HTM 01-05 battle continues after BDA claims

British Dental Association calls for evidence to be examined by NICE

The British Dental Association (BDA) has made the bizarre claim that the Department of Health’s (DH) chief dental officer has refused to publish documentation on contamination he has already committed to publishing as part of the HTM 01-05 guidance document on decontamination in dental surgeries.

The BDA claims that three areas of the guidance have been amended before printing the document, which includes permission to use potable water for the rinse stage of decontamination.

The BDA claims this is a climb-down from the previously intended requirement for reverse osmosis and freshly distilled water.

The association also objects to an increase in the period during which instruments can be stored after processing in a validated vacuum sterilizer, from 50 to 60 days.

It also drew attention to the revision of the requirement for two sinks for decontamination, to allowing both bowls in a single unit.

The association also claims that concern about these changes has been heightened by a ‘consistently’ by the DH to publish documentation on contamination he has already committed to publishing as part of the HTM 01-05 guidance document on decontamination in dental surgeries.

In addition, the BDA were also members of the expert working group and commented on working drafts over quite a long period of time.

He said the clinical section of the guidance had been available online since October 2008.

Dr Cockcroft continued: ‘The new guidance has essential quality requirements, which are not much greater than the existing requirements defined in the BDA’s own guidance document. However the aim is to move to wards best practice as defined in the new document.’

Over the last five years, the DH has introduced a Clean, Safe Care Strategy, resulting in cleaner hospitals and significant reductions in MRSA and C. difficile infections.

The association claims that concern about these changes has been heightened by a ‘consistent failure’ by the DH to publish references for the document’s evidence-base.

“Regarding point three, this is not new guidance, it has just been re-positioned within the document.

He added: ‘The knowledge base has moved on in the first two areas mentioned by the BDA.”

New Modules Launched

After the success of Communication in Dentistry: Stories from the Practice, Smile-on in association with Dental Protection Ltd (DPL) has launched the next three modules of this flexible approach to dental training. Modules four to six of Communication in Dentistry consist of: Module four: Complaint handling and dealing with difficult patients; Module five: Consent and communicating choices; Module six: Recording communications. The cutting edge technology and informative content offers users a flexible approach to promoting effective and reliable working systems to help practices enjoy greater success and safeguard themselves from legal action. Smile-on is proud to support all dental professionals by offering flexible education and accessible learning to help build fulfilling and successful dental careers.

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