Mouth Cancer calls ‘you’ for action

No training spells danger warns experts

Implant experts are calling for a gold standard qualification for dentists offering implants, and for implantology to be a specialism in its own right.

The General Dental Council (GDC) recently reminded all dentists they must only undertake procedures they are properly trained in, after a number of dentists were found carrying out dental implants without proper training.

The GDC pointed to guidelines published by the Faculty of General Dental Practice (UK), Training Standards in Implant Dentistry.

These say: ‘It is essential that the dentist carrying out this work has received suitable training, and has been assessed as competent to do it.’

It adds: ‘This will normally involve that dentist taking a post-graduate training course in implant dentistry.’

Dr Avik Dandapat, one of the few dentists in the UK to hold the Diploma in Implantology from the Royal College of Surgeons, believes the guidance is rather vague and would like to see implantologists having to adhere to certain standards.

He said: ‘It is fairly easy to do implants but very difficult to do them to the standard the Royal College demands. And, bluntly, these should be the standards that, if not mandatory, are those to which the professional aspires.’

Mr Dey warns that if this doesn’t happen, ‘we are soon going to see a huge court case hitting the headlines’.

‘We are going to see a situation where someone has been on a course, practised on a few dummies and when they come to practising on a patient, something will go wrong. The patient will realise they have had virtually no experience,’ he said.

As well as Under-secretary for health Ann Keen MP supporting this week’s launch, attendees were joined by shadow front bench health minister Mike Penning MP, Labour health campaigner Rosie Cooper MP, chief dental officer of England Dr Barry Cockcroft, Welsh counterpart Dr Paul Langmaid and the BDA’s chief executive Peter Ward.

The Foundation’s campaign week, which began on 16 November, calls for action on mouth cancer – whether wearing the campaigns Blue Ribbon Appeal badge, visiting the dentist for a check-up, or a self examination for ulcers which do not heal within three weeks, red and white patches in the mouth, or unusual lumps and swellings.

Mouth Action Week ran from 16 to 22 November, and was sponsored by Denplan, Dental Design, Vitalite Plus and the British Dental Association (BDA).