Could cigarette packaging go up in smoke?

A UK-wide consultation on whether tobacco should be sold in standardised, or plain packaging, has been launched

The recent consultation concerning the future branding of cigarette packaging has come about in an effort to impact on people's health and reduce the uptake of smoking.

The consultation suggests for the first time what requirements for standardised packaging could consist of, including no branding, a uniform colour and a standard font and text for any writing on the pack.

The consultation will seek views on whether tobacco packaging should remain unchanged, plain packaging should be adopted, a different option should be considered.

Respondents will also be asked to consider what the specific impact of standardised packaging could be, including whether it could reduce the appeal of tobacco products, increase the effectiveness of health warnings, impact on the tobacco industry and retailers or encourage consumers to buy tobacco products abroad for their own consumption.

There has however already been mixed opinions on health forums and news sites regarding the consultation.

Non-smokers and smokers alike are exclaiming that policies such as this are "incredibly patronising" and some non-smokers are even suggesting that it shows a complete lack of understating about addictions.

Whilst some people believe that it could have an effect on steering people away from starting the habit, many people believe that the plain packaging policy will have little to no affect whatsoever on younger people; some even believe it will encourage them to start smoking because cigarettes will have that "forbidden factor".

However, there are some that hope that if the policy does come into effect it will reduce the attraction of cigarettes; but many people remain sceptical. One concern that non-smokers, ex-smokers and smokers alike are raising is how the "plain packet policy" will be "an open invitation" for smugglers and counterfeiters to produce fake cigarettes with harmful substances. Further worries, such as a substantial loss in Tax from cigarette purchases are also concerning members of the public, whilst others believe that the consultation is a waste of Taxpayers' money. People are even asking why plain packaging would be needed if the cigarettes are hidden from view.

The consultation will be open for responses from 16 April to 10 July. Any person, business or organisation with an interest is encouraged to respond.

To take part in the consultation visit http://consultations.dh.gov.uk.
King’s dental alumni awards announced

Health and Social Care Bill gains royal assent

World Health Day

The Alumnus of the Year Award was this year shared by two alumni, Professor John S Greenspan and Professor Deborah Greenspan (RDH, Dentistry, 1964) and Professor Deborah Greenspan (RDH, Dentistry, 1964). The prize is given to the person or persons who have achieved national and international distinction in any walk of life and brought credit to the profession, directly or indirect-ly, with particular emphasis on the last three years.

Prof John and Deborah Greenspan are internationally recognised for their contribu-tions and achievements in the field of oral manifestations of HIV/AIDS.

Prof Deborah Greenspan commented: “This award was completely unexpected and is deeply appreciated. From the merger of the Royal Dental Hos-pital with Guy’s, then United Medical Dental Schools, the Guy’s, King’s and St Thomas’, now King’s College London, we have felt part of a growing and supportive alumni group that can be proud of being part of an outstanding dental school and university. The heritage of the Royal lives on in King’s College London Dental Institute.”

Prof John Greenspan added: “We did not know we were get-ting the award, so to hear about it while sitting among four ta-bles of my classmates and their guests at the reunion marking the 50 year since our gradu-ation was particularly poignant. Memories of 50 plus years ago, mingled with news of col-leagues’ families and careers flooded the mind with a mixture of emotions; nostalgia, pride, yes some sadness for those no longer with us, plus a deep sense of gratitude for the edu-ca-tion we received at the Royal all those many years ago.”

The Alumnus Distinguished Service Award was presented to Mr Martin Kelleher. The award aims to honour a long-serving member of staff who has made a signifi-cant contribution to the Dental Institute or one of its constitu-ent Schools.

Mr Kelleher is a Consult-ant in Restorative Dentistry at King’s College London Dental Institute. He was postgraduate tutor at King’s College Hospi-tal and Guy’s Dental Hospital for many years. He has lect-ured extensively both nation-ally and internationally for more than 25 years and is the author of many peer reviewed articles and a book on dental bleaching.

President of the Dental Alumni Association, Dr Clive Debenham said: “Martin Kelle-her is a teacher whose idiosyn-cratic, didactic but sympathetic style will always be remem-bered by those lucky enough to fall under his tutelage.”

Commenting on the award, Mr Kelleher said: “I was equally surprised and delighted to receive this prestigious award from the Dental Alumni Asso-ciation. During my many years as postgraduate dental tutor at both the King’s College Hospi-tal, Denmark Hill site and the Guy’s Hospital site I tried to be as inclusive as possible of the various graduates, each with their different histories, in run-ning Clinical Day in conjunc-tion with the dental alumni.

“I am delighted to note that the alumni and the Dental Insti-tute generally continue to be highly successful and they are to be heartily congratu-lated on this. In expressing my deep gratitude for this honour I would like to take this op-portunity not just to thank all those involved, but also to wish them all the best for their fu-ture activities.”

Martin Kelleher

Health and Social Care Bill gains royal assent

The Health and Social Care Act recently gained Royal Assent to become the Health and Social Care Bill. The Act aims to:

- Give patients more information on how the NHS is performing and the range of providers they can choose for their healthcare. And they will have a stronger voice through Healthwatch, with the Health and Social Care Bill will deliver more power to clinicians, it will put patients at the heart of the NHS, and it will reduce the costs of bureaucracy.

“We now have an opportuni-ty to secure clinical leadership to deliver improving quality and outcomes; better results for pa-tients is our objective.”

Professor Steve Field, chair of the NHS Future Forum, said: “it was a tremendous privilege to be able to chair the Independent NHS Future Forum. All the comments and debate that we heard helped improve the Bill.”

The implementation of the Act will now enable clinical leaders, patients’ representa-tives and local government to take on new and leading roles in shaping more effective ser-vices.

World Health Day

World Health Day was celebrated on the 7th April, marking the anniversary of the founding of the World Health Organisation in 1948. World Health Day is a global campaign, inviting every-one – from global leaders to the public in all countries – to focus on a single health challenge with global impact – the focus this year being Ageing and Health.

World Health Day 2012 focused on how good health can add life to years, enabling older men and women to not only live longer, but also to extend their active involvement in all levels of society. Ageing concerns each and every one of us – whether young or old, male or female, rich or poor – no matter where we live.

Before the end of this century, the world will have more older people than children. People are living longer and life expectancy continues to improve around the globe, but living longer is only one part of the equation – living well is the key to ensuring that older people remain healthy, energetic and involved in their commu-nities and society as a whole.

As the world’s population continues to age, social and eco-nomic implications of an ageing population will need to be ad-dressed. Evidence suggests that moderate physical activity can help to improve and prolong mobility in the elderly, yet as age increases, physical activity often decreases. This sort of decline in activity levels is more pro-nounced in women, low-income groups and in persons with low education levels.

Education and awareness are therefore key as well as ade-quate provision of age-friendly, community based exercise and recreation facilities as well as improved access to basic primary health care. But perhaps the most important role for government and community leadership bod-ies lies in acknowledging the val-ue of older people and the contribu-tions they make to family and community life.

Although it is never too late to adopt a healthy lifestyle, start-ing early will make sure that your later years are not only long, but also healthy. Studies show that children’s arteries start showing atherosclerosis from as early as two years of age, which means the effects begin in utero. Whatever your age, regular exercise is crucial, so don’t delay.

World Health Day 2012

The core principles of the Act mean that doctors and nurses will be able to tailor services for their patients, more choice will be given to patients over how they are treated, and bu-reaucracy in the NHS will be reduced.

The Act aims to:
- Devolve power to front-line doctors and nurses: Health pro-fessionals will be free to design and tailor local health services for their patients
- Drive up quality: Patients will benefit from a renewed focus on improving quality and outcomes
- Ensure a focus on integration: There will be strong duties on the health service to promote integration of services
- Strengthen public health: Giving responsibility for local public health services to local au-thorities will ensure that they are able to pull together the work done by the NHS, social care, housing, environmental health, leisure and transport services
- Give patients more informa-tion and choice: Patients will have greater information on how the NHS is performing and the range of providers they can choose for their healthcare. And they will have a stronger voice through Healthwatch

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Denplan withdraws from ROI

Following its launch in the Republic of Ireland in August 2010, Denplan’s Executive Board has taken the difficult decision to withdraw its presence from this region.

Denplan has been working with a range of member dentists over the last 19 months in order to increase the level of support it can offer to both the dental professionals and their patients - following the Government’s decision to remove state-funded dental provision and reduce the Medical Card provision to children and exempt patients.

However, ongoing interest by the insurance regulators in this region has necessitated a growing investment in legal services to explain Denplan’s product design and cover, which has, in turn, made this market financially unviable. This has been compounded by Denplan’s recent sale to Simplyhealth, which is not yet registered to trade in the Irish Republic.

Denplan’s Managing Director, Steve Gates, commented: “We’re disappointed to be withdrawing from the Republic of Ireland, but I would personally like to thank all of our contacts in the area for the support and business they placed with Denplan and wish them every success in the future. “This decision in no way affects our substantial presence in Northern Ireland, which still offers strong opportunities for growth over the coming years, I would also like to reiterate that there will be no job losses as a result of this decision.”

Today I spent most of the day at the GDC CPD Review Conference. It was a very interesting day, looking at the delivery of CPD and the barriers to accessing quality courses.

The delegate list was filled with practitioners, under- and post-graduate dental Deans, educators, academics, GDC members and commercial providers. Chaired by GDC Chief Executive and Registrar Evlyne Gilvarry, the day took in many aspects of CPD and its relevance to revalidation; both allowing course providers to gain an insight into the potential direction for CPD in the future, and for the GDC to get feedback from stakeholders.

One of the buzzwords from the day was ‘blended learning’ – the use of different teaching modalities to allow for a rounded learning experience. This can use both online and face-to-face methods, with interactivity at the heart of it.

If CPD and revalidation are here to stay, then so is blended learning.
Centres selected to host cutting-edge cancer services

A round 1,500 cancer pa-
tients a year will benefit from a cutting-edge can-
cer treatment – Proton Beam Therapy – that will be avail-
able in London and Manches-
ter, Health Secretary Andrew Lansley announced today.

Up to £50 million will be invested by the NHS in build-
ing Proton Beam Therapy fa-
cilities at The Christie NHS Foundation Trust hospital in Manchester and University College London Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. The Depart-
ment of Health have set aside public capital for this scheme.

Proton Beam Therapy is a type of radiotherapy, which uses a precision high-energy beam of particles to destroy cancer cells. The treatment is particularly suitable for complex childhood cancers, increasing success rates and reducing side-effects, such as deafness, loss of IQ and sec-
ondary cancers.

Given the complex nature of the treatment and facilities, Proton Beam Therapy won’t be fully available in England until 2017. Until then, the NHS will continue to fund patients in need of Proton Beam Therapy to go abroad – either to Swit-
zerland or the USA. By 2014/15 the NHS will be spending £50 million per year sending up to 400 patients overseas.

Health Secretary, Andrew Lansley, said: “Developing a national proton beam ther-
apy service is vital to ensuring our cancer facilities are world class. We have always said that it is patient outcomes which matter, and to get the best for patients we must always be looking to push the bounda-
ries.

“In addition to improved success rates, Proton beam therapy reduces the side-e-
effects which patients, particu-
larly children, can suffer as a result of traditional forms of cancer treatment.

“One of the most significant benefits is the comfort and improved quality of life for patients undergoing treatment.”

The Department of Health plans to introduce PBT servic-
esthe Christie and UCLH. The Department’s assessment shows this to be affordable and deliverable in the short term. The development of the service will be closely moni-
tored and should further cap-
acity to be needed in the future, the preferred third site is Uni-
versity Hospitals Birmingham, subject to normal business cases processes and the views of the NHS Commissioning Board.

Tackle alcohol abuse at the dentist

Alcohol abuse causes dental disease and mouth can-
er warns health experts. To tackle this at the earliest op-
portunity, screening and treat-
ment for excessive drinking is vital, according to a paper pub-
lished in the April edition of the Royal College of Surgeon’s Den-
tal Journal. The paper, ‘Alcohol misuse: screening and treatment in primary dental care,’ points out that patients do not attend their GP unless they are ill, but most people visit their dentist for a routine check-up, giving the dental team a unique oppor-
tunity to identify misuse.

The paper highlights that making standard questions about alcohol consumption more explicit under new policy proposals could provide a cur-
rently untapped opportunity to help individuals tackle prob-
lem drinking, as asking patients about alcohol consumption is a routine component of un-
derstanding a patients overall health.

Jonathan Shepherd, Profes-
lor of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery and lead author of the paper, said: ‘Excessive alcohol consumption can lead to can-
cer of the mouth, larynx and oesophagus and dentists maybe the first to notice these condi-
tions. So we need to introduce an alcohol screening tool that reliably detects hazardous and harmful drinking alongside ef-
fective treatment.’

The paper emphasises that an estimated one in five men and one in seven women in the UK regularly binge drink which costs the UK economy approxi-
ately £25 billion a year. Pro-
moting moderation in alcohol consumption in the primary dental setting could contribute to decreasing the economic, so-
cial and health burdens associ-
ated with alcohol abuse.

The study stresses that iden-
tifying and tackling alcohol misuse at the dentist would be a major contribution to the Gov-
ernment’s health priorities. ‘The dental team has a responsibility to promote overall health and not just dental health. Dentists and the Government must work together to develop and deliver screening and treatment by in-
tervening early,’ Shepherd con-
cluded.

Clarification on licensing for dental surgeries

Richard first approached doc-
tors at the university to discuss surgical options. After a face was donated by the family of a deceased anonymous donor, the extensive and difficult sur-
ger could commence, and was conducted in late March by a multidisciplinary team of more than 150 medical professionals and lasted 78 hours. According to the university, this is the first time in history that a full-face transplant has been completed by a team of plastic and recon-
structive surgeons experienced in both trauma and dental and facial reconstruction.

The project was financial-
ly supported by the US Navy, which hopes to gain better in-
sights into the reconstruction of the wounded faces of returning soldiers.

Surgeons perform full-
face transplant

S urgeons at the University of Maryland in Baltimore have reported the trans-
plantation of an entire face onto a 57-year-old man.

According to a report, the surgeons successfully trans-
planted facemask, including teeth, and upper and lower jaw. The procedure is considered to be the world’s most extensive full-face transplant. The pa-
tient Richard Lee Norris from Hillsville, Virginia, had the face transplant after a gun incident 15 years ago left him severely disfigured. Richard lost his lips and his nose, and his jaw-
line was almost completely de-
stroyed. As a result, he was left with limited movement of the mouth.

It wasn’t until 2005 when Richard first approached doc-
tors at the university to discuss surgical options. After a face was donated by the family of a deceased anonymous donor, the extensive and difficult sur-
ger could commence, and was conducted in late March by a multidisciplinary team of more than 150 medical professionals and lasted 78 hours. According to the university, this is the first time in history that a full-face transplant has been completed by a team of plastic and recon-
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Clari-
Switch on to new ideas

Speakers:

Prof Nasser Barghi
Dr Richard Kahan
Prof Gianluca Gambarini
Dr Wyman Chan
Dr John Moore
Dr Ajay Kakar
Ms Jackie Coventry
Dr Mona Kakar
Basil Mizrahi
Fraser McCord
Mhari Coxon
Amit Patel
Anthony Roberts
Campaign for CASPER

Jane Armitage launches the Campaign for Administrative Standards and Professional Education for Receptionists and Practice Managers (CASPER)

In the modern dental profession there is no shortage of Standards and Regulations or authoritative bodies to assess and compliance. The origins of the current legislation date back as far as the Dentist Act 1921, which restricted the practice of dentistry to qualified, registered practitioners, working within ethical standards set by a regulatory body; The Dental Board for the UK, the initial forerunner of the General Dental Council (GDC) establishing how many practices are required and Clinical Governance is introduced to the Healthcare Sector.

Over the 90 years since the Dentist Act 1921 the health care professions have changed considerably, so too has their relationship with the public. When dentistry was restricted in 1921 the purpose of this legislation was to protect the public. In 2001 following some high profile medical cases, including the Harold Shipman, Alderhay and The Bristol Babies it was clear that to maintain public confidence higher profile measures were required and Clinical Governance was introduced to the Healthcare Sector.

Over the past 10 years the dental profession has introduced a curricular framework to enable members of the dental team to gain registerable qualifications and this has enabled a range of dental professionals to increase the scope of their contribution to patient care. As a result careers in the dental profession have become more prestigious and attractive to a wider range of people with a vocation to work in a caring profession.

Clinically dentistry can claim almost 100 years of ongoing development with excellence as its primary objective. However, when it comes to the non clinical aspects of dental care there is a massive black hole in terms of training and ongoing development requirements.

The Health and Social Care Act 2005 sets out clear regulations which in turn have been translated by each constituent country of the United Kingdom to local essential standards of quality and safety. Each has appointed inspectors to visit registered practices to assess compliance. If you look really hard you will find training recommendations for Registrars and Managers. But not only do you need to look hard, to find any meaningful education requirements, you also need to use a broad span of interpretation because qualification requirements for Registered Managers are not definitive. Worse still the standard for administrators and receptionists are non-existent; or at least I have not been able to find them.

It is indisputable that the quality of UK clinical dentistry is world class. However, nowadays patients demand more that excellent dentistry, they will not settle for less than an excellent dental experience from the moment they decide to make an appointment on until they complete their treatment.

This is recognised in care quality outcomes. To consistently achieve these outcomes requires a range of quality management skills, such as planning, audit, performance, creating, implementing and evaluating SMART objectives and gathering feedback on clinical and non clinical aspects of care. Without formal education these skills will be absent from dental teams’ skills sets, therefore patients experience of quality if their dental experience will suffer.

Jane Armitage is a high profile multi-award winning practice manager. Over recent months she has helped numerous practice managers who are completely out of their depth with the new quality management regulations.

“I agree that the dental profession needs definitive non-clinical educational and CPD standards for dental managers and administrators.”

If you would like to add your voice to ours, simply email us your name and:

www.CASPERCampaignto: casper.campaign@gmail.com

The Campaign for Administrative Standards and Professional Education for Receptionists and Practice Managers (CASPER) has gathered high profile dental professionals who believe that qualifications for practice managers and receptionists are the next logical step in the progression of the dental profession and are urging the GDC and CQC to formulate a non-clinical curricular framework.

Jill Taylor, President of the Association of Dental Administrators and Managers (Formerly the BDSPA) has added her support to this campaign with the following Statement “I agree that the dental profession needs definitive non-clinical educational and CPD standards for dental managers and administrators.”

If you would like to add your voice to ours, simply email us your name and:

“I agree that the dental profession needs definitive non-clinical educational and CPD standards for dental managers and administrators”

to: casper.campaign@gmail.com.

Registation for Showcase 2012 now live!

Dentists are now able to register online for their e-ticket to BDTA Dental Showcase, which takes place at ExCel London from 4-6 October 2012. Registration is free and can be completed easily online at www.dentalshowcase.com and you will instantly receive your e-ticket.

Dental Showcase is the UK’s No.1 dental exhibition, with over 10,000 members of the dental team expected to visit the three-day event, and more than 550 companies exhibiting, presenting the latest products and services that the dental industry has to offer.

Each year the BDTA holds an outstanding show, which is why Dental Showcase continues to be the biggest and best exhibition in the dental calendar.

Book your ticket now to ensure that you don’t miss out!

For more information, or to register for your free ticket to BDTA Dental Showcase please visit www.dentalshowcase.com.
Research to target threat caused by sepsis

Twelve new research and development projects that aim to improve the future diagnosis, detection and management of sepsis, a life-threatening illness caused by the body over-reacting to an infection, are to receive government funding totaling £8 million.

The grant funding – from the Technology Strategy Board, the Department of Health, Ministry of Defence, Home Office, Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council and Medical Research Council – will be matched by funding from the UK companies involved in the projects, bringing the total value of the R&D to more than £15 million.

Iain Gray, Chief Executive of the Technology Strategy Board, said: “There is universal recognition of the need for new and improved diagnostic tools to help in the management of sepsis. The products that will emerge from this important research and development will help to reduce the economic burden, death and illness from sepsis and infectious diseases and create opportunities for UK companies in the huge global market for diagnostic devices.”

The 12 business-led R&D projects will see more than 20 UK companies working collaboratively with more than 12 universities, research organisations and NHS Foundation Trusts. The funding awards follow successful applications by the consortia to two competitions managed by the Technology Strategy Board.

The Multi-pathogen detection and/or simple discrimination competition sought proposals for projects to develop point-of-care diagnostic tools to assist clinicians and health workers in the management of sepsis, while the Advancing biomarker use in sepsis management competition looked for R&D projects that would advance the effective use of biomarkers in the management of the condition.

The projects will be led by BD Biosciences (Oxford) (2 projects), BioGene (Kimbolton, Cambs), HPA Microbiological Services Porton (Salisbury), Innovate UK Ltd (Birmingham), Magna Parva (Leicester), MAST Group Ltd (Bootle), MicroLab Devices Ltd (Leeds), Mologic Ltd (Sharpham, Beds), Randox Laboratories Ltd (Crumlin, Co Antrim), Sepsis Ltd (Liverpool) and Smiths Detection Watford Ltd (Watford). Taking into account the other organisations that make up the twelve consortia, companies and experts from every part of the UK will take part in the research and development activity.

The projects include work that will lead to the development of:
- Point-of-care devices to detect multiple pathogens and antibiotic resistance profiles
- A rapid test (less than three minutes) to detect the presence of bacteria in blood
- Devices capable of detecting pathogens and the host response in a single system in less than 15 minutes
- Biomarker based cellular assays to predict stages of infection and sepsis
- Tests incorporating physical and biological measurements that can be used in multiple settings to detect the early signs of infection and sepsis

The Technology Strategy Board used the Multi-pathogen detection and/or simple discrimination competition to pilot a planned initiative called Design Option, which aims to help businesses think more about design at the start of their research and development project.

The Design Option initiative, applicants to this competition were offered free access to design mentors while they were in the early stages of developing their project proposals. Five requests for Design Option assistance were received and approved. Three of these were invited to submit full applications and two were ultimately successful in securing offers of grant funding.

The funding programme is part of the Technology Strategy Board-managed Detection and Identification of Infectious Agents (DIIA) Innovation Platform, which is managing a range of government investment in innovative research and development into diagnostic tests and devices that will help to cut the number of deaths and cases of illness caused by infectious agents in humans and animals, while reducing the economic burden.

Come and celebrate the AOG’s 50th anniversary this summer, at the Haberdashers’ Aske’s Girls School in Herts. Enjoy the sun with superb Indian cuisine, wine, beer, soft drinks and plenty of entertainment for the kids including a bouncy castle and an interactive animal zoo!

The event will take place on 8th July 2012 and tickets are available online. Non-AOG members can purchase tickets from the website for £15 an adult and £5 for children under 16, while the special members’ rates are £5 per adult and £1 for under-16s.

The AOG began as a source of social networking for dental professionals, and over the years has become a place for people of all ages to come together and give back to those within dentistry. Open to everyone, the AOG organises events, educational support and charitable trips with the aim of working ‘towards the greater good’.

Help us celebrate our 50 years of success, and enjoy great company and fun for all the family at our BBQ this summer.