Mouth cancer is ‘most frightening’ cancer

November is Mouth Cancer Action Month, a campaign organised by the British Dental Health Foundation (BDHF) that aims to raise awareness of the risks and symptoms of the disease.

Dental practices across the UK are being encouraged to check patients for signs of mouth cancer and make people aware of the four main risk factors for the disease: smoking, drinking alcohol to excess, poor diet and the human papillomavirus (HPV) often transmitted through oral sex.

"Mouth cancer can severely affect some of the very things we take for granted. Speaking, eating, drinking and breathing can all be affected by radiotherapy, chemotherapy and surgery resulting from the disease."

"Throughout the campaign we urge everyone to take action and visit their dentist. They are in the best position to check your mouth thoroughly for signs and symptoms of the disease."

"The campaign is a great opportunity for the public to learn about the risks and what to look out for. Ulcers that do not heal within three weeks, red and white patches and unusual lumps or swellings in the mouth should not be ignored. Our advice is clear – if in doubt, get checked out."

Turn to page six for more information about Mouth Cancer Action Month.

NHS: More openness for health system

Water lines: Are yours clean?

Endodontic irrigants: Gary Glassman discusses

Happier patients: Transforming lives with straighter teeth

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Our website is AUSTRALIA’s premier source of news and information about the dental industry. Visit us to find out more about your industry.

www.dental-tribune.co.uk
Periodontal disease could be effectively treated by ‘beckoning’ the right kind of immune system cells to the inflamed tissues, according to researchers at the University of Pittsburgh.

“Currently, we try to control the build-up of bacteria so it doesn’t trigger severe inflammation, which could eventually damage the bone and tissue that hold the teeth in place,” said Charles Sfeir, co-author of the study.

“But that strategy doesn’t address the real cause of the problem, which is an overreaction of the immune system that causes a needlessly aggressive response to the presence of oral bacteria. There is a real need to design new approaches to treat periodontal disease.”

“There is a lot of evidence now that shows these diseased tissues are deficient in a subset of immune cells called regulatory T-cells, which tells attacking immune cells to stand down, stopping the inflammatory response,” said Steven Little, senior author of the study.

“We wanted to see what would happen if we brought these regulatory T-cells back to the gums.”

The researchers developed a system of polymer microspheres to slowly release a signalling protein called CCL22 that attracts regulatory T-cells, and placed tiny amounts of the paste-like agent between the gums and teeth of animals with periodontal disease.

The team found that even though the amount of bacteria was unchanged, the treatment led to improvements of standard measures of periodontal disease, including decreased pocket depth and gum bleeding, reflecting a reduction in inflammation as a result of increased numbers of regulatory T-cells. MicroCT-scanning showed lower rates of bone loss.

In the US to ban cigarette sale to 19- and 20-year olds. Bloomberg said that it says will increase public participation as part of its pledge to openness and transparency.

Mayor Michael Bloomberg has 30 days to sign the bills into law. The minimum age bill will then take effect 180 days after enactment.

“We know that tobacco dependence can begin very soon after a young person first tries smoking so it’s critical that we stop young people from smoking before they even start,” said Bloomberg.

Tobacco-purchasing age raised to 21 in NY

New York City Council has approved a measure that will raise the tobacco-purchasing age to 21.

The current purchasing age is 18 but the new bill will make it illegal for anyone under the age of 21 to buy cigarettes, certain tobacco products and even electronic cigarettes. The council also approved another bill that will set a minimum price of $10.50 for a pack of cigarettes.

“This will literally save lives,” New York City Councilman James Gennaro, whose mother and father died from tobacco-related diseases.

New York is the biggest city in the US to ban cigarette sale to 19- and 20-year olds. Similar legislation is expected to come to a vote in Hawaii in December 2015, and the state of New Jersey is also considering a similar proposal.

Anh Diep, senior author of the study.

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‘More openness and transparency’ for NHS

National Director for Patients and Information, said: “This is the single most important step forward in transparency for healthcare anywhere in the world.

“The English healthcare system is already one of the most transparent in the world – publishing more information than any other country. But these new measures will transform outcomes, put citizens at the centre of everything we do and will provide the means by which NHS England will be at the cutting edge of medical science.”

Unregistered dental therapist prosecuted

Ms Penvose was arrested by South Yorkshire Police on 15 October 2015 and admitted to the offences, as well as admitting to treating more than 5,500 patients during the period that she was not registered.

On 1 November 2015 she appeared at Barnsley Magistrates’ Court and pleaded guilty. She was sentenced to a 12 month conditional discharge and ordered to pay a £5 victim surcharge.

Patients are not protected by ‘friends and family’ test

The government has revealed patients are not protected when “friends and family” test the services they are due to receive.

The government’s “friends and family” test is a 10,000-strong panel of anonymous patients asked to test the service of their GP practices.

But the government said in written evidence that patients are not protected by the test.

Professionals have been concerned that the government is not being transparent about the effectiveness of the test.

The government plans to publish the results of the test on NHS England’s website.

A dental therapist has been prosecuted for the illegal practice of dentistry.

Jane Penvose was registered with the General Dental Council (GDC) as a dental therapist from 1 October 1996 to 6 August 2012, when she was removed from the register for not paying her Annual Retention Fee.

On 2 September 2015, the GDC received a complaint that
Editorial comment

Welcome to November's issue of Dental Tribune.

Recession affects food purchases in UK

People in the UK are purchasing less calories and less fruit and vegetables, according to research. Published by the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS), the research was presented as part of the ESRC Festival of Social Science on 4 November 2013.

“Gluttony in England? Long-term change in diet” describes changes in households’ calorie purchases since 1980. It shows that although the average weight of an adult male has increased by 9.6 kilograms, and the weight of an adult female by 7.9 kilograms, there has been a substantial reduction in calories purchased.

Calories purchased from eating out, soft drinks, snacks and confectionery increased over the period for all but young single households, with particularly big increases for older single households (70 per cent) and couples with children (56 per cent). However, most calories are bought for consumption at home, and the decline in calories from food at home was much larger than the increase in calories from eating out, soft drinks, snacks and confectionery.

Melanie Lührmann, one of the authors of the report said: “We were surprised to find that there has been a substantial decline in total calories purchased at a time when obesity has increased.

“Purchases of snack foods, soft drinks and food out have increased, and now account for a greater share of calories for most households. However, calories purchased for consumption at home have declined strongly and account for the bulk of household foods purchases. This does not mean that poor diet plays no part in rising obesity. But understanding the interaction between diet and physical activity is clearly crucial.”

A second report which looked at food expenditure and nutritional quality over the recession (from 2005 to 2012). It found that the average real food spending fell by 8.5 per cent from 2005-7 to 2010-12, as food spending in cash terms failed to keep up with rising food prices. From 2007 to 2012 the price of food rose by 10.2 per cent more than the price of all goods.

Detection at an early stage is critical so if MCAM is a timely reminder to both the public and healthcare professionals that ‘if in doubt, get checked out’.

Awareness event and screening sessions are being held all over the country – if you are a practice getting involved, let us know!

Take a look at pages 6-7 for more on the campaign, or go to the dedicated website – www.mouthcancer.org.
Fizzy drinks tax could reduce obesity by 180,000

Researchers from the University of Oxford and University of Reading carried out the study, which is published in the British Medical Journal. It was found that the tax could also raise more than £275 million for the Treasury.

Sugary drinks (fizzy drinks, squashes and cordials) have been shown to increase the risk of obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease and tooth decay. They only suppress appetite weakly, so consuming fewer sugary drinks is unlikely to result in an increased intake of other sources of calories.

For the study, the researchers used a large survey of shopping preferences of families in the UK to estimate how purchases of sugary drinks would change in response to a 20 per cent increase in their price.

The research suggests that purchases of sugary drinks would reduce by around 15 per cent, with the expected reduction in energy intake being 28 calories per person per week. This would reduce the number of obese adults by 180,000 in the UK, it was estimated.

Dr Adam Briggs from Oxford University and joint first author of the study, says: “Sugar sweetened drinks are known to be bad for health and our research indicates that a 20 per cent tax could result in a meaningful reduction in the number of obese adults in the UK.”

Professor Richard Tiffin of the University of Reading says: “Obesity is a ticking time bomb. Doing nothing risks condemning millions of people to poor health and an early grave. This is a complex battle in which a soft drinks tax could be a useful weapon, but on its own would not go far enough in the face of such a massive problem. Sedentary lifestyles, poor education, addiction to alcohol and tobacco, and poverty all play far more significant roles than fizzy drinks in causing bad health.”

Simon Stevens appointed new NHS boss

Sir David Nicholson on 1 April 2014. He has worked as an NHS manager, a health advisor to Labour, and is currently working for United Healthcare as its global health president.

Chairman Professor Sir Malcolm Grant said: “I am delighted that Simon will be taking on this exceptionally challenging leadership role for the NHS. He has huge experience, both national and global, and across all sectors, and is admired by his international professional colleagues across the world for his commitment to the values of the NHS and to the provision of quality healthcare for all.

“He brings a wealth of ideas and unique experience, building on a distinguished career across the NHS, international healthcare and government.

I look forward to working closely with him as we lead innovation, change and significant improvement in safety and quality to patients across all areas of the NHS.

“We have been through a rigorous global search, and engaged with a range of excellent candidates. I am confident that Simon Stevens is the right person to lead NHS England through the coming years, bringing new ideas and fresh energy.”

Simon Stevens said: “The next five years are going to be extremely challenging for the NHS, but compassionate high quality for all is as vital as ever. It will be a privilege to lead NHS England – at a time when the stakes have never been higher – because I believe in the NHS, and because I believe that a broad new partnership of patients, carers, staff and the public can together chart a successful future for our Health Service.”

Consider your colleagues in need this Christmas

While Christmas can be a very joyous occasion, for some it can bring a period of struggle. For dentists who have found themselves in serious financial crisis, this time of year can sometimes mean deciding whether you can afford to heat your home and feed your family, rather than how you are going to celebrate over the festive season.

At this crucial time of year many dentists turn to the BDA Benevolent Fund for help.

Dr Ann Rockey, Chairman of the Fund, says: “Please consider your colleagues in need this Christmas! We all know what an expensive time of year it is with increased fuel bills, the ever-increasing costs of a supermarket shop, Christmas and the GDC Annual Retention Fee on top. Every year we have requests for assistance from dentists in need. In recent years we have seen a threefold increase in the number of applicants who are in difficulties with their commissioning bodies or the GDC”.

Vital funds have already been raised by 80 dentists and their partners who took to the dance floor and raised £2,485 for the Fund. Organised by Dr Ann Rockey and Dr Pam Norman for the Board of Trustees of the Fund, the dinner dance was held at the Cardiff Village Hotel in April.

For more information, call 020 7448 4499, email administrator@dentalacthelp.org or visit www.bdbenevolentfund.org.uk.