Satisfied, but not enough

Office of Fair Trading (OFT) report makes recommendations to free patients from restriction of dentist referral

Evidence gathered in the recent Office of Fair Trading report, has suggested “that dental patients are largely satisfied with the services provided by their dentist.” However, the report has also highlighted some areas for improvement.

The OFT study found that patients have insufficient information to make informed decisions about their choice of dentist and the dental treatments they receive; it also stated the complexity of the complaints process for patients, instances of potential pressure selling by dentists of dental payment plans and the need for accurate and timely information for patients. The OFT is calling on NHS commissioning bodies, the General Dental Council and the Care Quality Commission to be proactive in enforcing existing rules which require dentists and dental practices to provide timely, clear and accurate information to patients about prices and available dental treatments.

The report also raised significant concerns about continued restrictions preventing patients from directly accessing dental care professionals, such as hygienists, without a referral from a dentist. The report considered these restrictions to be highly unjustified, and the OFT have responded by urging the General Dental Council (GDC) to remove restrictions preventing patients from making appointments to see dental hygienists, dental therapists and clinical dental technicians directly, as soon as possible.

The OFT report also highlighted concerns with the current NHS dental contracts in England and stated how it is extremely difficult for new dental practices to be established and how successful dental practices, which offer a higher quality of service to NHS patients, are prevented from expanding. As a result, the OFT has urged the Department of Health to redesign the NHS dental contract to facilitate easier entry into the market by new dental practices and allow successful practices to expand.

John Fingleton, OPT Chief Executive said: “Our study has raised significant concerns about the UK dentistry market which need to be tackled quickly in the interest of patients. All too often patients lack access to the information they need, for example when choosing a dentist or when getting dental treatment. We also unearthed evidence that some patients may be receiving deliberately inaccurate information about their entitlement to NHS dental treatment, and we expect to see robust action taken against such potential misconduct by dentists.

“This study has also highlighted that the current NHS dental contract in England may well not be working in the best interests of patients, and that regulations unjustifiably restrict patients from getting direct access to dental care professionals like hygienists. Reform in both these areas is needed without delay.”

In response to the report, Dr Susie Sanderson, Chair of the BDA’s Executive Board, said: “Where patients do have concerns about their care, it is clearly important that they have an effective complaints process. This is helpful for dentists and patients alike and dentists support the goal of making the process as simple as possible.”

“Also crucial is the development of a new dental contract which is already under way in England. In piloting and designing these new arrangements Government must ensure that it provides clarity about what the NHS offers and properly supports practitioners in providing the kind of modern, preventive care that our patients deserve.”
The ninth annual Clinical Innovations Conference has been hailed a ‘fantastic success’ from delegates and organisers alike. Dental Tribune was there...

The Clinical Innovations Conference 2012, organised by Smile-on and the AOG and in association with The Dental Directory, was a fantastic success, boasting world-class speakers, cutting edge topics and practical advice for the many dental professionals in attendance.

Held last month at the Millennium Gloucester Hotel in London, the event saw more than 400 visitors from across the country come together for the two-day event.

As befits one of the leading aesthetic and restorative conferences held in the UK, delegates were able to expand and develop their understanding of ideas and techniques with help from some of the top names in the field. For the first time, the event included a London Deaneary DFT Conference, running alongside the Clinical Innovations Conference, providing more variety and attracting a number of additional practitioners.

The event began on the Friday, with world-renowned Dr Nasser Barghi speaking on ‘All-Ceramic and CAD/CAM Restorations in 2012: Clinical Steps’, to a highly attentive audience. Always a popular speaker, Dr Barghi’s look at restorative materials and the best indication for each was both practical and entertaining.

After the coffee break the conference split into two streams; Dr Wyman Chan and Dr Anthony Roberts. Dr Chan gave a lecture on ‘Modern Bleaching Techniques’. As a dedicated tooth-whitening dentist, Dr Chan focussed on bleaching techniques and the science behind the products he uses, as well as running a live demonstration alongside his lecture, with his dental nurse.

Simultaneously, Anthony Roberts spoke about ‘The Periodontal Jigsaw: Putting it all Together’. Looking at what a measure of success in periodontal treatment might mean for both clinicians and patients, Dr Roberts discussed BPE charting and the journey of diagnosis. He also explained the clinician’s role as motivator, communicator and educator in addition to their clinical capacity for the best treatment for patients.

The afternoon continued the high standard of speakers, with Richard Kahan giving an enthusiastic talk on ‘New Horizons in Endodontic Diagnosis and Treatment Planning’.

Comparing the dental and medical industries, Richard highlighted the issue that dentistry has a far smaller range of tests to use when diagnosing a patient’s complaint. In fact, the only truly objective test is an X-Ray. This is not however, a totally reliable tool, as its limitations can affect the results shown. If an X-Ray does not show a specific problem that does not necessarily mean there is nothing wrong – if a lesion for example is limited to cancellous bone, an X-Ray will not show it at all.

In effect, an X-Ray gives a ‘shadow’ of the tooth structure, so a 2nd and 3rd dimension is needed for an accurate diagnosis. The Limited Volume Cone Beam Computed Tomography (CBCT) gives this, and allows for a reliable and immediate diagnosis; preventing the possibility of working on the wrong tooth and causing more problems than existed originally.

Nasser Barghi, Mhari Coxon and Fraser McCord then separated the conference into three streams, speaking on ‘Bonded All Ceramic Restorations in 2012’, ‘Effective Biofilm Management’ and ‘Diagnosis of Complete Denture Problems’ respectively.

Fraser McCord took over the lectures to discuss the best techniques for diagnosing problems with complete dentures. He was quick to establish five main areas where problems arise;

- Support (resistance to movement towards the tissues)
- Retention (resistance to movement away from the tissues)
- Appearance
- Stability (resistance to movement along the long axis of the tooth)
- Appearance

To diagnose each, Dr McCord recommended a hands-on approach, tracing the dentures while in the patients’ mouths to find where problems could be occurring.

Dr McCord concluded his lecture with a few pointers to aid success with complete dentures. The first was that practitioners should ensure they use the suitable diagnostic treatment with confidence and competency. Patients’ expectations should also be kept realistic and the dentures should be age appropriate, helping them to look as natural as possible. Finally, good communication with the tech...
nicipian is of huge benefit, particularly when dentures need manufacturing or adjusting.

Mhari Coxon followed on from Dr Roberts’ presentation of the morning with a look at biofilm management. Giving an update on recent research into biofilm, Ms Coxon illustrated the four stages of biofilm development and showed 3-D images of biofilm in its various stages of attachment, growth, maturity and dispersion. She then went on to discuss the methods of removing biofilm and the evidence to support their use.

The first day concluded with Professor Gianluca Gambarini lecturing on ‘3D Endodontics: Concepts and Techniques’. Discussing the benefits of cone beam technology, he illustrated the importance of working with 3-D images to diagnose patients’ complaints.

Professor Gambarini then looked at techniques to treat a variety of complicated endodontic problems. As a great believer that the ‘Anatomy dictates instrumentation’, he showed that success of endodontic treatment can only be achieved if the most appropriate tools and techniques are adopted for each case.

The London Deanery DFT Conference was for London Deanery Foundation dentist attendees only, and proved to be a popular addition. The exciting new programme featured captivating lectures from Richard Kahan, Nasser Barghi, Martyn Cobourne, Stephen Henderson and Dr Wyman Chan.

As the Conference split into three sessions again, Professor Gambarini returned to speak about ‘Improving Root Canal Preparation and Obturant’. Simultaneously, Ajay Kakar lectured on ‘Non-Surgical Management of Periodontal Disease’, Sandeep Senghera discussed ‘Treating Your Patients and Business to the Latest in Technology’ and Dr Nasser Barghi spoke about ‘CAD/CAM Zirconia’ to MSc students.

Dr Senghera’s presentation was a practical look at marketing your practice to new and existing patients using the technology that many use daily in their personal lives – smartphones, social media etc. Likening the patient base to a bath with water running in and draining out, he emphasised the need to ensure patients are retained with smart recall processes and timesaving strategies for patients such as online appointment booking.

John Moore then took over the speaking to explore ‘Digital Dentistry and the Advantages for Cosmetic Treatments’. Primarily discussing how his practice is using the CEREC system to their advantage, Dr Moore showed how clinicians can use CAD/CAM in their practices to fulfil patients’ requirements.

Dr Barghi returned again in the afternoon to repeat his popular lecture on Bonding from the previous day, while Dr McCord’s lecture was ‘An Update on Impression Techniques for Complete Dentures’.

Dr Nilesh Parmar looked at Dentistry in the 3rd Dimension’. Discussing the clinical applications for CBCT in various branches of dentistry, Dr Parmar used many case examples using the technology to illustrate how, in his words, it ‘changed my working life’.

The Clinical Innovations Conference 2012 came to a close on the Saturday afternoon, with Dr Amit Patel speaking on ‘Peri-implantitis – A Future Timebomb’. With the growing trend of placing dental implants, cases of peri-implantitis and peri-mucositis will inevitably increase.

Dr Patel discussed the process of the inflammation and the reasons for it, looking at prosthesis design. He discussed his preferences for screw-retained restorations and looked at therapies for managing the inflammation.

One of the many strengths of the Clinical Innovations Conference is that it combines lectures with live workshops, demonstrations and a trade exhibition, to cater to practitioners’ every need. Between lectures, delegates were able to browse the exhibition stands, accessing some of the latest technologies in the world of aesthetic and restorative dentistry, and put their questions directly to the experts at each company.

Feedback from the event has been fantastic, with many delegates already penning the 2013 date in their diary. Next year’s event, the tenth anniversary of the Clinical Innovations Conference, will be held 17-18th May 2013. See you there!
The first ever Clinical Innovations Award, a fantastic new prize designed to showcase the best, most innovative products on the market today, was held this year at the Clinical Innovations Conference Charity Ball.

The Clinical Innovations Conference, now in its ninth year, has become one of the leading conferences in aesthetic and restorative dentistry in the UK. The conference itself brings together top international thinkers who present the very latest developments in dentistry.

In keeping with the theme of the lectures, these conferences have become the backdrop for companies to expose the genius of their innovative products. Smile-on and the AOG invited the dental industry to nominate their most innovative product to be judged by a panel of experts.

There was a fantastic range of entries, some of which were described as “breathtakingly brilliant”, others of which were defined as “superbly practical”; all were distinguished as having innovation at the heart of their solutions.

The judging panel consisted of a number of esteemed dental professionals, as well as members of a number of key journal editorial boards. As the award ceremony got underway, the judges were keen to comment on the variety and excellence of all the products short-listed, which had given the panel “great admiration” for all the companies involved. With such a strong short-list, picking a final three was tough, and the judges were particularly interested to examine innovation for dentistry as a profession – not just in the product itself.

With such a strong line-up of potential winners, the winner of the inaugural Clinical Innovations Award really had to stand out above the rest and after much careful deliberation, Dean of the London Deanery Mrs Elizabeth Jones announced the winners.

The winner was the Morita Veraviewepocs 3D R100 X-Ray machine and according to the judges it was a cut above the rest:

“This is an amazing development. No one thought anyone could achieve it. The field of vision in the right trough providing accurate information has been almost impossible with rotational devices. This is a technological breakthrough of increasing an 80mm diameter cylindrical field of vision to 100mm triangulated field of vision – to simulate the shape of the triangulated mandible, now includes the missing anatomy without exposing other tissue. This improves accurate detailing and will enhance patient safety when diagnosis and treatment planning is undertaken.”

Launched in March 2012 the Veraviewepocs 3D R100 is the latest model in the Veraviewepocs 3D series of combination panoramic, cephal & cone beam CT devices. It redefines the concept of 3D imaging with a unique Reuleaux Triangular FOV which more accurately matches the shape of the patients’ jaw. The R100 FOV im-
includes relevant anatomy that would be imaged with a 100mm circular diameter cross section but excludes irrelevant tissues outside the jawline. Not only was it previously considered impossible to achieve anything other than a circular cross section, but by achieving this, the X-ray dose to the patient is comparatively lower by around 15 per cent. With such powerful implications for enhanced patient safety, the R100 is the deserving winner of the first ever Clinical Innovations Award.

The highly commended award went to W&H with its entry the Proface light probe. Despite all the years of research in the field, detecting caries remains difficult. Where previous caries detection devices have generally been chemical based leaving stains, the Proface light probe was commended for its innovative approach that, while not perfect, provides the right approach to ‘evidence’ in knowing when to stop treating.

This new innovation allows direct visual identification of the caries-infected areas, thereby enabling selective treatment during caries excavation due to the ease of detecting the caries. Proface enables simple identification of the extent of a carious lesion allowing the clinician to ensure that subsequent excavation is minimally invasive and leaves healthy tooth structure intact. It also allows the clinician the confidence of knowing that they have eradicated the entire caries.

The commended award went to NSK S-MAX PICO HANDPIECE. In the modern era of micro cutting and magnification, this handpiece reduces the size of its head to allow wider visibility and better access to the posterior regions of the mouth where mouth opening is restricted, or in children and patients where mouth opening is limited. This handpiece has the smallest neck and head size yet developed in dentistry and the NSK’s S-Max pico ultramini turbine has been specifically developed for minimally invasive (MI) procedures. The technical specification of this handpiece’s cutting ability for such a small head is impressive. This is minimalistic functional art in action.

Finalists for the award were:
- The Carestream CS7600, the world’s first Intelligent Image Plate System
- COMPONEER from Coltène/Whaledent, Direct Composite Shells that represent a completely new class of veneers
- Tri Plaque ID Gel from GC UK, a gel that allows you and your patient to identify areas of plaque in three easy steps
- Propoints from Smart Seal, the only obturation product to use hydrophilic polymers which absorb water and expand laterally within the root canal, creating a 3D mechanical seal
- TEPE Angle from TePe, designed to provide improved access and cleaning. A TEPE Angle clip strip also offers a novel way of displaying the entire range in dental practices
- The Nano Water Flosser with the Plaque from Waterpik, which has been described as the “pinnacle of modern Water Flosser technology.”
- A piezo scaler developed by Ti-gons W&H that provides the patient with temperature-controlled irrigant spray thus avoiding irritation, even for sensitive teeth

Smile-on and the AOG would like to congratulate all the winners of the Clinical Innovations Award, and would like to thank everyone who helped make the Clinical Innovations Conference such a resounding success.
flawed and out of date. The Steele Review, which was commissioned by the last government, has already addressed the concerns raised around the 2006 NHS Contracts and a replacement proposal is already being piloted. The results of this will be used to help shape the future of the way NHS dentistry is delivered.

“The recommendation for the GDC to require that private practice is a right and structure is irrelevant. A dentist should provide a patient with a treatment plan, and as each patient’s plan is different, fixed pricing will lead to confusion and the possibility of disappointed patient expectations.”

“The report suggests that patients should be given direct access to dental hygienist and therapists. And whilst supporting this recommendation, as we believe it may facilitate a better understanding of oral health and encourage new patients and more referrals to the dentist, it must be done under caution.

“This report should not be taken as an end in itself. The future of dentistry in the UK and if taken in isolation it does not deliver a satisfactory solution for the patients or the dental health profession. The findings of the OFT report need to be included and reviewed as a part of the education, research and change which needs to happen to deliver the best quality dental care.”

David Worskett, Chair of the Association of Dental Groups (ADG) said: “The Association of Dental Groups, which represents the larger corporate providers of dentistry and Dental Groups, welcomes the OFT’s market study of dentistry in the UK and supports many of its key conclusions.

“In particular, ADG members, who account for some 10 per cent of NHS dentistry, support provision of clearer pricing information and are pleased to have been able to reach agreement with the OFT on ways of extending and improving this.”

“The ADG supports the OFT’s emphasis on choice and competition in dentistry. Members welcome the emphasis in the report on improving entry to the market for new providers and the support the OFT gives to increasing tendering. Long-term contracts facilitate investment and continuity of patient care but must not prevent commissioners from tackling poor quality. The OFT’s recommendations to the sector and to the Department of Health have the potential to improve quality for patients and help to drive up standards, particularly when taken in conjunction with the new NHS dental contract, which addresses many of the worst problems identified by the OFT in the current arrangements.

“Clinical opinion in the UK remains divided over the issue of direct access to some dental services and the ADG believes that it is clinical considerations that should determine whether to go down this route. The ADG therefore awaits with interest the work already being undertaken by the GDC on this.”

“It is of course vital that improving and extending this. A dental health profession. The findings of the OFT report need to be included and reviewed as a part of the education, research and change which needs to happen to deliver the best quality dental care.”

Dr McGregor won support for his demand that registration should not impose any expense on practices.

He said: “It’s a bit like medieval times, giving a piece of silver to the axe-man to ensure the sweep was sure. The ultimate cost of registration should not fall on GPs.”

The report also quoted Gloucestershire GP Steve Avis, who said he did not want his GP in Scotland, more than 100 exhibitors representing the cream of the UK dental trade have been showcasing the latest innovations, product developments, services and launched.

It has been agreed that GP’s should be spared the fee to register with CQC.

Dentist to clean shark’s teeth

Richard Howarth, a 45-year-old dentist from Dundee, took part in a shark diving challenge at the Blue Planet Aquarium, in Edinburgh, to raise funds for charity Dental Mavericks.

Richard has been invited to do the charity event at the Blue Planet Aquarium, in Edinburgh, to raise funds for charity Dental Mavericks.

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According to the report, the conference called on the CQC to make transparent and evidence-based criteria when deciding which GP practices should be spared the fee to register with CQC.
Editorial comment

The news today has been dominated by the Office of Fair Trading’s report into dentistry and the recommendations that they have made. People from all areas of the profession have been making their cases in a variety of media – radio, TV, newspapers etc – aiming to downplay what many have called the sensationalising of the report.

Yet again the drum of evil dentist misleading patients has been hanged, trying to drown out the fact that the majority of those who responded (and that was 3450 people) are actually satisfied with the dental care they receive.

Statistics, as we all know, can be twisted to prove anything. In my post-graduate days as a green and grateful marketing assistant for a firm selling telephone systems, I had to ring local businesses to find out about their systems for a university-based project. Treated as a loathsome cold calling salesperson, I had to take the figures from the nine companies who bothered to talk to me and make a presentation out of them. With the use of the times by five principal and some lovely pie charts, I made a fantastic presentation that bore no resemblance to the true situation of the telephone system usage of the city’s local businesses.

Sound familiar?

Thought so.

Dental training needs ‘urgent consideration’

The recent Health Select Committee report on Education, Training and Workforce Planning highlights a failure to adequately consider the dental issues that must be tackled, the British Dental Association (BDA) has said. This must be addressed urgently, the BDA believes, by proper consideration of how changes might affect dentistry and what must be done to support dental training.

The report, which notes a lack of vital detail in plans for the reform of the training and education of healthcare workers, has nonetheless failed to pick up properly on warnings in the BDA’s submission to the Health Select Committee inquiry, meaning that the issue of how the training of dentists and their teams will be paid for is still unclear. Detailed assurances that dental practices will not be expected to pay for training, a scenario that would be completely unacceptable, are urgently required, the BDA believes.

Dr Judith Husband, Chair of the BDA’s Education and Standards Committee, said: “This report reminds us that the Government’s plans are still lacking in important detail and require significant further development. Disappointingly, differences between medical and dental training remain unacknowledged and dental-specific issues have not been addressed.

“The BDA has been pressing for clarity on these issues. That they continue to be unresolved is a source of frustration and anxiety for dental practice owners. Dentists need to see a bold, unambiguous statement from Government that confirms that they are not to be landed with a huge financial burden for training future generations of the profession.”

The regime that shows plaque bacteria no mercy

Brushing and flossing/interdental cleaning are pivotal to oral hygiene. They displace and dislodge dental plaque bacteria that can cause gingivitis and periodontal disease. But bacteria from other areas of the mouth can recolonize on teeth quickly.

Using LISTERINE® after mechanical cleaning destroys oral bacteria effectively, killing up to 97% in vivo. This lowers the bacterial burden in the mouth and in plaque that reforms. And when used for 6 months, LISTERINE® can reduce plaque levels by up to 52% more than brushing and flossing alone. In addition, LISTERINE® Total Care products offer various levels of fluoride and other benefits to suit patients’ needs.

So recommend LISTERINE® as the final step in your patient’s daily regime, to finish the job started by mechanical cleaning.

Finish the job. Finish off with Listerine.

References:
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Buying smarter could save NHS £1.2bn

New ways of buying supplies and medical equipment could save the NHS £1.2 billion to reinvest in patient care, Health Minister Simon Burns announced today.

The NHS has been asked to ‘raise its game’ when purchasing goods and services, such as gloves and sutures, catering and energy, to save at least £1.2 billion over the next four years.

The Department of Health, working with the NHS Supply Chain, has also established a £500 million cash fund to enable the NHS to bulk buy large equipment such as:
- CT scanners
- MRI scanners
- ultrasound machines
- cancer treatment technology

Thanks to this fund, £1 billion has already been saved through orders that have been placed in advance via NHS Supply Chain with suppliers.

Traditionally, the NHS has struggled to make the most of its buying power as there was very little knowledge between local hospitals about their equipment needs. This fund allows the NHS to benefit from the savings of bulk buying expensive medical equipment via NHS Supply Chain.

Health Minister Simon Burns said: “It is important that when we know there are simple solutions, that is why the NHS needs to buy smarter and get the best value for the taxpayer for every penny spent. “We know that at least £1.2 billion could be saved over the next four years if the NHS innovatively changes the way it buys goods and services.

“Already, over £11 million has been saved through bulk buy discounts on the cash fund. “This is the first step to a smarter, smarter procurement in the NHS and we will be working closely with hospital trusts over the next six months to help them save even more money that can be reinvested in patient care.”

The recommended life of the majority of equipment, such as CT and MRI scanners is ten years, after which it either needs updating or replacing because of wear and tear. There are over 200 of these large scale items that will need replacing over the next couple of years if the NHS is able to significantly benefit from the discounts achieved via these bulk buy deals when replacing this important equipment.

By having the cash fund available, the NHS Supply Chain are able to secure better bulk buys deals for the NHS with suppliers. As equipment is purchased by trusts, payment for it will go back into the fund, effectively replenishing it for future use.

Andy Brown Managing Director of Business Solutions for NHS Supply Chain said: “This important development will allow NHS Supply Chain to group together the purchasing power of the NHS for this vital equipment, make large commitments to suppliers and bring improved planning to the management and replacement of this equipment across the NHS and with suppliers.”

Procurement plays a valuable role in driving improvements in cost and quality. Better procurement means these savings can be reinvested to benefit patients. Our ambition is to put in place a world-class procurement system in the NHS that is responsive to modern suppliers. This will enable the NHS to adopt existing innovations and stimulate new ones that will benefit patients and taxpayers.

In addition, hospitals are now being asked to drive forward improvements through a series of actions, being more transparent and assessing how they buy equipment and services, including:
- Publish the details of all contracts over £10,000
- Appoint a board executive to be accountable for procurement performance
- Regularly audit procurement

These actions in Raising Our Game will be taken forward immediately, whilst the strategy for developing world-class procurement will be published later this year.

It is vital that we have procurement that is not only better, but is world class. As a first step, Raising our Game sets out the actions that the NHS must take immediately. It should be focused on outcomes, not just cost, and must be responsive to creative ideas from suppliers, procurement specialists, clinicians and managers.

Transforming procurement in the NHS could enhance quality and value and the strategy for delivering this will be published later this year.

Trade a smile for a ‘smiley’

Want to take part in National Smile Month? Struggling for ideas? Budget too tight? Make the BDHF smile and they can help.

Campaign organisers the British Dental Health Foundation are offering five organisations the chance to win 300 ‘Smileys’ to aid their event, simply by making them smile.

So how does it work? Well, you can post your idea on their website, Facebook fan page, on Twitter or email them. They’ll pick out their favourite and voila – free ‘Smileys’. The contact details you will need can be found below.

Dr Nigel Carter, Chief Executive of the Foundation, said: “So far the campaign has generated an excellent response. It is extremely pleasing to see such a variety of organisations taking part in this year’s campaign.

“We hope by making so many ‘smileys’ available free of charge that more organisations will come forward and help us spread the messages of National Smile Month. All you need to do is make us smile!”

Submit your attempts to make the BDHF smile by 5pm on Friday 8 June at the following places to be in with a chance of winning:
- www.smilemonth.org/page/competition
- Facebook fan page – ‘National Smile Month’
- Twitter – @Smilemonth, @Da vidW_BDHF or @DavidA_BDHF
- Email – pr@dentalhealth.org

For further information please visit www.smilemonth.org or call 01788 539762.

“Grand Tour” to benefit Dentaid

Elizabeth May is a specialist in Special Care Dentistry currently working for the Somerset Primary Care Service. She plans to celebrate her retirement in June with a “Grand Tour”, in aid of Dentaid, visiting each of the county’s ten clinics in turn – about 200 miles – backpacking with a lightweight tent.

Starting on June 28th, the route will take her from her home in the Mendips to Frome, Yeovil, Chard, Taunton, Wilmington, Minehead, Bridgewater, Burnham-on-Sea, Wells, Glastonbury and home, covering about 25 miles per day, using many of the long distance footpaths in Somerset.

She writes: “Dentaid’s aims sum up many of the areas of dentistry in which I have been involved – the wider aspects of delivery of care to populations; issues of access and reaching out to the more vulnerable; prevention and education.”

Sponsorship donations to benefit Dentaid will be much appreciated and can be made at www.justgiving.com/elizabeth-may1.

Membership of Information Governance Review Panel announced

Fiona Caldicott, Chairwoman of the independent Information Governance Review, has selected the members of the panel who will conduct the review. The aim of the Review is to advise on how to achieve a better balance between protecting and sharing confidential personal information.

The members of the Review, entitled ‘Information: to share or not to share?’ have been drawn from patient and voluntary groups, clinical and local government professionals. Further information is available at www.Caldicott2.dh.gov.uk

Dame Fiona Caldicott, Chair of the Review, said: “I am delighted that the individuals who we invited to participate in this work have accepted enthusiastically. They will play a crucial role in ensuring we have effective connections with groups or individuals whose support we need if our recommendations are to be realistic and likely to lead to constructive and acceptable improvement. The breadth of panel members’ experience will guarantee us the necessary insights to identify the appropriate balance between sharing and protecting information.”

The full list of panel members is:
- Dame Fiona Caldicott, Chair
- John Carvel, former Social Af fairs Director at the Guardian
- Professor Mike Catchpole, Head of Epidemiology and Sur veillance, Health Protection Agency and Faculty of Public Health
- Terry Dafer, Director of Adult Social Care, Stockport Council and ADASS
- Janet Davies, Director of Nursing, RCN
- Professor David Haslam, President BMA
- Dr Alan Hassey, GP, clinician Academy of Medical Royal Colleges
- Dawn Monaghan, Strategic Liaison Group Manager, Informa tion Commissioner’s Office
- Terry Parkin, Director Peoples Services, Bright and Cove ntry Council
- Sir Nick Partridge, Chief Ex-
The key to a healthy smile lies in the infant and toddler years

Leaning experts in toddler feeding and dental health have united to highlight the importance of diet, positive feeding habits and good oral health routines in the early years, as part of National Smile Month (20 May-20 June). Around a quarter of a million children starting primary school across the UK will already have tooth decay and the Infant & Toddler Forum (ITF) and British Dental Health Foundation are working together to raise awareness about how to avoid this wholly preventable problem.

Those who learn good habits from an early age are more likely to carry them into adulthood, and the ITF – specialists in food and feeding in the under threes – has produced a sheet of simple tips to help families take positive steps towards their toddlers’ good dental health. Endorsed by the Foundation, the practical, evidence-based advice includes tips on how to care for children’s teeth – including diet, bottle-feeding, tooth brushing, fluoride and medicines.

Advice around what and what not to eat can also be confusing; the UK Royal College of Surgeons Dental Faculty recently reported that half of five year olds show signs of enamel erosion caused by fruit, particularly citrus fruits and encouraged schools to ban fruit juice and to offer milk and water instead.

Judy More, paediatric dietician and member of the ITF, says: “It is important to give young children the opportunity to learn to like water as a drink by offering it. Fruit juice, like other sweet drinks, causes tooth decay when drunk frequently throughout the day. If fruit juice is given as a drink it should be well diluted; for example one part juice to about six to ten parts water and served in a glass, cup or beaker, not a bottle.

“Sweet food, sweet drinks and fruit juices should only be given at four occasions throughout the day (eg three meals and one snack) to minimise the times teeth are exposed to sugar and acid. Water and milk are the only drinks that should be offered between meals and snacks.”

Dr Nigel Carter, Chief Executive of the Foundation says, “Educating children from an early age can reap huge benefits, as the development of a good oral healthcare routine begins at a young age.”

For more information on protecting toddlers from tooth decay, download the ITF’s free ‘Protecting Toddlers from Tooth Decay’ Guidance & Tips sheet for families or Factsheet for professionals working with parents.

For further information about National Smile Month and to view resources supporting the campaign visit: www.smilemonth.org.uk

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www.dmg-dental.com

*The Dental Advisor, Vol. 23, No. 3, p. 2-4*
A long career dedicated to the dental nursing profession- Jean Smith

Dr Diana Wincott MBE, pays tribute to M Jean Smith MBE: Following the Second World War there was great difficulty in recruiting suitable dental chairside staff. There was no formal training available, pay was poor and the term 'Attendant' often deterred suitable applicants from entering the work.

The Dental Nurses and Assistants Society of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, established in 1940, sought to influence and act to secure proper training and pay for their members and protect the character and status of dental nurses. It was in this environment that the young Jean Smith found herself.

Jean passed the National Examination in 1945 at the Leeds centre. At that time the Panel of Examiners consisted of six dentists.

In 1948 Jean replied to an advertisement for a Secretary to the Dental Nurses and Assistants Society who urgently needed a new secretary; the advertisement stated that, unless someone came forward at once, the society would cease to function. Fortunately Jean Smith was appointed!

Jean made a huge commitment to her work and succeeded in increasing the number of courses, candidates and examiners, ensuring that the professional status of dental nurses was promoted. She became widely recognised as the figurehead of the profession.

Then in January 1954 the British Dental Association and the British Dental Nurses Association agreed to form a Joint Committee.

Recommendations on pay and conditions for dental nurses in General Dental Practice were issued in an advice sheet and in 1964 a National Voluntary Register was established. Jean Smith administered the register and became the first registrar.

Succeeding years were occupied with ever increasing workloads and emerging issues of fluoridation, dental health education and post qualification courses. It became clear that there was a need to look at creating an improved career structure for dental nurses within the dental team; this was pursued with the BDA and representatives from Area Health Authorities and the Department of Health.

Jean's style was always calm and considered. She was able to read a situation and make timely judgements for the benefit of the profession and it is through Jean's considerable contribution that we now call ourselves a profession. This service to dentistry was recognised in 1975 when Jean was awarded the MBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours. (pictured)

In 1978 the Association was officially entered on the records as a Trade Union. Pay negotiations continued with the BDA and through the Whitley Council. In 1985 a campaign was launched and MPs approached to support a fair wages resolution. Jean prepared the submission made to the Nuffield Foundations research into the Training and Future Role of Dental Nurses.

Jean was determined to get proper recognition for Dental Nurses and in 1980 appointments were made to the GDC to set up a group of stakeholders to standardise their training and education. The Dental Nurse Standards and Training Advisory Board was set up in 1981 and the National Voluntary Register was taken under the auspices of the GDC.

A report was prepared and published in 1994 outlining, for the first time, the role and training objectives for dental nurses. It is widely acknowledged that much of the work in developing this document was undertaken by Jean and three other dental nurse representatives.

Jean Smith retired from the Association on 51st December 1985 but continued to work for the Examining Board and in the development of Occupational Standards.

Jean Smith's impact on the Dental Nursing Profession is without equal. She leaves a daughter Jennifer, grandchildren Diane and Joeli and great grandchildren Natalie, Hannah, Isobel and Alexandra.