Patience is a virtue

New research has shown that one in four post-menopausal women is more likely to snap quicker than women’s. When asked how long they would wait before walking off in a huff, five out of ten women would wait up to a minute, but only one in ten women said they would leave this quickly, however, the research also showed that men tend to believe they are more patient than women. On average, Brits’ patience lasts just two and a half minutes before they snap. A third of the people surveyed said they often found themselves complaining to complete strangers. Some of the things that made people lose their cool were being put on hold, waiting for people who are late, delayed trains, trying to get an appointment with a dentist or GP, and children repeatedly asking the same question.

Menopausal tooth loss

New research forecasts that over one in four post-menopausal women are likely to suffer from tooth loss over a five-year period. A study of more than 1,000 post-menopausal women indicates that around one in four are likely to suffer tooth loss over a five-year period, however, the risk increases to nearly 90 per cent if other risk factors are present, especially diabetes and if they smoke. The American-based study found that 293 post-menopausal women out of 1,021 (28.7 per cent) had suffered from tooth loss over the five-year study period. Previous studies have potentially linked the menopause to tooth loss because of factors such as bone loss and oestrogen deficiency. The research was published in Community Dentistry and Oral Epidemiology.

Teeth whitening salon offers raises patient issue and patient safety

Following an advertisement placed recently on Gumson by Star smile, a company who are offering whitening treatments that are performed by non-dental professionals, the question of patient safety has once again been brought into the limelight.

On their site Starsmile claim they offer “the same professional service and treatment as a dentist but at a fraction of the cost,” they also claim to provide a health check of the patients teeth and provide aftercare; however, they are neither dentists nor dental professionals. During the treatment video that is displayed on the Starsmile website, the ‘technicians’ are constantly in contact with the teeth and mouth; however, although stated as part of their procedure, there was no ‘health check’ either before or after treatment.

In addition to this, Star smile also claimed how one of the ‘highlights’ of the treatment was that the procedure and the technology were recommended by the British Dental Association.

Further problems begin to emerge as Starsmile make it clear in the FAQ section of its website that tooth whitening is not provided by GDC registrants, saying: “We are not dentists, our teeth whitening procedure is a cosmetic treatment carried out by fully-trained Starsmile technicians.”

In light of the advertisement the BDA wrote to the General Dental Council (GDC) to ask them to take action to ensure patient safety is upheld.

Stuart Johnson, Chair of the BDA’s Representative Body said: “This advert is very concerning in that it encourages the public to get tooth whitening done by non-dental professionals. The GDC’s recent campaign sought to warn the public against tooth whitening being conducted illegally by unregulated persons, and highlighted the fact that the procedure should only be undertaken by a dentist.

The BDA wants patients to feel completely safe and know that they are being treated by a registered professional who is fully trained to undertake this procedure. We’ve called on the GDC to take action on this matter.”

The law currently states that under the Dentists Act 1984 it is an offence for non-registrants to practise or be prepared to practise dentistry. However, it has been noted by the GDC that several companies which produce tooth whitening products maintain that: since tooth whitening products are covered by the European Council Directive on Cosmetic Products 76/768/EEC, their agents are carrying out a cosmetic procedure and not practising dentistry.

A statement from the GDC on non-registrants who carry out tooth whitening stated: The Council is aware and concerned that tooth whitening is being carried out in a growing number of salons, clinics and shopping centres by non-GDC registrants and indeed is being offered to people in their own homes. It is also aware that the standard of treatment being offered is far below that which is required by its registrants. For some time the Council has been exploring different approaches to tackling this problem with a view to ensuring that such procedures are only carried out by regulated individuals and in suitable locations. Given the legal complexities involved, however, this has been a lengthy process.

Dental Tribune was unable to contact Starsmile for their take on the issue.

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