Clearance for HIV positive healthcare workers

The Department of Health has announced a system of health clearance for healthcare workers living with HIV whose disease is adequately controlled, so that they are able to return to their chosen profession

In August 2015, Chief Medical Officer Sally Davies announced that healthcare workers who are HIV-positive will be able to return to practice, and now the Department of Health announced a system of health clearance, setting those wheels in motion.

In January 2011 the DoH said that it was reviewing its policy on the prevention of HIV-positive surgeons and dentists from carrying out ‘exposure-prone procedures’, and now the day has come for the UK to fall in line with most other Western countries, and give these healthcare workers their professional back.

As Kevin Lewis, Dental Director of Dental Protection put it: “After decades of living in fear and dealing with prejudice, dentists can finally return to their professional calling”.

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As Kevin Lewis, Dental Director of Dental Protection put it: “After decades of living in fear and dealing with prejudice, dentists can finally return to their professional calling, although regrettable it is too late for some to do so. Patient safety should be at the forefront of healthcare, but the original rules were introduced as a reaction to a mysterious and viral load, and are regularly monitored by their treating and occupational health physicians.

Those with HIV wishing to perform exposure-prone procedures will need to be registered on a confidential national register, the UKAP-OHR. An interim paper-based version is being made available to allow healthcare workers to register, whilst the web-based version is in development and will be made available in April 2014.

Humans can smell disease
Humans can smell sickness in someone whose immune system is highly active, according to a new study from Karolinska Institutet. According to the research published in *Psychological Science*, there is anecdotal and scientific evidence suggesting that diseases we have particular smells. A person who suffers from diabetes, for example, is known to sometimes have a breath smelling of acetone. For the study, participants were injected with either a form of lipopolysaccharide (LPS) – a toxin made from bacteria and known to ramp up an immune response – or a saline solution. The volunteers wore tight t-shirts to absorb sweat containing odorant molecules connected to immune response over the course of four hours. A separate group of participants were instructed to smell the sweat samples. Overall, they rated t-shirts from the LPS group as having a more intense and unpleasant smell than the other t-shirts.

New gum created to fight US Army's plaque problem
U.S. military scientists have created a ‘combat gum’ that kills the bacteria that cause cavities, according to the *New York Daily News*. The gum has been produced to help reduce dental problems among Army recruits. All necessary dental work must be done before the troops deploy, which could mean they miss training time. If toothaches occur overseas, the soldiers have to be pulled to the nearest dentist, wherever that may be. Scientists have spent seven years on the gum, which contains an ingredient that enhances the body’s natural ability to kill the bacteria that cause plaque. Fighting tooth decay and gum disease could be as easy as chewing the gum for 20 minutes after meals.

A problem shared is a problem halved
One way of coping with stress is to share your feelings with someone who is having a similar emotional reaction to the same scenario, according to a new study from Sarah Townsend from the USC Marshall School of Business.

“For instance, when you’re putting together an important presentation or working on a high-stakes project, these are situations that can be threatening and you may experience heightened stress,” said Townsend. “But talking with a colleague who shares your emotional state can help decrease this stress.”

www.dental-tribune.co.uk
New BDIA marketing campaign launched

A new marketing campaign promoting The British Dental Trade Association’s (BDTA) re-brand to the British Dental Industry Association (BDIA) to the dental team has launched.

Tony Reed, BDIA Executive Director, explained: “BDIA encourages aspiring dentists to choose BDIA as they appreciate the diversity of dentistry beyond the direct ‘trade’ including banks, insurance companies, publishing companies as well as suppliers of services and technologies to the dental industry amongst its membership. The new advertising campaign is incredibly simple in its approach and hopefully it will ensure the Association’s new name is instantly recognisable throughout the dental sector.”

Since 1925, the Association has played a crucial role within the industry as a not-for-profit organisation, using its funds solely for the purpose of developing dentistry for the benefit of its members, the profession and the public.

Today, BDIA plays a pivotal role in driving quality standards within the dental industry; equipping its members with exclusive information and statistics to provide greater insight and opportunities for networking and collaboration to address market challenges; shaping the future of the wider dental industry through its proactive engagement with relevant bodies; organising exhibitions that deliver a key focal point for the industry and the profession to conduct business for mutual benefit, as well as providing highly regarded training for the industry ensuring a thorough understanding of the essentials of dentistry.

To find out if your suppliers are members of BDIA or if you would like to become a BDIA member, please visit www.bdia.org.uk or call 01494 782873.

Dental nurse stuck off following ‘number of convictions’

A London-based dental nurse has been struck off by the General Dental Council (GDC) following a public hearing into a number of allegations including convictions for theft and failure to declare convictions and cautions.

The allegations against Adrienne Ford were heard by the GDC’s Professional Conduct Committee (PCC) in December 2015.

Between 1985 and 2007, Adrienne was convicted of theft a number of times, received a caution for an offence of possession of a Class B Drug (cannabis resin), and was convicted of theft and attempted theft. She also committed two offences of welfare benefit fraud between 2005 and 2007.

She failed to register with the GDC by 50th July 2008, the date by which dental nurses were required to be registered. She worked at The Pembridge Road Dental Practice as a dental nurse on days after 50th July 2006 and before 23 June 2010 without registration. When she did eventually register with the GDC, she declared that she had not been convicted of any criminal offences.

Furthermore, between July 2008 and May 2012 Adrienne was not indemnified or insured in respect of claims from patients arising out of her practice as a dental nurse.

The GDC’s PCC told Adrienne: “You have demonstrated a history of criminal conduct involving dishonesty spanning three decades. You subsequently made a false declaration to the GDC for the purposes of obtaining registration as a dental professional. Your repeated dishonesty and criminal conduct goes to your character and is therefore, in the Committee’s view, very difficult to remedy. Moreover, there is a need to declare and uphold standards within the profession. You have demonstrated repeat conduct which is capable of bringing the profession into disrepute.”

Hundreds of students without foundation training place

According to a release issued by COPDEND, each applicant was asked to state a preference for each of the 71 training schemes and 88 per cent on one of their top 10 schemes.

Further training places are expected to become available later in the year.

Dr Judith Husband, Chair of Ethics, Education and the Dental Team for the BDA, said: “The conclusion of the first stage of DFT allocations marks the beginning of a difficult and anxious time for those who have not been awarded a place. Those currently completing their studies must remain focused on securing a place by concentrating on doing as much work as possible, which is easier said than done. I urge all those individuals to seek the support of their tutors and to contact the BDA for help and information.”

“The BDA continues to press for guaranteed DFT places for all UK graduates, as we believe it is unfair to the young people aspiring to work in the NHS and the taxpayer alike that they should have to defer the chance to do so.”

E-cigarettes banned for under-18s

The law change will be introduced in Parliament this week as an amendment to the Children and Families Bill.

Ministers also plan to make it illegal for adults to buy traditional cigarettes for anyone under 18. The new rules, which could be in force by the autumn, may mean that anyone caught buying cigarettes for a child could be given a £50 fixed penalty notice or a fine of up to £2,500.

The name change of the UK’s principal industry body, which represents more than 80 per cent of the dental industry, has driven a complete brand refresh. The new advertising creative explains the rationale behind the name change as the Association drops ‘Trade’ and gains ‘Industry’, to convey the increasing diversity of its membership, in addition to highlighting the benefits of choosing to do business with quality-conscious BDIA member companies.

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Fluoridated water does not increase bone cancer risk

Fluoride levels in drinking water do not lead to a greater risk of primary bone cancer, a new study has found.

Researchers at Newcastle University found that higher levels of natural or artificial fluoride in drinking water in the UK had no impact on the incidence of either osteosarcoma or Ewing’s sarcoma in people 0-49.

Dr Richard McNally of the Institute of Health & Society at Newcastle University led the study. He said: “This is the largest study that has ever been conducted examining the possible association between fluoride in drinking water and risk of osteosarcoma or Ewing sarcoma.

“Karen Blakely used sophisticated software to link together data on the geographical distributions of bone cancer incidence and fluoride levels. Statistical modelling of these data showed that there was no evidence of an association.”

Andy Hall, chairman of Bone Cancer Research Trust’s (BCRT) Independent Scientific Advisory Committee, said: “Bone cancer is diagnosed in about 500 patients every year in the UK and Ireland, many of whom are children. However, at present, very little is known of the factors which trigger the disease.

“The study funded by the Bone Cancer Research Trust and reported by the team in Newcastle provides very important reassurance to patients and their relatives that fluoride is not involved in this process and shows that more research is needed to find out how this potentially devastating form of cancer can be prevented.”

Fluoridated water has no impact on incidence of bone cancer
**Fukushima children’s teeth to be checked for radiation impact**

The Fukushima Prefecture Dental Association will spearhead efforts to determine whether children’s teeth contain the radioactive isotope strontium-90 following the meltdown from the Fukushima nuclear plant in 2011, according to the Japan Times.

Similar to calcium, strontium-90 tends to be absorbed by the bones and teeth once it enters the body. It is widely believed to cause bone cancer and leukaemia, and cannot be detected by whole body radiation counters.

The teeth of children aged five to 15 will be checked if extracted during regular dental visits, and the research will start by examining the teeth for cesium or other isotopes. For the other teeth, checks for radioactive isotopes will be carried out in groups of ten, rather than on individual teeth.

The education ministry released readings for strontium detected in the Fukushima area in September 2011 that said the amount present in soil was less than a hundredth of the cesium present.

Noboru Takamura from Nagasaki University said: “Based on past radiation data, any detected amount would be extremely small. If that is proved by the research, people will feel relief. I want the researchers to take the time to explain the results to the children whose teeth will be examined.”

**Learn how to save a life at the Dentistry Show**

The Mouth Cancer Foundation will be at stand F57 at this year’s Dentistry Show, where delegates can learn how to save in life in just two minutes.

Dental practices in the UK should be performing thorough mouth cancer checks on their patients. This quick detailed examination takes just two minutes, yet very few patients are aware they should receive this at least once a year and it is suspected that some dental practices are still not doing it.

The scheme is open to any dental practitioner registered with the GDC or any dental practice whose clinicians are registered with the GDC. For more information, email info@mouthcancerfoundation.org or call 01924 950 950.

The scheme is a ‘Two minutes to save a life’ screening protocol that every dentist should be able to include in their routine examinations in order to increase early detection rates and save lives.

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**Lords backs ban on smoking in cars with children**

The House of Lords has backed a Labour plan to ban smoking in cars carrying children, despite opposition from the government.

According to the BBC, government backbenchers will not be pressed to reverse the change in the Commons. Instead, they will have a free vote on the amendment when the bill returns from the Lords.

The amendment to the Children and Families Bill was brought forward by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath, Lord Faulkner and Baroness Hughes.

Lord Hunt said: “I was very surprised by research that has been identified by the British Lung Foundation, which shows that a single cigarette smoked in a moving car with a window half open exposes a child in the centre of a back seat to around two-thirds as much second-hand smoke as in an average smoke-filled pub of days gone by.”

This level increased to 11 times when the car was not moving with the windows closed.

Conservative peer Lord Cormack argued that any law which “brings the state into the private space of individuals should be deplored”.

However, Lord Hunt said: “There are more important principles than that. One for me is the need for child protection. Unlike most adults, children lack the freedom to decide when and how they travel, they lack the authority most adults have to ask people not to smoke in their company.”

Director of pro-smoking group Forest, Simon Clark, said: “Legislation is completely unnecessary. Most adult smokers accept that smoking in a car with children present is inconsiderate and the overwhelming majority choose not to. Education, not legislation, is the way forward.”

**Leicester MP calls for sugar ban in schools**

Leicester MP Keith Vaz is campaigning for sugar and drinks to be banned in all schools in the city, according to the Leicester Mercury.

Mr Vaz said: “For too long, food and drink manufacturers have misled parents about the amount of sugar added to their products. These hidden calories are contributing to an epidemic of childhood obesity.”

He has written a letter to the Leicester’s education cabinet member, councillor Vi Dempster, urging the education authority to ban sugar from school’s canteens and vending machines.

Valence Primary School in Dagenham banned fruit juice, and Mr Vaz wants to follow this example.

Councillor Dempster said: “All of our menus are devised with the help of a dietician – all of our recipes meet Government guidelines.

“Over the past few years, our menus have been reviewed to reduce the amount of sugar that’s used. Given the levels of child­hood obesity in the city, I absolutely support the points Keith Vaz raises about sugar.”
Two of the UK’s most respected education and academic organisations have joined forces to provide an innovative, technology driven MSc in Restorative and Aesthetic Dentistry. Healthcare Learning Smile-on, the UK’s pre-eminent healthcare education provider and the University of Manchester, one of the top twenty-five universities in the world, have had the prescience to collaborate in providing students with the best of everything – lecturers, online technology, live sessions and support.

The programme is designed to encourage the student to take responsibility for his/her own learning. The emphasis is on a self-directed learning approach.

The majority of the learning resources on this programme will be online. The masters will combine interactive distance learning, webinars, live learning and print.

Students will be able to communicate with a diverse multi-ethnic global community of peers, with who they will also share residential get-togethers in fantastic settings around the world.

This innovative programme establishes the academic and clinical parameters and standards for restorative and aesthetic dentistry. Students will leave with a world recognised MSc.

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Blackpool defers decision on fluoridated milk

Blackpool councillors have deferred their plans to introduce milk containing fluoride into local primary schools, according to the Blackpool Gazette.

The council met on 27 January 2014 to make a decision on whether school children should have fluoridated milk, but decided to hold off introducing it.

Blackpool’s director of public health, Dr Arif Rajpura, said: “We have decided to defer the decision on fluoridated milk.

“A study which took place in Newcastle showed slightly higher levels of fluoride than expected in children who used the milk. Public Health England has asked that any local authority considering a decision on using fluoridated milk to await the findings of its study.

“The information was only provided to us today [27 January] and we will look at the findings and make a decision on fluoridated milk in the coming weeks when we have a chance to review it.”

If the council goes ahead with the plans, parents will be given the chance to opt out of the scheme.

Councillor Sarah Riding, cabinet member for health, said: “The issue for us is that unfortunately children’s teeth in Blackpool are some of the worst in the country.

“Introducing fluoride would not be something that happens in isolation – we would continue with all our initiatives in schools around brushing teeth.”

Paediatricians should manage dental trauma, says report

Non-dentists can play a key role in preventing and treating dental trauma, according to a new report by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

In guidelines published in Pediatrics, the academy lays out the basics of prevention, diagnosis, and treatment for injured teeth.

In children six years of age and younger, oral injuries are the second most common injury, writes Martha Ann Keels, chief of pediatric dentistry at Duke University, and her colleagues. Anyone who sees children in urgent care settings needs to be prepared to treat dental trauma because often no dentist is available and time may be of the essence.

The authors write that physicians who care for children should try to prevent injuries to their patients’ teeth by recommending safety measures. They should also tell their patients to wear mouth guards during sports.