New report says parents to blame for children’s poor oral health

By DTI

MANCHESTER, UK: A lack of knowledge about the importance of early oral health care measures and the availability of treatment among parents has led to almost every seventh child aged 8 or under in the UK having never seen a dentist, according to a new report by dental group mydentist.

The report is in line with new findings by the Faculty of Dental Surgery at the Royal College of Surgeons of England earlier this week that oral health among the nation’s youth is worsening, with more children than ever sent to hospitals for tooth extractions owing to severe decay. While the Royal College of Surgeons has identified increasing sugar consumption as the main contributor, the mydentist survey also found that one in ten of those children who had actually seen a dentist had at least one filling done, resulting in an estimated burden of £22 million annually for the National Health Service.

The report is based on a survey of nearly 2,000 parents who were asked a series of questions about their children’s oral health as well as their level of knowledge and understanding of how important it is. The survey found that only one in four children aged 8 or under in the UK had been taken to see a dentist within the last year, with one in ten of those children who had actually seen a dentist having at least one filling done, resulting in an estimated burden of £22 million annually for the National Health Service.

Among its findings are that only a quarter of the children of the parents surveyed brushed their teeth for the recommended two minutes twice daily. Many parents also failed to identify things that are actually beneficial to their children’s health, such as fluoride, which is 10 per cent considered to be harmful.

On the contrary, almost a fifth of the parents thought that acidic beverages like fruit smoothies, a major contributor to tooth erosion, would benefit their children’s teeth. The mydentist survey was conducted among 2,000 parents throughout the UK. It found that those in Wales were most likely to take their children to see a dentist early on. Children living in the North West also scored higher in terms of personal oral hygiene, brushing their teeth for longer than youngsters in any other region.

Despite more children in the UK suffering from dental problems, many have never been taken to a dentist.

Maltreatment case settled with five figure number

By DTI

CHELMSFORD, UK: A dentist from Benfleet in Essex is reported to have paid an amount of £16,000 to settle a lawsuit by a former patient over allegations of maltreatment. Charges against him included having damaged the facial nerves of the 49-year-old civil servant, Graham Hancock, during a third molar extraction at his dental practice in Chelmsford.

Hancock told the Essex Chronicle that he had suffered from continuous facial pain, numbness and loss of taste after having undergone the procedure in late 2013. After his condition worsened, he was sent to King’s College Hospital in London for specialist treatment.

The case was taken to court after other oral surgeons found the dentist’s work to have been unprofessional. Among other things, he failed to take a radiograph to identify the risks of the procedure and to inform the patient of other treatment options. Hancock’s solicitors said currently working at a dental practice in Basildon, the dentist is reported to have not admitted liability despite having agreed to pay the five-figure settlement.

He has also been under surveillance by the General Dental Council on several charges of misconduct and poor professional performance, including allegations of not having maintained appropriate standards of infection control and having exposed patients to dental panoramic radiography without justification while working at his former practice in Southend-on-Sea between September 2010 and October 2011.

Halitosis association launched

In order to address the lack of scientific data on halitosis, the International Association for Halitosis Research (IAHR) was officially formed on 5 June at a meeting of leading halitosis researchers during EuroPerio8 in London. As new insights into the problem of bad breath are rapidly expanding, the IAHR aims to promote research on all aspects of halitosis and its related issues and to distribute and publicise the research. “Not only do we need to create awareness among the public, but we should also enhance the information and treatment advice for professionals,” president Dr Edwin Winkel from the Netherlands said.

Despite affecting a vast number of people worldwide, sound epidemiological data on halitosis is rare. While only 10 per cent of those who suffer from bad breath are attributable to tongue coating, gingivitis, periodontitis and other conditions in the oral cavity, a minority of cases are caused by systemic diseases or conditions.
Leeds collaborates over future of oral health care in Europe

By DTI

LEEDS, UK: Dental treatments cost an estimated £79 billion a year across the EU peril dental diseases are almost entirely preventable. A new research project, funded through a €6 million grant from the EU, aims to bring about a shift in dental care practices, from a focus on treating teeth by extraction and fillings to more effective oral health care treatments to prevent disease in the first place.

The four-year project will be led by the University of Leeds, in conjunction with the Academic Centre for Dentistry Amsterdam and Heidelberg University, in collaboration with NHS England, as well as universities and dental insurers from across Europe. Using de-identified data from millions of health records across Europe, the researchers will work with dental professionals and insurers to identify effective strategies for preventing disease in each country. Providing continuous feedback to shape best practice, a set of key performance indicators will be developed against which dentists and health care systems can measure themselves.

“The World Health Organization has said that dental diseases are the most common chronic diseases known to man. We want to change this,” said Prof. Helen Whelton, Dean of the University of Leeds’s School of Dentistry and project lead. “The hope is that, by continually assessing and feeding back the performance of dental professionals and healthcare systems in keeping teeth healthy, it will foster change in practice and encourage a move to more preventive dental care.”

“We will be using secure, de-identified medical records to develop a model with a focus on preventing dental problems, which gives dentists and health systems the ability to measure their success in making patients healthier,” Whelton explained. “We will be looking at things such as how long teeth remain healthy with no need for treatment or, at country level, the amount spent on extractions each year. This information can be compared across different systems and countries.”

The project will have access to eight European patient record databases from countries including Britain, Denmark, Germany, Hungary, Ireland and the Netherlands. In addition to hearing the views of professionals and insurers, the project will consult with patients in the participating countries to identify their preferences and gain their perspectives on the dental care they receive.

“This is a fantastic example of collaboration between universities, the public sector and the private sector, with the aim of improving the dental health of an entire continent, and we hope this will feed in to the reform of healthcare systems globally,” Whelton concluded.

Most Brits avoid showing their teeth in photographs

By DTI

LONDON, UK: Say “cheese!” Although it is meant to make people smile, this cue apparently induces the opposite in many British people. According to a new survey, eight out of ten worry about how their teeth look in photographs, with almost every second person wishing he or she could change the appearance of his or her dentition altogether.

The research, which was initiated by global health care company Bupa, surveyed 2,000 people on their dental habits and attitudes to brushing their teeth. As the answers revealed, the British are far from being a tooth-pride nation. An astonishing 81 per cent of the respondents worried about the appearance of their teeth in photographs, with 28 per cent of them refusing to smile in pictures at all for fear of their teeth looking unattractive in photographs or on social media.

Fourty-two per cent of those polled confessed that their teeth were the number one thing they would change about themselves, 35 per cent admitted to being embarrassed about the appearance of their teeth and 65 per cent said they wished they were whiter and cleaner.

It would appear that the ever-present sparkling celebrity teeth are fuelling these feelings of dental inadequacy, as 53 per cent said they feel pressured to have impeccable teeth because of those displayed by modern celebrities and public figures.

Shying away from smiling in photographs is one thing, but the British’s anxiety about their teeth appears to be linked to a serious lack of oral hygiene knowledge. Of those surveyed, 47 per cent admitted that they do not know how to brush their teeth properly. The poll further found that half of the respondents do not use mouthwash, 9 per cent share a toothbrush with someone else and, alarmingly, 29 per cent do not even use toothpaste. One in five also admitted that they regularly use chewing gum as a substitute for brushing their teeth.

Commenting on the research, Dr Steven Preddy, Dental Clinical Director of Bupa Dental Services, said: “Worryingly, our research highlights how many people are ignoring the art of brushing their teeth properly. Modern, state-of-the-art electronic toothbrushes and interdental tools provide a wealth of different ways to clean. So there should be no excuse for not brushing for two minutes twice every day, and in conjunction with seeing a dentist regularly, we encourage people not to neglect their teeth and gums!”

In terms of UK regions, respondents from South East England were the most responsible teeth cleaners with 74 per cent brushing twice daily as recommended, followed by Scotland (67 per cent) and Northern Ireland (64 per cent).

The worst offending region was Yorkshire and the Humber region, where only 53 per cent of respondents brush twice a day.
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Dental Circle meets in London to celebrate future of professional social media

By DTI

LONDON, UK: With temperatures skyrocketing last month in the capital, the organisers of Dental Circle could not have chosen a better time to hold its first major networking event. Consequently, hundreds of members of the professional social media website met in London to share ideas and celebrate the achievements of the ambitious platform.

And there was plenty to celebrate at the event sponsored by dental implant solutions provider Struumann. In just one year after launching, the site has attracted over 3,000 members, a number that might not seem too high for a professional network, but one that fits in perfectly with the ethos founders Amit and Dev Patel had in mind when launching the site. Instead of being open to anyone, like Facebook or Twitter, the network works similar to exclusive social media sites like ELEQT, but without the hurdle of having to pay one’s way into it. Professionals interested in joining Dental Circle just have to register with the General Dental Council and want to be part of an ever-growing network of professionals.

“In the current employment market, young dentists are struggling to find jobs and make the right connections. Specialists too are receiving fewer referrals and principal dentists are flooded with ambiguous CVs from across the world,” explains Amit Patel, who is also a London-based dentist. “Dental Circle is the professional network for dental professionals, with the aim of connecting all dentists, therapists, hygienists, nurses and laboratory technicians.”

Once approved, members are given a personal profile page, which they can customise with their interests and achievements, special interest groups to explore or deepen their knowledge of different aspects of dentistry. These are led by mentors, including clinical gurus such as Chris Orr and Zaki Kanaan.

“Young dentists are more ambitious than ever, looking to advance their careers through courses and investing in dental products and practices early on. Our goal was to create a website where they can find support from a variety of professional sources,” Patel said.

In addition to its online presence, which includes common social media websites like Facebook, Dental Circle has recently begun organising roadshow events that give members and other professionals the opportunity to network with prominent experts, as well as to try out the latest technologies and tools. Three of these events, intended to cover clinical topics ranging from short-term orthodontics to posterior direct restorations, are scheduled for later this year in London, Leeds and Manchester.

“The Dental Circle Roadshow events are a new concept, aimed at young dentists, helping to build foundations, but also advance current techniques,” said Dev Patel.

Registrations for each of the one-day events, which are worth seven hours of continuing professional development, are still being accepted. Professionals interested in attending the work-shops are also invited to register at dentalcircle.com/roadshow.

Capital prepares for International Orthodontic Congress

By DTI

LONDON, UK: The International Orthodontic Congress (IOC) is held once every five years and offers one of the world’s largest and most important opportunities for orthodontists to work with prominent experts, as well as to try out the latest technologies and tools. Three of these events, intended to cover clinical topics ranging from short-term orthodontics to posterior direct restorations, are scheduled for later this year in London, Leeds and Manchester.

The organiser expect to attract more than 7,000 people. About 4,000 participants have already signed up for the event. It will be officially opened on 27 September at the ExCel, London Exhibition and Convention Centre in the heart of London’s Royal Docks, with easy access to central London. The venue is part of a 100-acre site which includes three on-site above-ground railway stations and easy access to the underground network and London City Airport.

In order to cater for both orthodontists and other dental health professionals, such as dental technicians, hygienists, dental attendants and office staff, the WFO will be offering two scientific programmes that will run in parallel. In addition to these programmes, a World Village area will take place, which will comprise of seven parallel, full-day programmes. To date, distinguished speakers have already confirmed their participation.

The congress lectures and presentations will be held in English, however, simultaneous translation will be provided for some sessions. Alongside the scientific programmes, attendees will have the opportunity to learn more about new products and technological developments at the accompanying exhibition that will run for the duration of the congress.

In addition, during the course of the congress, several social events are planned for the evenings, including an international reception at the famous Madame Tussaud’s wax museum and a gala dinner at the Old Billingsgate, an extraordinary and unique venue that is situated in a prime position on the River Thames which was once the world’s largest fish market. Tickets for these events can be purchased upon registration.

According to the WFO, one of the reasons the congress is taking place in London is because of the city’s heritage and its attractions on offer. As a city of history and culture, delegates will have numerous opportunities to enjoy many of the sights, including castles and palaces, historical buildings and monuments, theatres and opera houses and other well-known places that were described by famous authors, such as William Shakespeare and Charles Dickens.

Online registration for the event is open until 17 September online but delegates can also register on-site at the registration desk on 27 September.