Smiles: London, York & Liverpool rated best

Results of new survey revealed on occasion of National Smile Month

By DTI

LONDON, UK: Brits may not like to show their smiles very often, according to research, but when it comes to ranking them, most consider Londoners, Yorkers and Liverpudlians to have the nicest smiles. All three cities scored highest in a recent poll commissioned by the Oral Health Foundation as part of National Smile Month.

The foundation asked more than 2,000 Brits where they thought the best smiles in Britain are, out of 45 of the country’s most populous urban areas.

While the capital and the two northern cities came out top, smiles in Salford, Wolverhampton and Lichfield were rated the lowest. Overall, the North of England scored significantly higher in the survey with cities like Manchester, Leeds and Newcastle all ending up in the top 10. However, southern cities like Bath, Bristol and Cambridge also came out high on the list.

“London may have a reputation for being a place that is very short on smiles but this couldn’t be further from the truth,” remarked Chief Executive of the Oral Health Foundation Dr Nigel Carter, OBE, on the poll. “It shows that quantity isn’t always related to quality and when London residents do choose to smile their grins are showing the rest of the country the way forward.”

The survey findings were released on the first day of National Smile Month, the UK’s largest and longest running charity campaign initiative. Celebrated this year for the 40th time and held until 16 June, it is aimed at increasing awareness of the importance of oral health by highlighting key messages, such as the benefits of regular toothbrushing and visiting a dentist in order to develop and maintain a healthy mouth.

Thousands of individuals and organisations take part in the initiative every year which takes place over the course of four weeks. This year’s campaign runs from 16 May to 16 June, the foundation has announced.

“A simple smile can make others around you feel at ease. It is highly contagious and plays such an important role in our lives that we should make our oral health a top priority,” Carter added. “It is an incredibly powerful tool and worth remembering it is one we all possess.”

Bristol researchers receive funding for super-chlorhexidine

By DTI

BRISTOL, UK: A University of Bristol spin-off has been awarded almost £1 million to bring a new technology to the market that could help to fight infections in the mouth and body. An enhanced form of chlorhexidine, the substance, named Pertinax, is said to offer improved properties compared with those of the original substance.

Overall, Pertinax Pharma has received around £900,000 from southern England technology investor Mercia Fund Management, Innovate UK (through its Aid for Start-Ups scheme) and an unnamed private investor. The company’s founder and chief scientific officer, Dr Michele Barbour, who is also a senior lecturer in biomaterials at the university’s School of Oral and Dental Sciences, said that the company will focus on the development of applications in dentistry first, where the technology already has relevance to a number of areas. Further uses in medicine will follow in time.

“We’re very excited about Pertinax’s potential,” she said. A proven antimicrobial agent, chlorhexidine has been used in a wide range of products and treatment processes to prevent and treat bacterial infections. Since it is a new formulation of the substance, Pertinax is reported to possess the same antibacterial properties, but without some of the shortcomings of the original formulation, such as short efficacy time. Possible future applications are its use in cements to reduce the failure rates of dental fillings, for example.

“With a strong management team and innovative product, Pertinax Pharma has the potential to take its product from dental tool to a must-have anti-infective across a wide range of industries, from veterinary care, to cosmetics and even home appliances,” Investment Manager at Mercia Fund Management Dr Brijesh Roy commented.

Mercia Fund Management recently provided funding for another oral health care-related project by the University of Manchester.
Promising oral care tech launched by Queen Mary spin-off

By DTI

LONDON, UK: With the BioMin Technologies CEO Richard Whatley said A launch in high-street stores, however, is anticipated for the end of this year.

For users who do not want to brush with a fluoride toothpaste, a fluoride-free version is currently in development. Whatley further added that his company is in talks about licensing the product for use in other dental products, including polishing pastes, varnishes and restorative dental materials.

“Our aim is for the BioMin brand to become synonymous with the treatment of tooth sensitivity in the eyes of both the dental professional and the general public,” he said.

In 2013, the promising invention received the Armourers and Brasiers’ Venture Prize, an annual award given to breakthrough innovations in materials science from the UK. A breakthrough, it has been developed to adhere to tooth structure through a special polymeric from where it slowly dissolves ions that form fluorapatite, a mineral also found in shark teeth, over an 8–12-hour period to make teeth more resistant to acids from food.

According to BioMin founder and Queen Mary Director of Research Prof. Robert Hill, the process has been proven to be more effective than the use of fluorides in conventional tooth pastes or professional prophylaxis materials, which are washed away and lose their effect more quickly.

In addition, the fluorapatite formed from brushing with BioMinF toothpaste has shown to effectively reduce dentine hypersensitivity by sealing open dentinal tubules in vitro studies at Queen Mary.

The team now intends to conduct long-term studies on the effects of the material over the course of the next two years.
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Mr Barrow, in your Dental Tribune: him in advance. had the opportunity to speak with the most important developments that UK dentists can likely expect in the not-so-distant future. Dental Tribune had the opportunity to speak with him in advance.

Dental Tribune: Mr Barrow, in your speech, you are going to address some of the trends that dentists in the UK will have to look out for in the years to come. What are the most important developments that will change how dentistry is run, in your opinion?

Chris Barrow: The first important issue in my opinion is that 85 per cent of NHS dentistry will be delivered by larger corporates. The mirror image of that is that the number of small practices will continue to decline. I am predicting that the number of small independently owned NHS and mixed practices will dramatically reduce, as we have seen in the pharmaceutical and other health care industries.

We will also see procedures being increasingly delivered by auxiliary dental care professionals. This trend is going to be supported by the Department of Health, because of the economics involved in having lower-cost people provide more dental services. So I think those with a dental qualification are going to find that more and more of their historic scope of practice will be moved down the line to less-qualified people.

Where do you see the private sector heading?

At a conservative estimate, we can expect the private dentistry market to reach £5 billion before 2026. Once again, I am suggesting that maybe two-thirds of that market share will be delivered by larger organisations. This will include a number of retailers, supermarkets and other private health care groups. It will mean that patients buy dental care in department stores and supermarkets, as you can now in House of Fraser or Sainsbury’s.

However, that still leaves 40 per cent of that £5 billion market delivered by smaller private independently owned practices. That is still the same size as the NHS budget for the whole country today. A positive perspective. There will be still plenty of business around.

What will be the most likely effects of this development be? It is estimated that there are currently around 10,000 independently owned practices in the UK, and my prediction is that this number will be reduced to 2,000, many of which will aggregate to smaller private micro-corporates. This is a trend that we are already seeing.

I also see the development of a new type of career pathway for the young dentist coming out of the foundation years, who will serve a significant amount of time as a salaried apprentice in a practice before receiving the opportunity to become an associate.

This apprentice dentist will spend four days a week in a private practice seeing his or her own patients and one day a week shadowing the principal. The principal is his or her clinical director and mentor, teaching him or her dentistry and how to communicate with the patients. Many of my clients are already advertising apprenticeships.

Innovation in dentistry is increasingly technology driven. What will be the impact of digital dentistry on dental practice be?

More and more of the manufacturing processes within dentistry are going to move into a digital environment, as is the supply of dentistry. Already, we have digital equipment that guides the placement of implants, for example.

...in ten years there will be no such thing as a general dentist with a full dental qualification.

At the moment, that guidance is given to clinicians. However, I wonder how long it will be before the guidance is given from one machine to another. Scientifically, some may argue that is going to produce a consistently more accurate result.

Digital dentistry in the UK is slower on the uptake than the rest of the world. Unfortunately, one of the legacies of the McCarthyism that has been going on in the General Dental Council over the last few years is that the number of early adopters and innovators in dentistry has been drastically reduced.

There are dentists in the UK who are innovating in the digital segment, but they are few and far between. The regulatory cloud will pass and innovation and early adoption in the UK will regain its rhythm. I am working with practices that are innovating in the digital marketing segment and I predict massive growth resulting from that.

Considering all the predictions you have made, what are the most important future recommendations for anyone thinking about going into dentistry?

My first advice would be that in ten years there will be no such thing as a general dentist with a full dental qualification. The objective of having a dental qualification will be to become a specialist and if you do not want to become a specialist, you might as well qualify as an auxiliary dental care professional.

Secondly, and I am borrowing the words of Russell Brand (with acknowledgment to my friend Dr Colin Campbell), the bejewelled bus of privilege has left. Going into dentistry in order to finance your property portfolio, to buy a Porsche, to get rich in general is going to become less attractive to graduates. Dentists in the private sector are going to be paid well but not as well as in the first decade of the twenty-first century. Entering the private sector will be the privilege of the few.

My last recommendation is that you had better go digital—which I observe is easy for many young dentists because they are digital natives by demographic.

On a general note, I am optimistic about the future of independent private practice in the UK. I would say that if you are interested in delivering complex and skilful care in an excellent environment to an appreciative audience of patients, utilising the very latest digital technology, there is a fantastic opportunity in the next ten years. I am looking forward to being a part of that.

Thank you very much for the interview.
World-class orthodontic experts to gather at BOS 2016 congress in Brighton

By DTI

BIRMINGHAM, UK: Registration for the upcoming congress of the British Orthodontic Society (BOS) is now open, the organisation told Dental Tribune at the Dentistry Show in Birmingham. To be held at the Brighton Centre from 23 to 25 September, the event boasts an impressive line-up of speakers that includes world-famous orthodontists Prof. Lysle Johnston from the US and the UK’s own Prof. Kevin O’Brien from Manchester. Both will share their views on contemporary orthodontic trends with congress attendees.

There will also be papers by a number of international experts, like Dr Adrian Becker from Israel and Prof. Hans-Peter Bantleon from Austria, as well as the best the UK has to offer in the field, including Prof. Anthony Ireland, who will be delivering the prestigious Northcroft lecture.

The congress will also see the introduction of a number of hands-on sessions called “skill studios”, with limited attendance, which are a further development of the highly successful master classes.

According to the BOS, the programme for this year’s event has been developed with the entire dental team in mind. “We will be developing the successful team lectures focusing on some non-clinical skills of benefit to the whole team,” chairperson of the BOS organising committee Richard Jones said. “This includes Dr Guido Sampermans, a highly innovative and inspirational orthodontist from Vienna who shares his vision of the patient journey and how the whole team can work together to deliver this.”

More than 1,000 attendees are expected for the congress in September. As a first, it will be held alongside the Orthodontic Technicians Association’s annual conference. More information about the registration process and the extensive programme can be found at the organiser’s website (www.bos.org.uk).

**AD**

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