High evaluations could slow down acquisitions

By DTI

LONDON, UK – Another rise in practice valuations in the UK could mean that practices in the South East and London will find it increasingly difficult to find buyers, the National Association of Specialist Dental Accountants and Lawyers (NASDAL) has warned. Evaluations in these regions have reached such a level that many potential acquirers can no longer pass the affordability test, London-based NASDAL accountant Ajay Patel recently said in a press release.

“In the current climate, practices that do not make a profit, or have a high overhead at a time when the Bank of Mum and Dad can afford to acquire in many instances," Patel said. "I have recently seen more and more potential acquirers, although meeting the bank’s solvency test, fail the remuneration test, i.e. level of take-home pay for the acquirer.”

“Projects in many instances demonstrate the acquirer would earn less after loan servicing cost than they do currently as associates,” he added.

According to the latest quarterly goodwill survey conducted by NASDAL, valuations in the period of April to July saw another rise over the previous quarter to goodwill of 138 per cent of gross fees despite the Brexit and the economic uncertainty it created. While the average of 107 per cent has seen a 57 per cent surge in the last three months, one practice in the West Country in particular reported having achieved goodwill in excess of 206 per cent of gross fees.

NHS practices also saw a 3.4 per cent increase on the previous quarter and now attract an average goodwill of 125 per cent of gross fees.

The greatest jump, however, was in the value of deals for private practices, according to the report.

Whilst it must be stressed that the EU referendum vote happened midway through the quarter, it does appear that the vote had, at worst, no effect or arguably a positive effect on the value of UK dental practices, summed up specialist dental accountant and partner at UNW Alan Suggett, who compiles the goodwill survey.

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BRIGHTON, UK – In late September, hundreds of orthodontic specialists gathered at the Brighton Centre for the 2016 British Orthodontic Conference (BOC). On the occasion, the British Orthodontic Society (BOS) announced the launch of a new app aimed at helping dental professionals and students classifying patients according to the Index of Treatment Need (IOTN).

Available as a free download from the iTunes App Store, the EASY IOTN app uses simple clinical features to guide the user to the correct classification via the quickest possible route, according to Dr Guy Deeming, who led the development team at the specialist body. With a simple interface to navigate, it is aimed at improving the standard and accuracy of orthodontic referrals, as well as supporting the training of undergraduates and foundation dentists, he said.

According to the BOS, the IOTN is often applied incorrectly owing to its complexity. “We wanted to simplify and streamline the scoring process, as well as support the training of dentists,” Deeming commented on Friday morning. “This is no substitute for calibration, but we hope it will be a useful adjunct for dentists.”

Included in the app is a continuing professional development (CPD) and training section that will provide one hour of verifiable CPD for the user. According to Deeming, an Android version is scheduled to be launched by the end of the year.

Also announced were the date and venue of the next BOC, which will take place from 24 to 16 September 2017 at the Manchester Conference Centre. Titled ‘Back to the Future’, the event will feature more than 40 prominent speakers, including Drs John Schobie and Nigel Harradine, who will be sharing their ideas regarding the future development of the field. Special focus will be on digital technology, material design and other innovations. 2016 congress chairperson Dr Richard Jones said: “In addition to the orthodontic technician and dental team programmes, the 2017 BOC will offer three full-scale orthodontic programmes throughout the three days of the event.

This year’s BOC was held from 25 to 25 September in Brighton.
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Queen Mary makes headway in development of tooth-repairing fillings

By DTI

LONDON, UK. In May, the first toothpaste containing bioactive glass was introduced to the public at Queen Mary University of London. Recently, a group of researchers from the university’s Institute of Dentistry has reported new data that demonstrate that the material has the potential to hinder the formation of bacteria that cause caries and repair it through remineralisation when used in dental fillings.

According to Prof. Robert Hill, who led the group, the bioactive glass composite remineralised partially decayed teeth and created an alkaline environment that discouraged the bacteria that caused the initial decay. It also filled in the gaps with tooth mineral, thus preventing the oral bacteria that cause caries from establishing themselves.

“Research in the US suggests this will potentially prolong the life of fillings and slow secondary tooth decay because the depth of bacterial penetration with bioactive glass fillings was significantly smaller than for inert fillings,” he said.

Currently, the average Brit has seven fillings in his or her mouth, the majority of which are of amalgam, which is placed into eight million new cavities every year, according to government figures. A new material able to repair teeth would provide the possibility of replacing the potentially toxic material and would mean a significant step forward in tooth restorative materials, according to Hill.

“There is huge pressure to eliminate mercury-based amalgam fillings by 2020 which is outlined in a position paper for the US,” commented CEO of BioMin Technologies Richard Whatley, who licensed the technology from Queen Mary Innovations. “We plan to translate the remineralising technology developed with the BioMinF toothpaste into restorative dental products.”

Toothpaste with bioactive glass has been available on the market since May this year.

UK men concerned about their teeth

By DTI

LONDON, UK. The look of their teeth is of great importance to British men. More than a quarter would investigate means of changing their appearance, they would like to, according to a new survey that asked men about their teeth, men aged 18 and 24 felt it was wrong for men to take steps to change their appearance, they were also the age group most likely to have looked into treatments to alter their appearance. Londoners were most likely to look for ways to change how they look. One in three admitted that they were considering treatment for their imperfections, such as straightening their teeth.

The survey was conducted among all age and socio-economic groups, as well as geographical regions, in the UK.

Acknowledged for half a century of service

By DTI

CARDIFF, UK. When Liz Hooper became a Saturday girl at a local dental office in Treherarris, the BBC was still broadcasting in black and white, the English football team was considered world class and the average house cost less than £4,000. Fifty decades later, she is still very active at the University Dental Hospital (UDH) in Cardiff, where she started her NHS career as a dental nurse in 1966.

After having completed her training as a dental nurse, for which she applied after reading an advert in the South Wales Echo newspaper, and working in that position for a year, she assumed the post of Senior Dental Nurse Tutor at UDH Cardiff, a position she still holds today. In addition to that, she worked as Dental Nurse Manager at the same hospital from 1996 to 1997.

During her long years of service, for her, the most important thing has remained the patients. “I still see people today who I treated years ago,” she commented. “I always try to address them by their names so that they know I remember who they are—it’s important to me.”

According to Hooper, she has never missed a single day owing to sickness during her 50 years of service.

“It has been an absolute pleasure to work alongside Liz,” said Beverly Withers, interim Dental Nurse Manager at Cardiff and Vale University Health Board and one of Hooper’s trainees. “She is well known and respected in the clinical world, devoting much of her working life to dental nursing and dental nurse training including the South Wales evening course, training thousands of dental nurses during 40 years.”

Referring to her nickname of “The Oracle”, Withers added: “She is the go-to person to find out anything which is dental related.”

“I’d like to say a big thank you to Liz for her commitment and dedication to dental nursing. It is a fantastic achievement to have completed nearly 50 years of service and to have never taken a day’s sick during this time, truly amazing,” said Hayley Dixon, Director of Operations for the Dental Clinical Board.

Photo: Maria Robles, Chair of Cardiff and Vale UDH (left) presented Liz (right) with flowers and gifts during a special afternoon tea with her colleagues who she trained.