

Heard in the dental practice

'A little boy was sitting in our waiting room watching adverts on the TV and one came on about gingivitis. He turned to his red-headed brother and said "That's what you've got gingerrrr virus". I almost fell off my chair laughing.'

'In 1966 I was a resident in dentistry at the DVA veteran's hospital in Vancouver, Canada. A patient with very limited English had been receiving treatment and on the way out the receptionist asked him "Which doctor did you see?" He replied gravely, "Oh yes witch doctor!"'

'A patient's daughter who was four-years-old told her Dad to "Man up princess" when he was having a check-up.'

'I was treating an elderly gentleman. I had to go through the options with him of which there were three. He then asks me "How often do you do number 1s?" I of course kept a straight face, especially because his daughter was sitting next to him, but when he asked "and do you regularly do number 2s?" At that point I had to leave the room.'

'Me to child going numb: "What did you do at school today?"
Patient: "Writing"
Me: "What did you write about?"
Patient: "I don't know, I can't read yet."'

Thank you to our readers for sending these funny stories as heard in their practices.

Dentists' personalities tested

The Institute of Patient Awareness (IPA) has issued a new set of guidelines for potential patients to use before choosing a dentist which includes a controversial personality testing questionnaire.

Contained in the compendium are over 50 incisive and often penetrating questions grouped into categories such as the slightly titivating 'Predilection to sports', 'Attitude to climate change' and 'Preferred deodorant and toiletries' and the more controversial 'Number of bank accounts.' However, most testing are those in the 'personality' section which are clearly aimed at estimating subliminal clinical thinking. This includes questions such as 'Which cavities do you prefer cutting – Class II with a mesial box or minimal intervention?' and 'When faced with a 5 mm pocket are you more or less inclined to reach for a toothbrush, a scalpel or a hygienist referral?'

When approached by the *BDJ*, a spokesperson for the IPA said 'the idea behind the initiative is to empower patients without disempowering dentists but frankly we are the ones who should be asking the questions. That's the trouble with you people.'

The full guidelines 'Oral questions and how to ask them' are available on the IPA website at www.ipa.com/spoilingforafight.

Cake culture continues to plague office workers

Undercover detectives placed in an office where journals and magazines are produced have revealed the extent to which the 'workplace cake culture' continues to be rife in used-to-be-Great Britain.

The so-called workplace cake culture was in the headlines back in January 2017 when the Faculty of Dental Surgery at the Royal College of Surgeons said that eating cake and biscuits at work was fuelling obesity and poor oral health.

Professor Nigel Hunt, Dean of the Faculty, said that the 'cake culture' may be a case of managers wanting to reward staff, colleagues wanting to celebrate or people bringing sugary snacks back from their holidays. Professor Hunt implored individuals to make a New Year's resolution to 'combat cake culture' this year.



Detectives planted in the international publisher in London's King's Cross found evidence of communal cakes, biscuits and/or sweets in every 10 m² of open plan office space, often on display in a highly visible area. Multi-packs of Jaffa Cakes, oversized bags of American chocolates and boxes of Turkish delight were particularly common. The detectives noted that staff often dipped into these sugary supplies at set times such as mid-morning or late afternoon, and encouraged others to indulge as well.

In the same office posters on staff notice boards advertised a lunchtime 'cake club'; a 'bake-off' competition took place weekly in one department; and another department organised a regular morning 'pastry run' involving large quantities of *pains au chocolat* and almond croissants. For birthdays there was immense pressure on staff to bake quantities of cakes for colleagues, and if they did not bake they were required to supply large tray bakes from the local supermarket, couched in tinfoil and dotted with rainbow-coloured confectionery. Anyone not seen consuming these birthday cakes at the ordained time in a state of gastronomic joy was usually given the silent treatment by colleagues or shunned for the next three working days at least.

When taken aside and confronted about the shocking levels of sugar on display in this particular office, one female senior managing editor insisted that baking was her 'only hobby'; that communal consumption of baked goods was 'marvellous for morale' and that she brushed her teeth twice a day anyway and 'that was the important thing wasn't it'.

The undercover detectives will next be targeting a large membership association in Marylebone to see whether its inhabitants' dietary habits are any improvement on those of the international publisher.