

Other journals in brief

A selection of abstracts of clinically relevant papers from other journals.

The abstracts on this page have been chosen and edited by Paul Hellyer

Dehydration may affect clinical performance

Impact of hydration and nutrition on personal performance in the clinical workplace

Parry D, Oeppen RS, Gass H, Brennan PA. *Br J Oral Maxillofac Surg* 2017; **55**: 995–998

In a busy clinical day, pausing for refreshment is important.

Studies in the areas of aviation and the military have recognised the importance of adequate hydration and nutrition of personnel to ensure optimum performance. Deficits in water of as little as 2% of body weight have been shown to impede physical performance and levels greater than this can lead to headache, sleepiness, impatience and apathy. The authors quote a recent informal study of 80 operating theatre staff, which showed that 25% had left home without eating breakfast and 50% had not drunk anything since the previous evening. Staff involved in lengthy surgical lists or busy clinics which may run late risk becoming dehydrated, due to lack of opportunity to take breaks.

The amount of fluid needed per day varies according to gender, physical size, workload and the working environment. The authors suggest that regular breaks for re-hydration are essential and that an appropriate supply is available close to the work place as distance may discourage intake. Appropriate fluids include (ideally) water, cordials, canned drinks and tea or coffee. They conclude that ‘adequate hydration and nutrition are essential if we are to provide patients with the best standard of care.’

DOI: 10.1038/sj.bdj.2018.462

Accepting gifts from patients, colleagues and suppliers

Looking gift horses in the mouth: gift giving, incentives and conflict of interest in the dental profession

Holden ACL, Spallek H. *J Law Med* 2018; **25**: 794–799

What is an (in)appropriate gift?

Dental professionals may receive gifts or incentives from patients, dental suppliers or colleagues seeking referrals. Patient gifts may range from a simple thank you card, to an offer of a day on a yacht. Suppliers may offer free toothbrushes and toothpaste or CPD courses. Specialist colleagues may offer free lunch and learn sessions as an inducement for referrals. The authors argue that even the simple thank you card, although it would be churlish (and impossible) to refuse, may induce unconscious bias in the care giver and alter the relationship between patient and professional, by creating an obligation to preferential treatment.

Dentistry can be a lonely profession and sponsored social events serve a useful function. Any recognition of a service well provided adds to job satisfaction. Others argue, however, that all gifts should be rejected. Because of the risks of conflicts of interest and erosion of trust, this issue needs discussion in order to protect the integrity of the profession.

DOI: 10.1038/sj.bdj.2018.464

How much patient feedback does the NHS need?

Improving the usefulness and use of patient survey programs: National Health Service interview study

Flott K, Darzi A, Gancarczyk S, Mayer E. *J Med Internet Res* 2018; **20**: e141

DOI:10.2196/jmir.8806

CQC reports are often confusing and too generalised to be useful.

A recent editorial in the *BMJ* concerning the Friends and Family Test (*BMJ* 2018; 360 DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.k367>) concluded that ‘it is time to stop compelling all NHS organisations to collect large amounts of data’ which add little value to services.

In this paper, 18 ‘patient experience leads’ for NHS providers were interviewed to identify the barriers to using patient feedback data from the National Patient Survey Programme. NHS staff are expected to interpret data from many sources such as ‘bespoke surveys, online platforms, social media, audits, complaints, and, in the NHS, the Friends and Family Test.’ Whilst patient input into services through such feedback has become the norm, the data is still frequently not used in a timely and relevant manner to drive up standards. Staff consider the feedback to be valuable but often cannot make sense of it, are not aware of how it is collected and have neither the time nor the skills to interpret it.

DOI: 10.1038/sj.bdj.2018.463

The risk of exposure on Facebook

An assessment of professionalism on students’ Facebook profiles

Nason KN, Byrne H, Nason GJ, O’Connell B. *Eur J Dent Educ* 2018; **22**: 30–33

Evidence of intoxication and nudity found on the profiles of students studying dentistry.

This study examined the Facebook profiles of all students studying at Dublin Dental School, including dental science, dental nursing, hygiene and dental technology students. One hundred and seventy-seven students (62%; n = 287) had an identifiable Facebook profile. About one third of the profiles linked themselves to the university and around two thirds identified themselves specifically to a dental course. Profiles were scored as (1) = clear violations of professionalism, (2) = questionable content, (3) = no issues. Six profiles were scored as (1), with content which might include racially insensitive comments. With scores of (2), 34% had questionable content and 25% had photographs showing unprofessional public intoxication and ‘levels of nudity’. Scores of (2) were not isolated to any particular course.

As students mature and gain experience, their increasing maturity (and decreasing free time) may alter their use and perceptions of social media. However, the paper highlights the importance for all dental professionals to take care of what is posted and to check privacy settings, on all social media accounts.

DOI: 10.1038/sj.bdj.2018.465