

The *BDJ* News section accepts items that include general news, latest research and diary events that interest our readers. Press releases or articles may be edited, and should include a colour photograph if possible. Please direct your correspondence to the News Editor, Arveen Bajaj at the *BDJ*, The Macmillan Building, 4 Crinan Street, London N1 9XW or by email to bdj@bda.org

Oral disease prevention

Francesco D'Aiuto of the UCL Eastman Dental Institute has been awarded an IADR/Colgate Research in Prevention Travel Award. Established by the International Association for Dental Research (IADR) and supported by the Colgate-Palmolive Company, it enables young investigators presenting original research in the area of oral disease prevention to travel to the International Association for Dental Research General Session. Each recipient receives US\$2,000 and a plaque.

Charges change

From 1 April, NHS dental charges in England will increase in line with inflation (approximately 2.7%) as follows: band 1 £15.90, band 2 £43.60, band 3, £194.

Stainless steel crowns for minors are to move from band 3 to band 2. There have been no changes to patient charges in Wales.

New CDO for Scotland

Margie Taylor has been appointed as Scotland's new Chief Dental Officer. Miss Taylor (51) has extensive experience in dentistry and is currently Consultant in Dental Public Health at NHS Lanarkshire. Before joining NHS Lanarkshire in 1994, she worked in Fife and Lothian as Chief Administrative Dental Officer and in clinical dentistry, respectively.

Born in Edinburgh and educated at James Gillespie's High School, Miss

Long service to dental profession recognised



Mary Newing, Editor of *Dental Practice*, is presented with a bouquet by Stephen Hancocks, *BDJ* Editor-in-Chief, on behalf of all her friends in the dental profession, to mark her retirement after nearly 40 years. The presentation took place at the British Dental Association. Last month Mary was also given an honorary Fellowship in Dental Surgery from the Eastman Dental Institute in recognition of her support in championing its work. She was awarded an MBE in 1997.

Taylor graduated from Edinburgh University in 1978. She gained an MSc in Community Medicine in 1985 and an MBA in 1996. She is a fellow in dental surgery of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh and the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow and an honorary member of the Faculty of Public Health Medicine. Miss Taylor has also held posts as Honorary Senior Lecturer at St Andrews, Glasgow and Dundee universities.

She will take over on May 1 from current CDO Ray Watkins, who is leaving to take up a post as Consultant in

Dental Public Health at NHS Grampian. Mr Watkins will continue to act as Chief Dental Officer until Miss Taylor takes up her post.

British Dental Association (BDA) Director for Scotland Andrew Lamb welcomed the appointment and said, 'Given that two years after the launch of the Scottish Executive's Action Plan, fewer patients are registered with an NHS dentist than were before and fewer dentists who provide NHS treatment are regarded as being committed according to Executive criteria, Miss Taylor faces significant challenges in her new role.'

Tooth brushing link to epilepsy seizures

Tooth brushing may trigger seizures in certain people with epilepsy according to an article published in the last month's issue of *Neurology*, the journal of the American Academy of Neurology.

Researchers say lesions in a specific part of the brain may be a cause in some people and the article reviewed the cases of three adults with epilepsy who experienced seizures while brushing their teeth. Two of the adults reported some of their seizures occurred when they brushed certain areas of their mouth. The seizures varied from jerking and twitching of the face to salivating vigorously. One patient was unable to let go of the toothbrush during the seizure. The seizures were confirmed by video monitoring.

Using MRI scans, researchers found all

three patients had lesions in the somatosensory area of the brain, which is close to the hand and speech motor areas. 'The rhythmic act of brushing teeth may excite an already overly excitable area of the brain and is similar to photosensitive epilepsy, which involves seizures triggered by flashing lights and moving patterns,' said study author Wendyl D'Souza, who is with the Department of Neurology and Neurological Research at St Vincent's Hospital, the University of Melbourne, Australia.

He added that since tooth brushing involved persistent rhythmic action, this may explain why this trigger is more likely to induce seizures in the somatosensory area of the brain compared to other oral stimuli, such as eating.



Study looks into growing dental enamel

Scientists have found a new technique to re-grow dental enamel from cultured cells.

A team of researchers from the Institute of Medical Science, the University of Tokyo, Japan, reports that epithelial cells extracted from the developing teeth of six-month-old pigs continue to proliferate when they are cultured on top of a special feeder layer of cells (the feeder-layer cells are known as the 3T3-J2 cell line).

This crucial step boosts the number of dental epithelial cells available for enamel production.

In the study the researchers seeded the cultured dental epithelial cells onto collagen sponge scaffolds, along with cells from the middle of the tooth (dental mesenchymal cells).

The scaffolds were then transferred into the abdominal cavities of rats, where conditions were favourable for the cells in the scaffolds to interact and develop. When removed after four weeks, the remnants of the scaffolds were found to contain enamel-like tissue.

The key finding of this study was that even after the multiple divisions that occurred during propagation of the cells in culture, the dental epi-

thelial cells retained the ability to produce enamel, as long as they were later provided with an appropriate environment.

The idea for the culturing technique originates from 1975, when Dr J G Rheinwald and Dr H Green of Harvard Medical School, USA, reported the use of feeder layers for culturing epithelial cells from the skin. The 3T3-J2 cells used in the current study were gifted by Dr Green.

The cell-scaffold approach is based on tissue-engineering technology developed at the Forsyth Institute, USA and was applied by one of the Tokyo researchers to produce enamel-like tissues in 2002.

Now that dental epithelial cells can be propagated in culture, the next step will be to achieve the same success with their partners in tooth formation, the dental mesenchymal cells.

Further development of this technique will be aimed toward production of tissue to replace damaged or missing enamel, and ultimately, regeneration of whole teeth.

The findings were reported during the 85th General Session of the International Association for Dental Research, in New Orleans, USA.

First European president installed



Alpha Omega (AO), the international dental fraternity, has welcomed its first UK-based President in 100 years. In assuming the role of International President, John Wolffe BDS, from Hendon in London, will be spearheading the organisation's educational and charitable roles as it seeks to provide dental health to deprived communities worldwide.

Having been installed at the fraternity's annual convention in Las Vegas, he assumes the role, having served as an international officer for the past two years.

John succeeds Steven Braunstein DDS of Buffalo, New York, who served as the 2006 International President. His election to the post represents only the second time a non-North American has led the fraternity – the last being 17 years ago, following the appointment of Yehuda Kaufman of Tel Aviv.

Patient focussed study wins prize

Dr Janice Ellis and a team from Newcastle recently won the Schottlander Poster Prize at the British Society for the Study of Prosthetic Dentistry (BSSPD) Conference in Newcastle.

The prize-winning poster, entitled *Understanding the edentulous plight; the patients' stories*, focussed on gaining a better understanding of the problems associated with the edentulous condition.

The study reported on the differences recorded between patients wearing conventional dentures and those wearing implant-supported overdentures. It also distinguished between the different patient profiles depending upon whether the patient was a late acquirer, an early acquirer or a compounded patient.

Dr Ellis received her prize from Dr Brian Schottlander at the BSSPD conference dinner held at the Baltic Exchange on Tyneside. The Schottlander Paper Prize winner was Dr David Newsum from



King's College, London. He will be presented with his prize at a dinner later on in the year.

Professional indemnity information online

The General Dental Council has produced an information sheet on indemnity to answer the questions dental

professionals most frequently ask. The information sheet, which is available on the GDC website, aims to provide greater clarity and certainty to registered dental professionals on this complex issue and answers questions covering risk cover, employer arrangements and what points to check when choosing a policy. www.gdc-uk.org

Supporting undergraduate research

This year's 30th BDA/Dentsply Student Clinician Award went to Elizabeth Paice, a final year dental student at Bristol Dental School. She was presented with her award at anniversary dinner held at the Savoy Hotel in London recently.

The BDA/Dentsply Student Clinician Awards programme supports international undergraduate study and focuses on original research, highlighting the continuous bond that exists between the profession and the dental industry.

Over the past year, Elizabeth Paice has undertaken a research project in the Clinical Trials Unit under the

supervision of Susan Hooper, Consultant/Senior Lecturer in the Division of Restorative Dentistry. Her winning presentation, *The Erosive Effects of Saliva on Enamel and Dentine following Chewing Gum: an Ex-Vivo study*, won her an all expenses paid trip to the American Dental Association's Annual Conference in San Francisco in September. She commented, 'The opportunity to be so fully involved with research during my undergraduate studies has been a real eye-opener to wider career opportunities and emphasised the relevance of research to dental practice.'



DIARY

April

Irish Dental Association Annual Scientific Conference

Date: 18-21 April 2007
Venue: Rochestown Park Hotel, Cork, Ireland
www.dentist.ie

The Society of Manchester Dental Alumni (SOMANDA) biennial meeting and reunion

Date: 20 April 2007
Venue: University of Manchester
Email: carolynstylianou@ntlworld.com

The International Team for Implantology (ITI) World Symposium 2007

Date: 26-28 April 2007
Venue: New York City
www.iti.org

29th Asia Pacific Dental Congress

Date: 26-28 April 2007
Venue: Jakarta, Indonesia
Tel: +62 21 726 0088
Fax: +62 21 739 7555
www.apdc2007jakarta.com

May

ADI 20th Anniversary Congress

Date: 3-5 May 2007
Venue: ICC in Birmingham
www.adi.org.uk

International Osteology Symposium 2007

Date: 10-12 May 2007
Venue: Grimaldi Forum, Monaco
www.osteology-monaco.org

DSTG Annual Symposium 2007

Date: 15 May 2007
Venue: Birmingham Dental Hospital
www.dstg.co.uk

BDA British Dental Conference and Exhibition 2007

Date: 24-26 May 2007
Venue: Harrogate International Centre (HIC)
Tel: 020 7563 4590
Email: events@bda.org

Computer aided self-help for anxious patients

Anxious patients in need of dental care could soon have their fears allayed by a computer-aided programme. A multinational research team at King's College London Dental Institute has announced that it has successfully completed the first development stage of its Computer Assisted Relaxation Learning UK (CARL-UK).

The system offers self-help for dental fear to thousands of people who avoid the dentist or seek dental treatment under sedation or general anaesthesia, costing the General Dental Service of the NHS millions of pounds each year.

CARL-UK, when completed in the next year, is expected to link to FearFighter, an established computer-aided self-help system that the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) recommends for panic, phobias and anxiety. FearFighter on the internet is being used increasingly and effectively by Primary Care Trusts around the country.

CARL-UK is being developed by a team of dentists and experts in Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) headed by Professor Peter Milgrom, Visiting Professor of Pain and Anxiety Control at King's College London Dental Institute and Emeritus Professor Isaac Marks of King's College London Institute of Psychiatry. Professors Milgrom and Marks have between them over 60 years of clinical experience treating fearful patients and are internationally recognised.

Professor Milgrom said, 'In trials in



Pictured above, Professors Milgrom and Marks

America, CARL-UK greatly lowered barriers to anxious patients seeking dental care. CBT helped people reduce dental fears very successfully at relatively low cost.'

The King's research team includes Dr Carole Boyle, a dentist and Associate Specialist in the Department of Sedation and Special Care Dentistry and Professor Tim Newton, a psychologist in the Department of Oral Health Services Research and Dental Public Health.

Phase I of the program development has been supported, in part, by the Society for Anaesthesia in Dentistry (SAAD). The Dental Institute already does online training for general dental practitioners in dental specialties.