

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

Lists merge

The General Dental Council (GDC) has closed the specialist list in Surgical Dentistry and transferred dentists on this list to a reconfigured Oral Surgery list.

The GDC claims that the move brings UK arrangements for oral surgery into line with those in Europe and elsewhere and will mean greater clarity for patients and practitioners about the specialty.

A new Specialist Dental Education Board has been set up with Professor Kevin O'Brien as its Chair. The Board was set up by the Council to advise it on amending the arrangements for the training and listing of dental specialties following the recommendations of the Specialist Lists Review Group.

Dental professionals, members of the public and others can search the specialist lists on the GDC website at www.gdc-uk.org/Search+our+registers.



General Dental Council

Supporting dentistry careers



The University of Sheffield has launched a new scheme designed to support students in the region who are considering a career in dentistry. The Access to Dental Occupations: Practice and Tutoring scheme (ADOPT), will provide students with an insight into the different disciplines within the dental professions, through a series of hands-on activities, work experience placements and lectures.

The two year ADOPT scheme, which is open to Year 12 students who are the first members of their immediate family to enter higher education, is being run in partnership by the University's School of Clinical Dentistry and its Outreach and Access section.

The scheme will give students the chance to engage with staff and students at the School of Clinical Dentistry and receive open, honest advice about courses and their content and about pursuing a professional career in dentistry. Hands-on activities sessions will allow students to learn everything from cavity preparation to extractions. Students who have completed the scheme will be eligible for an interview for an appropriate course at the University's School of Clinical Dentistry, but participation in the scheme does not guarantee an undergraduate place at the University. Students must also achieve the necessary grades and perform well at interview.

Professor Trevor Walsh, Dean of the School of Clinical Dentistry, commented, 'The School values the diversity of applicants to all of its dental programmes and has been determined to encourage the widest access to all suitable candidates.'

Young dentist survey conducted

The BDA is conducting a survey of its younger members (those aged 35 years or less), to find out more about their opinions and needs. Three separate questionnaires have been sent out, each

to a random sample of 1,500 BDA members in this category.

The surveys ask questions about BDA membership, representation and BDA products and services and all three

questionnaires also include a section on communication.

This research is part of a joint project with the Department for Trade and Industry, looking at young-member participation and engagement within the BDA.

Study suggests link between oral health and ethnicity

Rates of tooth decay and periodontal disease can be linked to ethnicity and country of origin even among immigrants who have lived for many years in the United States, according to a New York University (NYU) College of Dentistry research team. The team found that immigrants' ethnicity and country of origin predispose them to caries and periodontal disease.

The team leader, Dr Gustavo D Cruz,

an Associate Professor of Epidemiology and Health Promotion and Director of Global Oral Public Health at NYU, undertook the study on the oral health of immigrants to the United States, analysing caries and periodontal disease rates in over 1,500 Chinese, Haitian, Indian, West Indian, Puerto Rican, Dominican, and Central and South American immigrants of Hispanic origin living in New York City.



A link has been found between country of origin and oral health

Dr Cruz said the study revealed significant differences among the ethnic groups. Puerto Ricans, Haitians and Indians for example, were more likely to suffer from periodontal disease while Hispanics were more likely to have dental caries. He commented, 'These differences are deeply rooted in an immigrant's country of origin, where early cultural influences can set the stage for oral health problems later in life. For example, some ethnic groups may be more prone to tooth decay partly because their traditional foods are high in refined carbohydrates, while other groups may be less susceptible to decay because refined carbohydrates are almost absent from their diet.'

Dr Cruz found that rates of tooth decay and periodontal disease can be linked to ethnicity and country of origin even among immigrants who have lived for many years in the United States and have increased income and education levels. He added that his future research would aim to identify which specific factors were behind individual ethnic differences so that preventive measures could be developed, such as diagnostic tests that pinpoint the presence of harmful oral bacteria that may be more common in certain ethnic groups.

The findings were presented at the scientific meeting of the International Association for Dental Research (IADR) in New Orleans recently.

Flexible virtual learning

The King's College London Centre of Flexible Learning and the International Virtual Dental School (IVIDENT) was launched recently at a reception in their new premises in Strand Bridge House.

Formally opened by the Principal of King's College London, Professor Rick Trainor, the Centre aims to develop and manage flexible learning enterprises within King's Dental Institute.

The Centre will bring together distance learning, e-learning and ICT related educational research in an academically led physical and virtual environment.

The Principal spoke about the increasing use of distance learning within the King's Dental Institute and the university sector and said that it would not eliminate other forms of learning but would complement and enrich traditional forms of learning. The project has attracted £2.3 million in funding.



Dr Patricia Reynolds, Head of Flexible Learning and Dr Brian Millar, Head of Distance Learning at the King's College London Dental Institute

Academic retires

Professor David Stirrups, co-ordinator of the Dental & Oral Health and Health Psychology Unit at the University of Dundee Dental School, retired recently. Professor Stirrups had been at the University for 15 years as Leader of the Dental School's Orthodontic Section. He became the Dental School's first Teaching Sub-Dean, dealing, among other things, with the School's first teaching review for the Scottish Higher Education Funding Council.

He has been the East of Scotland Orthodontic Specialist Training Programme Director since his arrival at Dundee, as well as being heavily involved in supporting Senior House Officer Training. Professor Stirrups has also served on the General Dental Council and latterly he has served as Coordinator of the Dental and Oral Health and Health Psychology Unit at Dundee.

Commitment to global health recognised

A visiting professor from University College London has become the recipient of the Health Volunteers Overseas (HVO) second annual Golden Apple Award.

Dr Martin Hobdell is currently a visiting professor with the Department of Epidemiology and Public Health at the University College London. He is a member of a number of dental associations including the British Dental Association and the British Association for the Study of Community Dentistry and has served on the HVO dentistry steering committee for the last seven years.

As part of its World Health Day observances, HVO created the award as a way of recognising the educational contributions of volunteers to sites abroad. Each volunteer honoured has demonstrated a strong commitment to HVO's educational mission by working on curriculum development, teacher training, didactic or clinical training, or the enhancement of educational resources.

Dr Hobdell was nominated in recognition of his leadership in creating and implementing graduate level certificate and masters training programmes in dental public health at the University of Health Sciences in Cambodia and at the Faculty for Odonto-Stomatology in Vietnam. He is an internationally known expert in oral health and developed, in



consultation with local faculty, a dental public health curriculum to be taught over a two-year period, mainly by visiting faculty.

A private, non-profit membership organisation, HVO was founded in 1986 to improve global health through education. It designs and implements clinical education programmes in child health, primary care, trauma and rehabilitation, essential surgical care, oral health, infectious disease, nursing education, burn management and wound care. In more than 25 resource-poor nations, volunteers train, mentor and provide critical professional support to health care providers for the neediest populations in the most difficult of circumstances.

Severe shortage of Latino dentists

The number of Latino dental graduates in California, Los Angeles, USA, fell by nearly 80% between 1982 and 1999, resulting in fewer dentists to serve a

growing, Spanish-speaking population.

A study published in the *Journal of Dental Education* (2007; 71: 227-234) by a team at the University of California has found that the number of Latinos who graduated from dental schools, and hence able to acquire licenses to practice dentistry in California, fell from 74% to 15% even as the state's Latino population increased by 42.7% during that time.

The authors of the study said that as Latino dentists are likely to both speak Spanish and English and to practice in areas with heavy Latino populations, there would be fewer dentists to serve this population. Also, the shortfall during that period was so large that a dramatic increase would not make up the difference today. Research was funded by UCLA's Center for the Study of Latino Health and Culture.



DIARY

May

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

4th ESOLA Laser Congress
Date: 16-19 May 2007
Venue: Belgium
www.esola.at

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

June

14th Annual Congress of the Turkish
Dental Association
Date: 11-17 June 2007
Venue: Lütfi Kırdar Convention Center,
Istanbul, Turkey
www.tdbkongresi.com

21st Congress of International
Association of Paediatric Dentistry
Date: 13-17 June 2007
Venue: Hong Kong Convention
and Exhibition Centre
Email: info@iapd2007.com
www.iapd2007.com

113th Meeting of the American Dental
Society of Europe
Date: 26-29 June 2007
Venue: Cameron House, Loch Lomond,
Scotland
Tel: 0141 331 0088
www.adse.co.uk

July

BDA Armed Forces Group AGM
Date: 5 July 2007
Venue: BDA Lecture Theatre,
London
Tel: 01296 656469

A clinical guide to anterior
dental aesthetics
Date: 13 July 2007
Venue: Marriot Regents Park,
London
www.bda-events.org

Smoking and oral health study



Secondhand smoke may be associated with bone loss in subjects with periodontitis.

According to a study published in the *Journal of Periodontology* (2007; 78: 730-735), subjects with periodontitis who were exposed to secondhand smoke were more likely to develop bone loss, which causes tooth loss.

Researchers studied rats that were induced with periodontal disease. One group was not exposed to cigarette smoke while the other two groups were exposed to either 30 days of smoke inhalation produced by non-light cigarettes (cigarettes containing higher tar, nicotine and carbon monoxide levels) or light cigarettes (cigarettes containing lower tar, nicotine and carbon monoxide levels).

Results showed that bone loss was greater in the subjects exposed to secondhand smoke, regardless of whether it was smoke from light or non-light cigarettes, than it was in those who were exposed to no smoke at all.

In other news, smoking cessation has been on the agenda for dental students at

the University at Buffalo, New York, USA. In a new programme, third and fourth-year dental students are using non-judgmental tobacco counselling to encourage their patients to quit. Results presented at the 2007 International Association of Dental Research meeting in New Orleans showed that 51% of the 89 patients who accepted and received tobacco counselling from the student dentists agreed to quit immediately.

Of that number, 29 patients, or 32% were still smoke-free after six months. Othman Shibly, Assistant Professor of Periodontics and Endodontics who developed the programme said, 'When I took over the responsibility for the dental school's preventive dentistry program I thought that major changes needed to be made in the dental curriculum to close the gap between clinical research and clinical practice.'

Students and dentists are taught about the effects of smoking on oral health but, in practice, we only do fillings and other procedures, so I led this effort to identify smoking as a dental problem that dentists should attend to.'

Healthy teeth for a lifetime

Tooth loss and declining oral health are inevitable as we grow older, according to a recent public opinion survey conducted by the Canadian Dental Association (CDA). More than half of the survey respondents had more than 75% of their natural teeth and other results paint a picture of an ageing population in which the value of oral health is growing.

Eighty-two per cent of respondents rated their oral health as good to excellent, 84% did not feel self-conscious about the state of their teeth and 83% were able to make varied food choices. Dr Jack Cottrell, President of the CDA said, 'This number comes as a surprise considering today's seniors are keeping more and more of their natural teeth. We absolutely can keep our teeth healthy for a lifetime - it just looks like attitudes may have to catch up with the new reality.'