

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.

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## BDA URGES MEMBERS TO TAKE ACTION ON CQC

The British Dental Association (BDA) is urging dentists in England to join their campaign calling on the Government to address concerns about the registration of dental practices with the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

The BDA would like practitioners to demonstrate the strength of feeling on this issue by sending a postcard directly to their Member of Parliament.

The BDA is sending all members a postcard emphasising the increasing burden of red tape encircling practitioners and the detrimental effect it has on patient care. Members will find a copy of the postcard in the December issue of *bdanews*.

The postcard presses MPs to demand the Secretary of State for Health does three things: simplify the arrangements for the CQC so it does not duplicate functions carried out by other bodies; ensure that the CQC registration fee is set at a reasonable level; and delay the deadline for registration to allow these concerns to be properly addressed.

The BDA has written directly to the Secretary of State outlining the profession's concerns and calling for the three steps to be taken.

The campaign was launched with the delivery of a giant postcard to Sir Paul Beresford MP, the Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Dentistry, at Parliament. It was presented by BDA

Executive Board Chair Dr Susie Sanderson and BDA General Dental Practice Committee Chair Dr John Milne.

'The BDA has reiterated these concerns to Government on numerous occasions,' said Dr Milne. 'It's time for Government to hear from the wider profession. I urge every dentist in England to send a postcard to their MP and force action on this vital issue.'



## DENTISTS MUST TAKE PART IN CQC FEES CONSULTATION

Health Minister Simon Burns MP has urged dentists across England to take part in the consultation on fees to register practices with the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

Speaking in an adjournment debate in the House of Commons, Mr Burns called on all dentists to lobby the CQC so that it is left in no doubt about the profession's concerns. Mr Burns added that the CQC's final fees scheme is subject to the con-

sent of the Secretary of State for Health.

While Mr Burns said that he has some sympathy with those dentists concerned that the process of registering with the CQC will be onerous and time consuming, he was sure that the majority of dentists who already provide high quality services will have no difficulty in meeting the essential levels of safety and quality.

Conservative MP Sir Paul Beresford,

the Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group for dentistry, who secured the debate, told the House that the functions of the CQC would duplicate functions carried out by organisations including the General Dental Council (GDC), the Dental Complaints Service and the Health and Safety Executive.

Sir Paul was also critical of the excessive bureaucracy associated with CQC registration, pointing to problems practitioners have faced securing enhanced Criminal Records Bureau checks.

## NEW CHILD ANXIETY SCALE APPLAUDED

Dr Abeer Al-Namankany, a PhD student at the UCL EDI Paediatric Dentistry Unit, has been honoured with the prestigious Award of Education and Scientific Excellence by the Saudi Government.

Abeer's PhD project focuses on developing a new dental anxiety scale for children undergoing dental procedures, and aims to evaluate the effect of video modelling on the behaviour of anxious children using both pharmacological and non-pharmacological methods.

The awards ceremony took place at London's ExCel in the presence of Saudi Ambassador to the UK and Ireland, His Royal Highness Prince Mohammed bin Nawaf bin Abdul Aziz Al-Saud; the Saudi Minister of Higher Education, Dr Khalid Al-Anqari as well as an audience of dignitaries, friends and family.

## GDC INSPECTORS HALT 150-YEAR-OLD EXAM

Further sittings of the Licence in Dental Surgery (LDS) – the oldest continuously existing dental qualification in the UK – have been postponed by the Royal College of Surgeons (RCS). Candidates who sat the LDS Part 2 in July 2010 are also required to re-sit that exam in order to complete their LDS qualification.

According to the Royal College of Surgeons, the General Dental Council (GDC) requested that the first sitting of the re-launched LDS Part 2 be withdrawn and candidates were informed. The RCS said: 'the independent inspector had concerns with the administration of the examination. Clearly this is an unsatisfactory conclusion for those candidates and the College is doing all it can to compensate them for their time and efforts.'

The GDC issued a statement on the matter and said that: 'while the GDC's independent inspectors' views on the

LDS are no reflection on its confidence in the Royal College of Surgeons of England as an institution, their inspection report found some serious issues with the award.' The GDC endorsed the inspectors' recommendation that the LDS was 'insufficient' for registration as a dentist in the UK.

The RCS said that it is working closely with the GDC to ensure that all of their concerns with the administration of the examination are addressed before any further sittings of the LDS are run.

The GDC said that it is sympathetic to candidates of the LDS and appreciates that they are in a difficult position at present. Current and prospective LDS candidates are advised to contact the RCS for the latest information. The GDC inspectors' report will be published on the GDC website at a later date.

## VITAMIN B SHOWN TO REDUCE MOUTH CANCER RISK

According to a study carried out over 30 years, women who consume high volumes of folic acid found in Vitamin B are less likely to suffer from mouth cancer.

Folic acid is found in vegetables such as spinach, asparagus, beans, peas and lentils and is added to bread. Fruit juices, broccoli and brussel sprouts contain smaller amounts.

Eighty-seven thousand nurses were followed from 1976 onwards by researchers from the Columbia University Medical Centre and Harvard School of Public

Health. Women who drank a high volume of alcohol and had low folic acid intake were three times more likely to develop mouth cancer than those who drank high volumes of alcohol but had high volumes of folic acid in their diet.

This is the first time that folic acid intake has been shown to affect the risk of mouth cancer. Alcohol leads to a reduction in folic acid metabolism by creating acetaldehyde which leads to a reduction of folic acid in the body.

'Rates of cancer in women have been increasing for many years as

a result of more women smoking and drinking,' said

Dr Nigel Carter, Chief Executive of the British Dental Health Foundation.

'This new research could offer a method

to reduce this by increasing fruit and vegetables containing folic acid in the diet.'

Past studies have tended to focus on men as they are twice as likely to suffer from mouth cancer as women.

Folic acid or vitamin B9 is essential to an individual's health as it helps make and maintain new cells. Pregnant women are advised to supplement their intake of folic acid, to ensure a healthy development of the baby.

An unhealthy diet has already been linked with around a third of mouth cancer cases. Recent research has also shown that an increase in food such as eggs and fish that contain Omega 3, and nuts, seeds and brown rice, which are high in fibre, can help decrease the risks.

The abstract for the published article can be found at: <http://cebpaacrjournals.org/content/19/10/2516.abstract?sid=230d6bb6-a0f0-49d5-9dd5-39040b4e41b9>

Folic acid supplements should be used with caution by patients with pernicious anaemia or a vitamin B12 deficiency and allergic reactions can occur.



## REGULATION IS ERODING DENTISTS' CONFIDENCE

The British Dental Association (BDA) has warned that growing bureaucracy is destroying the morale of high street dentists in England and could be driving practitioners to retire early or leave the NHS.

Nearly half of all high street dentists reported that their morale has fallen during the past 12 months, with a third reporting in a BDA survey that their morale is now either low or very low. More than 60% said that growing administration was to blame. Rising expenses and continuing problems with the 2006 contract, including a lack of time to provide preventive care to patients, were also cited as major factors in the profession's decline in confidence.

The BDA is concerned that adding a further layer of bureaucracy – the registration of dental practices with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) – which

comes into force in 2011, could exacerbate the problems and drive many dentists to retire early.

The BDA has compiled a support kit for dentists as CQC registration begins. This all-in-one digital pack collates current BDA guidance and relevant legislation, with an outline of the 16 outcomes integral to the system. Users will have access to over 40 models, templates and protocols covering the CQC compliance standards.

The BDA is also calling on the Care Quality Commission to explain the calculations behind its proposed fee scale to register dental practices, following concerns that single practice owners could end up subsidising owners of larger practices.

With registration fees for one practice proposed to start at £1,500, the sliding scale means that the more practices a provider owns, the cheaper the unit cost, despite the CQC's assertion that the cost of registration would be linked directly to providers' responsibility for meeting the essential standards.

John Milne, Chair of the BDA's General Dental Practice Committee, said that the CQC must explain how it calculated its proposed fee scale, 'otherwise this is a pointless exercise and will only further erode the profession's confidence in a regulation process which seems unnecessary.'

The BDA's CQC support kit is available online free of charge for BDA members. [www.bda.org/shop](http://www.bda.org/shop)

## DIARY

### JANUARY 2011

#### You and the General Dental Council

Date: 12 January 2011  
Venue: Hilton Templepatrick Hotel and Country Club, Belfast  
[www.gdc-uk.org](http://www.gdc-uk.org)

#### CEREC CAD/CAM courses

Date: 21/22 January 2011  
Venue: Sirona Dental Systems, Chiswick  
Email: [mark.buckland@sironadental.co.uk](mailto:mark.buckland@sironadental.co.uk)  
Telephone: 0845 071 5040  
[www.sironacadcamolutions.co.uk](http://www.sironacadcamolutions.co.uk)

#### Law, Ethics and Record Keeping

Date: 28 January 2011, 9am-5pm  
Venue: British Dental Association, London  
Email: [susie.brooke@bda.org](mailto:susie.brooke@bda.org)  
Telephone: 020 7563 4163

### FEBRUARY 2011

#### Tooth wear and acid erosion: modern strategies of management

By Alex Milosevic  
Date: 1 February 2011  
Venue: The Centre for Health Science, Raigmore Hospital, Inverness  
[www.bda.org/events](http://www.bda.org/events)

#### How can we encourage health behaviour change?

An event for dental therapists and hygienists  
Venue: Eastman Dental Institute  
Telephone: 020 7905 1298  
Email: [m.kelly@eastman.ucl.ac.uk](mailto:m.kelly@eastman.ucl.ac.uk)

#### Young Dentist Conference

Date: 5 February 2011  
Venue: Novotel London St Pancras, London  
Email: [events@dentalprotection.org](mailto:events@dentalprotection.org)  
Telephone: 020 7399 1339  
[www.dentalprotection.org/ydc](http://www.dentalprotection.org/ydc)

## DENTAL TREATMENT LINKED WITH VASCULAR EVENTS

Recent research shows that invasive dental treatment such as extractions carries a small but statistically significant increase in the risk of stroke and heart attack over the short term.

In a study published in *Annals of Internal Medicine*, researchers examined data from the claims database of a US Medicaid programme to investigate whether impairment to blood flow resulting from invasive dental treatment created a higher risk for cardiovascular events.

Averaged across the different age

groups, the records suggested that, in the month following invasive dental treatment, the risk of a heart attack or stroke is increased by 50%. However, in the weeks following this, the risk then returned to normal, resulting in an increased overall risk of less than 4% per year.

The research was undertaken by researchers from the UCL Eastman Dental Institute (UCL EDI), UCL Epidemiology and Public Health Department and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

'This is the first study that links those dental procedures associated with a relevant host inflammatory response with short term risk of vascular events,' said Dr Francesco D'Aiuto, a HEFCE Clinical Senior Lecturer at UCL EDI.

The researchers are keen to stress that any risk increase is likely to be outweighed by the long-term benefits of dental treatment.

The abstract for the published article can be found at: <http://www.annals.org/content/153/8/499.abstract>