

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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DH INITIATIVE ADVOCATES 'SPORTS CANDY'

The Department of Health's (DH's) Change4Life (C4L) initiative is teaming up with children's superhero character Sportacus to inspire UK children to ditch their junk food and tuck into more 'sports candy' – otherwise known as fruit and vegetables.

Sportacus features in the children's television programme 'LazyTown', in which the main character encourages her friends to go outside and be active, with the help of local hero Sportacus. The partnership of C4L and LazyTown aims to encourage children between the ages of two and five to be more active, eat healthier food and leave their 'lazy ways' behind.

To launch the partnership, 3,600 Sure Start Children's Centres were due to receive new

Change4Life activity packs featuring all the LazyTown stars in September. The packs contain fun ideas for group activities and parents at home, such as healthy recipe ideas and a sticker wall chart. This will help children track their progress as they become as active and healthy as Sportacus.

The C4L and LazyTown materials will also be available for Change4Life supporters and partners to download from www.nhs.uk/Change4Life.

LONG-TERM CONFIDENCE IN DENTISTRY IS LOW

According to a new Healthcare Index, dentists' confidence in the future of the healthcare sector is very low. Dentists' outlook was, however, by far the most positive of the three primary healthcare providers researched by Lloyds TSB Commercial, with general practitioners (GPs) and pharmacists taking an even more negative outlook.

Based on a combined 'Confidence Index' drawn from a number of questions, where any figure greater than zero represents a positive outlook and figures below indicate a negative outlook, dentists registered minus 26 (the maximum values achievable are plus 100 and minus 100).

This compared to minus 61 for GPs and minus 50 for pharmacists, indicating that while dentists are uncertain about the proposed NHS reforms and how these will hit their profit margins, they are

the most positive of the primary healthcare respondents overall.

Overall confidence in the future of the dentistry sector reflects concern around finances and growing competition; 85% of dentists are expecting further financial pressures over the next five years and 91% anticipate increased competition in the marketplace over the same period. Forty-three percent of dentists expect to see an increase in profits over the next 12 months, with 33% expecting profits to remain flat.

'Although dentists are more optimistic in the short term, take away the relative stability of a current NHS contract and they appear to share the same financial fears as GPs and pharmacists,' said Ian Crompton of Lloyds TSB Commercial.

www.lloydstsb.com/healthcare/pdf/Lloyds_TSB_Healthcare_Index.pdf

HELP STAMP OUT SLAVERY

Pam Swain, Chief Executive of the British Association of Dental Nurses (BADN), is appealing for dental practices to obtain and display resource materials from the Purple Teardrop Campaign.

The Purple Teardrop Campaign aims to stop human trafficking, particularly of women and girls into prostitution, and 18 October 2011 is Anti-Slavery Day.

'Dental and medical staff can often be instrumental in identifying victims of this practice,' said Ms Swain, who is also President-elect of Soroptimist International Blackpool & District.

For more information and to order resources visit www.purpleteardrop.org.uk.

