

ORAL HEALTH INEQUALITIES

On 21 May 2015 the International Centre for Oral Health Inequalities Research and Policy (ICOHIRP) will be holding a Launch Conference in London in partnership with Public Health England. Committed to tackling oral health inequalities, academics and policy makers from 15 countries have formed a global network to explore the nature and cause of oral health inequalities to inform future policy. Further details at: www.ucl.ac.uk/dph/icohirp.

YOUNG DENTISTS TAUGHT THE IMPORTANCE OF CONSENT



This year's Young Dentist Conference took place on 14 February in London, hosted by Dental Protection in conjunction with the British Dental Association (BDA) and the *British Dental Journal* (BDJ).

Dr Raj Rattan, senior dental-legal consultant at Dental Protection, told over 200 delegates that failing to obtain patient consent before commencing treatment is one of the top risks for young dentists that can lead to litigation.

The other top risks that can cause legal problems for young dentists are:

- A failure to take into account what is and what is not available on the NHS
- Working beyond competence.

Dr Rattan said: 'It is vital that young dentists have an awareness of the factors that contribute to sub-optimal care. By controlling these factors, new clinicians can help to provide the best care to their patients and prevent potential complaints and claims.'

BOOK REVIEW



THE HISTORY AND IMPACT OF DEVELOPMENT IN DENTAL BIOMATERIALS OVER THE LAST 60 YEARS

N. Wilson, S. Gelbier

BDA

price £6.95; pp 108

ISBN 9781291769081

This concise text covers a transcript of a witness seminar, held as part of the John McLean History of Dentistry Archive, which took place at the British Dental Association in June 2012. An esteemed group of specialists in the field of dental materials interpret the history and advancements of this rapidly developing area. Alongside input from practising clinicians, a dental technologist and a patient, it delivers a comprehensive and balanced view of the effect of developments in biomaterials on the practice of dentistry from the introduction of the National Health Service to the present-day. The use of the transcript encourages the reader to become a part of the discussion and provides scientific information alongside relevant clinical studies.

The seminar follows a logical and systematic order, commencing with the background of dental materials science, followed by discussions on the milestones in dentine bonding, impression materials, luting cements, glass ionomers, composites, amalgam and ceramics. It

discusses their roles, design criteria, testing processes and their biocompatibility. The key concept running through the seminar is that the development of further materials should involve the collaboration of both academics in dental materials and the clinicians implementing them on a daily basis in dental practice.

I would recommend this book to anyone who handles dental materials. This book has encouraged me to embrace the latest developments and, more importantly, to study the instructions on the box! This is an easily overlooked aspect of utilising a new material, yet the correct manipulation of any material is fundamental to its successful use. This text inspires experienced dental clinicians to embrace advances in the available materials and urges dental undergraduates to investigate materials within and beyond their dental school environment.

A-S ANDREWS

ONLINE INITIATIVE TO IMPROVE ORAL HEALTH OF THE ELDERLY

A new online initiative to improve the oral health of elderly people launched on the 3 March in the House of Commons. The Improving Oral Health in Older Persons Initiative (IOHOPI) aims to raise awareness of the importance of good oral health later in life by providing training for carers within the English counties of Kent, Surrey and Sussex. Its website, www.iohopi.co.uk, has been specially developed by the British Dental Health Foundation (BDHF) and features e-learning modules, links and resources that aim to substantially improve the overall wellbeing and quality of life for older people.

According to the IOHOPI Project Leader, Dr Robert McCormick, the initiative will be 'initially aimed at providing oral healthcare training and resources for carers within the care home setting [but the team] aspire to extend this to support and improve training for all carers of older persons within the wider community.'

It is predicted that by 2020, around one in five people in the UK will be aged 65 years or older. As people age, many will develop



some deterioration in physical and cognitive abilities, and increasingly need care, either in their own or in residential or nursing homes. BDHF Chief Executive, Dr Nigel Carter OBE, said: 'Elderly people have some very specific dental needs with many suffering from decay due to changes in saliva flow that occur with age or as a result of prescription drug use. All this occurs at a time when self-care through toothbrushing may become more difficult due to decreasing manual dexterity.'

'I hope the vast array of resources on the website will help carers to better understand the importance of oral health and help to reduce the number of problems older people face.'