Dental trauma leads to death

A 14-year-old girl starved herself to death after developing a fear of dentists, an inquest heard.

Sophie Waller, from St Dennis in Cornwall, had an operation to remove her milk teeth after she stopped eating or speaking, after cracking a tooth on a boiled sweet.

She refused to go to the dentist to be treated for toothache because her tongue had been burnt.

A week later Sophie was so emaciated, her hair was falling out and they could see her spine through her back. She weighed less than four stone when she died.

Paradisiacal pathologist Dr Marie Ann Brundell said Sophie died on December 2, 2005 from acute renal failure caused by starvation and dehydration.

Dr Brundell said she would have expected a health professional to have noticed Sophie’s emaciated state had they seen her before she died.

The inquest heard that though Sophie lost 11 kgs in the four weeks before her death her parents, Janet Waller, a nursery teacher, and her husband Richard, a taxi driver, did not take her back to see a doctor.

They told the hearing they rang the hospital but were told by a nurse not to bring Sophie in as she was now under the care of a community child psychologist.

Dr Cockcroft condemns survey

The survey for Which? magazine found eight per cent have tried DIY dentistry and the same amount of people knew someone else who had tried it.

Around a quarter of those who had tried to remove a tooth with pliers. Three in 10 had tried to whiten their own teeth using household products, while 12 per cent had attempted to take a tooth out using a string tied to a door handle.

No complaints

The Dental Complaints Service (DCS) has seen complaints increase by eight per cent. The DCS logged 1,164 complaints in December 2008. For January – December 2007, the DCS logged 1,047 complaints, an increase of 10 per cent over the equivalent period in 2007.

The average number of complaints logged since the launch of the DCS in May 2006 is now approximately 32 per week.

A breakdown of the type of complaints made revealed that the highest number concerned indirect fillings and direct fillings.

Prosthetics were the second most popular reason for complaint followed by direct coronal restorations.

There were no complaints concerning treatment of patients without their consent and left their proximities.

Money matters

Tidy details

Make sure your paper work is in top condition following your tax return. An investigation could happen any second.

New habits

Fixed appliance orthodontics have become an efficient and widespread treatment for malocclusion but can we do better?

Fearelimination

Clinical case presentation may send shivers down students’ backs, but if you plan ahead it’s not so bad at all.

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