May will be National Smile Month, the biggest oral health event in Europe

The British Dental Health Foundation is going back to basics with National Smile Month this year. National Smile Month 2007 will take place from May 13 to June 12 with the back to basics tagline ‘Two Minutes Twice a Day’ and event organisers say it will be the biggest one yet.

Dr Nigel Carter, chief executive of the Foundation, commented: “We were as shocked as anyone when our National Dental Survey found that not only are people failing on basic brushing, they also admit to having used things like scissors, screwdrivers and knives to pick food from between their teeth. Twice daily brushing with fluoride toothpaste is the most important element of any oral health routine, yet over half of people questioned in the study admitted to brushing for less than two minutes, one in five admitted to brushing less than twice-a-day and around a third are oblivious to the benefits of fluoride.

“Furthermore, robust scientific research suggests that most people actually brush for less than 45 seconds and this is barely long enough to skim across most of the teeth. With so much of the news focusing on problems of NHS access and cosmetic treatment, it is clear that the return to basics offered by this campaign is absolutely vital if we are to continue to improve oral health in this country.”

The campaign, which will be launched at the House of Commons in May, will advise the public on how to make the best of their smile. Members of the public will be able to take part in the National Dental Survey 2007 online from mid-February.

Back to basics—two minutes twice a day

This year’s theme of ‘Two Minutes Twice a Day’ represents a real return to basics for National Smile Month. The Foundation’s National Dental Survey 2006 found that around half of people are failing on simple oral healthcare.

This year’s campaign will promote the three key oral health messages of:

– Brush for two minutes twice-a-day with fluoride toothpaste
– Cut down how often you have sugary foods and drinks
– Visit your dentist regularly, as often as they recommend.

Robust studies suggest that most people actually brush for less than 45 seconds, while our own research has found that one in five brush less than twice-a-day and around a third are oblivious to the benefits of fluoride. Good brushing is the most important aspect of any oral health routine, making it a perfect focus for National Smile Month 2007.

Want to take part?

Organising an event in National Smile Month is a perfect way of getting important oral health information to your patients, pupils or workforce. It can also be excellent fun and makes for great PR.

The free National Smile Month Guide contains all the information you need to organise a successful event. Information on the campaign theme, advice on planning and promoting your event and a range of event ideas are all included in the eight-page booklet.

The website contains forms to register if you are taking part as well as order forms for items to buy.

For more information on National Smile Month or to take part in the event, visit the website: www.nationalsmilemonth.org