Dental associations speak up over whitening debate

Could this be the call for reclarification on whiteneing products?

A n on-going investigation by Essex County Council Trading Standards Officers is directly affecting the availability of hydrogen peroxide-based whitening products to dentists triggering many dental associations to speak up and call for government clarification regarding teeth whitening products.

The British Dental Bleaching Society (BDBS) has endorsed such calls, stressing that there is no question around patient safety regarding bleaching when carried out by an appropriately trained and qualified dental healthcare professional.

The British Dental Association (BDA) has already expressed concerns that any supply problem could mean patients seek whitening treatments from non-dental professionals, which is illegal and exposes patients to potential harm.

As stated in a recent press release, the BDA is aware that the current investigation by trading standards at Essex County Council is having a major impact on the availability of hydrogen peroxide-based whitening products to dentists, and as a result, the situation is adversely affecting their ability to provide whitening treatments to patients. This supply problem could mean that patients will seek whitening treatments from non-dental professionals instead.

The European Union is currently reviewing the EU Cosmetics Directive, which is hoped will provide a coherent legal framework for the provision of tooth whitening products in the UK. Meanwhile, the BDBS and the BDA are urging Trading Standards officers to maintain the low-key approach to enforcement around the supply of whitening products to dental professionals previously advised by Local Government Regulation (LACORS).

The BDA would like to see the previous low-key approach to enforcement around the supply of whitening products to dental professionals previously advised by LACORS and taken by trading standards re-instated.

Stuart Johnston, Chair of the BDA’s Representative Body, said: “The recently-changed approach to the supply of whitening products, and particularly the impact the investigation being undertaken in Essex is having, is a significant concern for patient safety. This must be addressed as a matter of urgency and the previously adopted low-key approach to supply to dental professionals reinstalled. A significant body of evidence demonstrates the safety of whitening products when used by trained dental professionals. We urge trading standards officers to adopt a pragmatic approach that recognises this and puts patient safety first.”

In a statement from the BDBS, there is no question around patient safety when dentists observe the following guidelines:

- A full examination must take place before any bleaching procedure
- Informed patient consent is paramount and patients must have alternatives and risks thoroughly explained
- Before and after photos must be taken and retained throughout the course, and following completion of treatment
- Any products supplied for home use by a dental practitioner must meet Scientific Committee on Consumer Products (SCCP) guidelines
- There should be a commitment by the trade not to supply beauticians or the public directly.

Pomegranate power

A new university study has found that pomegranate juice reduces stress hormone levels in British workers. Researchers at Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh studied the physiological effect of daily consumption of 500ml of Pomegranate Pure pomegranate juice over a two-week period and found that daily consumption caused a significant reduction in the level of stress hormone cortisol in saliva and a significant reduction in systolic and diastolic blood pressure in all volunteers. Volunteers also showed an improvement in appetite and health as measured by pulse wave velocity. Volunteers were also assessed on mood status using a specialist test.

After consumption of pomegranate juice most subjects reported that they were more enthusiastic, inspired, proud and active and all reported that they were less distressed, nervous, guilty and ashamed according to the attributes tested. The full results of the study will be presented at an international conference in Barcelona in October.

New Ministers

Following the May 5 elections in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales, new ministers have been appointed. In Northern Ireland, Democratic Unionist Party Member Edwin Poots has been announced as the new Minister of Health, taking over from Ulster Unionist Party Member, Jim Savage. In Wales Wrexham Assembly Member Lesley Griffiths has become the new Minister for Health. She was previously Deputy Minister for Skills, Innovation and Science. In Scotland, Nicola Sturgeon MSP retains her post as Deputy First Minister and Secretary for Health. Jackie Baillie Labour MSP will be the Shadow Cabinet Secretary for Health.

Toothless tourist

DTI: On 9 May, an expedition investigating the cause of the vanishing lakes in the Blue Mountains World Heritage Area, stumbled across the Blue Mountains World Heritage Area. They now aim to return the teeth even though no one now remembers the name of the German tourist.