White at the end of the tunnel

Trading Standards Essex ‘support’ in-surgery tooth whitening; CDO announces regulation amendment proposals to be sent to EU Parliament

The confusion surrounding the issue of tooth whitening could be nearing an end as situations both at home and in Europe see major developments.

In a meeting of the British Dental Bleaching Society, Dental Directory’s Sales and Marketing Director Mike Volk read out part of a letter received from Essex Trading Standards by the company over the issue of supplying tooth bleaching products (Dental Tribune Vol 5, No. 15 pg 10):

“At outlined during our conversation on Friday, this Service has no issue with peroxide-based whiteners > 0.1% supplied to GDC registered dentists for use in the course of a professional whitening service conducted by a registrar. It is the view of this Service that such treatments would be regulated by the GDC. Provided your business takes steps to make this possible."

In view of this statement, Dental Directory has announced that it has reinstated the sale of chairside whitening kits to registrants, with an estimated 9.4 million patients seen and an additional 3 million more people in England given a dental examination this year. The report show that 56.2 per cent of the population is seen by an NHS dentist, exceeding the standard level of 55.8 per cent for the very first time. The report also revealed a 100,000 decrease on the previous year in Courses of Treatment (CoTs) with an estimated 9.4 million in the last quarter; the largest decrease was seen in North East, which saw a provisional drop of over five per cent.

Dentsply buys Astra Tech

According to a report from Reuters, U.S. company Dentsply International has brought AstraZeneca’s dental implants and medical devices unit Astra Tech for £1.4 billion, securing themselves another section of the dental market. Dentsply’s revenue will now increase by approximately a quarter after the off fids from rival private eq uity firms and medical techn ology groups, strengthen ing its position in the dental market. Last year the Swedish based company Astra Tech had a revenue of £555 million, ranking itself as the world’s third largest dental implants maker after Straumann and Nobel Biocare. As one report stated, for AstraZeneca, this change re enforces its role as a “pure play” pharmaceuticals company at a time when many rivals are diversifying.

Otzi the iceman

20 years ago Otzi the iceman, the 5,300-year-old mummy, was discovered encased in ice in the Italian Alps; but even though he had a full set of teeth reports said that they were in bad shape. Recently at the World Congress on Mum my Studies in San Diego new findings from CT scans were presented revealing that the man suffered from advanced alveolar bone loss of his teeth, "pro found" carious lesions, and periodontitis. The severity of the iceman’s carious lesions surprised the researchers, and they have suggested that the condition is evidence of a change in the Neolithic diet. DNA testing of the iceman’s oral cavity is being planned.

News in Brief

Number of patients seen by NHS dentists increases

According to a new quarterly report looking into NHS den tal activity, almost one million visits to general dental practitioners in March 2006. The figures, show that 56.2 per cent of the population is seen by an NHS dentist, exceeding the standard level of 55.8 per cent for the very first time. The report also revealed a 100,000 decrease on the previous year in Courses of Treatment (CoTs) with an estimated 9.4 million in the last quarter; the largest decrease was seen in North East, which saw a provisional drop of over five per cent.

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