King’s College London appoints new dental Dean

Dr Dianne Rekow, Senior Vice Provost of Engineering and Technology at New York University (NYU) and Provost of Polytechnic Institute of NYU, has been appointed as the next Dean of the Dental Institute at King’s College London.

She will succeed Professor Nairn Wilson, who is due to retire at the end of this year, and will take up the position from 1 January 2012.

Dr Rekow is president of the International Association for Dental Research (IADR) and is an internationally known authority on the performance of new materials and products for use in aesthetic and restorative dentistry. Dr Rekow’s team has also carried out research into the use of bioengineered tissue to facilitate the growth of replacement bone in people who have been disfigured by disease.

Principal of King’s, Professor Sir Rick Trainer, said: “Dr Rekow is an internationally renowned, highly regarded expert in her field with substantial experience of successful academic leadership in dentistry and beyond. I am delighted to welcome her to King’s Dental Institute as it enters the next phase of development as a world class dental clinical academic centre.

“With her unparalleled knowledge and expertise, Dr Rekow will help drive the Dental Institute forward to realise its full potential across the spectrum of innovative clinical practice, learning and teaching and ground-breaking oral and dental research.

“This year the Dental Institute was ranked in first position in two of the UK’s higher education league tables - The Guardian and The Complete University Guide. I would like to pay tribute to Professor Nairn Wilson’s role in achieving this during his many years of dedicated service to King’s, and under whose leadership and vision the Dental Institute has gone from strength to strength.”

Commenting on her appointment, Dr Rekow said: “King’s well-earned outstanding reputation is an incredibly valuable asset for a new dean, creating an exceptionally strong base from which to mitigate emerging challenges and realise future opportuni- ties for the Dental Institute, the College, the associated Trusts, and the dental profession as the Institute continues its evolution to increasingly greater distinctions.”

Could future cavities be prevented?

A recent study by the University of Illinois has confirmed that the bacteria associated with early childhood caries (ECC) has been found in infant saliva.

The study, led by researcher Kelly Swanson, focused on infants before their first teeth were formed; most studies in this sector focus on children who are already at nursery or primary school.

“We now recognise that the “window of infectivity,” which was thought to occur between 10 and 55 months of age, occurs at a much earlier age, before their first teeth were formed;” Kelly was quoted. “We want to characterise the microbial evolution that occurs in the oral cavity between birth and tooth eruption, as teeth erupt, and as dietary changes occur such as breastfeeding vs. formula feeding, liquid to solid food, and changes in nutrient profile.”

Throughout the study the team were able to characterise communities of bacteria and learned that oral bacterial communities in infants were much more diverse than originally expected.

Talking on whether these bacterial communities could be manipulated before tooth eruption, Dr Rekow said: “The soft tissues in the mouth appear to serve as reservoirs for potential pathogens prior to tooth eruption,” Kelly was quoted. “We want to characterise the microbial evolution that occurs in the oral cavity between birth and tooth eruption, as teeth erupt, and as dietary changes occur such as breastfeeding vs. formula feeding, liquid to solid food, and changes in nutrient profiles.”

In conclusion, the researchers said that educating parents-to-be on an oral hygiene is the most important strategy for prevention of dental cavities.

Eastman students gain prominent research grants

UCL Eastman PhD students Shari Daniels and Fiona Ryan have both been awarded prestigious research grants by the European Orthodontic Society (EOS) to aid in their impressive research in the field.

Fiona is currently undertaking the final year of her PhD and she and her supervisor Professor Susan Cunningham have been awarded £16,520 to fund a national research project to investigate certain psychological characteristics in the general UK population. In addition to this, Fiona has received a £10,000 research grant from the Royal College of Surgeons of England for her work on patient involvement in orthognathic treatment. Professors Susan Cunningham and Nigel Hunt supervise her in this endeavour.

Shari Daniela, along with supervisors Professor Nigel Hunt and Dr Rishma Shah, has been awarded £20,000 to support her research into the relationship between the muscles of mastication, mandibular growth and orthodontic therapies.

The UCL Eastman Dental Institute would like to congratulate both Shari and Fiona on their outstanding achievement and wish them every success with their research.

Could lollipops prevent tooth decay?

A recent study has shown that lollipops containing liquorice root extract significantly reduce the levels of tooth decay causes specifically in pre-school children. For the research, which was published by the Academy of Pediatric Dentistry, 66 pre-school children, aged between 2-5, were given the sweet fruit-free lollipop twice a day for two weeks; levels of the bacteria Streptococcus mutans (SM), which is the primary culprit in tooth decay, were recorded at the start, during the study and nine weeks afterwards.

The results showed that a twice-daily use of the lollipop significantly reduced both number and relative per cent of bacteria SM in high-risk children, whilst SM numbers were further reduced for 22 days after the last lollipop.

The researchers concluded that the lollipops were a simple and effective potential for preventing cavities in high-risk children.

The investigation was a collaborative effort of the Greater Lansing Area Head Start Program, the University of Michigan and the University of California - Los Angeles (UCLA) and was funded by the National Institute of Child Health and Development’s National Institute of Dental Research and Data Institute of the affiliated companies of Delta Dental of Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Tennessee, Kentucky, New Mexico and North Carolina.
What a floss of waste

An experiment involving animal waste has shown that dental floss has the potential to capture large amounts of hazardous gases before they are released in the environment.

The experiment, conducted by engineers from Texas A&M University’s Department of Biological and Agricultural Engineering in the US, were reportedly able to extract 50 per cent of ammonia emissions from liquid animal manure by simply using tubes based on expanded polytetrafluoroethylene (ePTFE), a highly versatile polymer which are used to manufacture fibres for cleaning teeth.

In recent years scientists have recognised that the breeding of cattle and livestock has caused a great deal of environmental problems, such as ammonia emissions being released into the atmosphere, the contamination of ground water and the acidification of soil and vegetation.

Figures from the US Environmental Protection Agency suggest that the US and China are the two largest producers of ammonia, releasing more than 15 million tons of ammonia into the environment.

According to a report, the new technology, which has been developed by Drs Saqib Mukhtar and MD Burhan, uses the process of diffusion to help lower ammonia emission, allowing gases to move from places of higher to lower concentration, such as the ePTFE tubes. From here the product can reportedly be put to good use, forming a chemical compound that can in fact be used to fertilise soil.

Although the technology is still being tested, the scientists announced that the technology will be able to be used on a larger scale in the near future.
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Dentsply names Ceram. X™ student winners

Leeds University dental student, Ola Hassan has been named the UK winner of the sixth Dentsply Ceram. X™ Case Contest and has entered the World Final.

Ola, who’s studying at Leeds Dental Institute, won the contest for her case poster showing restorative procedures on a 57-year old male patient suffering from non-curious tooth tissue loss caused by erosion and attrition associated with a history of frequent alcohol consumption and bruism. Teeth from 13 to 23 and 35 to 44 were restored with Ceram.X™ duo nano-ceramic composite.

Ola’s poster, along with all the winning entries from around the world will be presented at the CONS Euro in Instanbul in October 2011.

Runners up for the UK contest were Rosemary Sykes, a final year student at Newcastle University Dental Institute and Kevin Lun from Bristol. Rosemary’s entry was based on the treatment of a 47-year old male patient who presented with a 15-year history of tooth surface loss in all quadrants and lack of posterior tooth support. A diagnosis of tooth surface loss caused primarily by erosion and secondarily by attrition was made and attributed to bruism, lack of posterior support and frequent consumption of acidic food stuffs. A diagnostic wax-up was prepared on retraled articulation casts. A two-step etch, rinse and bonding system was employed under rubber dam and the teeth were restored using Ceram.X™ duo (+ D3 and E3) followed by polishing using Ceram.XHFolu discs and the Enhance system.

Kevin’s case study was a 52-year old male with a history of tooth surface loss regarding his maxillary and mandibular anterior teeth. His main concerns were reduced self-esteem, an inability to smile without anxiety and difficulty on biting. The aetiology of tooth surface loss was diagnosed as attrition with secondary erosion, resulting in marked reduction of clinical crown height. This was due to bruism and frequent consumption of diet cola at night.

Dentsply offers warmest congratulations to the three entries and the very best of luck to Ola in the world final.

Meanwhile, Dentsply is calling for current dental students to enter the 2012 Ceram.X™ Global Case Contest. Entrants must restore a tooth using Ceram.X duo or Ceram.X mono plus nano-ceramic restorative to compete.

The case must be presented following a call for new ideas for health apps that would help patients make informed decisions about their care.

Everyone, including patients, doctors, nurses and other health professionals and app developers, is invited to submit new ideas of health apps and online maps they think would be useful.

One leading example of an app that benefits patients is Choosing Well, developed by NHS Yorkshire & Humber for their local community, which allows people to search for their nearest NHS health services.

As part of this drive for ideas, Andrew Lansley has also asked people to come forward and name their favourite existing health applications.

Speaking to patients, doctors and nurses at Evelina Children’s Hospital recently in London, Andrew Lansley said: “We want to give people better access to information that will put them in control of their health and help make informed choices about their healthcare.”

“Over the next six weeks, we want to hear from patients, health professionals and budding app developers on their ideal new app. This is a unique opportunity for the NHS and those who develop apps to not only showcase their work but bring to life new ideas and realise true innovation in healthcare.”

Mr Lansley also announced the panel of judges who would choose the best apps to be showcased at an event in autumn: “I’m pleased to have such influential panel members representing the NHS, patients and clinicians as well as technology and those who support entrepreneurs. Innovation is what will help us create a more modern and personalised NHS for patients.”

The panel of judges includes Dr Shaibal Roy, Sir Bruce Keogh, Julie Meyer and Jennie Ritchie-Campbell. People can share their idea or suggestion by visiting http://mapsandapps.dh.gov.uk/. They can also vote for their favourite ideas at this site.
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Superannuation certificates could be positively dangerous

D entists should have recently received their superannuation form SD86C for the year 2010-11. If in the past you haven’t given any attention to this certificate, you certainly should now, says Johnny Minford, a Chartered Accountant and member of the NASDAL. The certificate states how much is going into your NHS pension. You would also use this document to quantify your tax relief, and as part of the calculations for your other pension and retirement planning. So it’s essential to check its accuracy.

You will remember the rush to get your Annual Reconciliation Report (ARR) submitted to your Primary Care Trust before the end of May. The ARR is intended to set out the achievement of UDA’s or UOA’s and who in the practice did them. The related superannuation information is kept by your retirement minsters. If the formal certificate SD86C then follows to be used as part of your tax submission.

Unfortunately, says Johnny, in his experience, the SD86Cs issued by many PCTs have largely ignored the ARR figures you have submitted. This means that they are wrong.

Johnny continued: “We have queried with some PCTs why this is so, and it appears that the issues are a mixed bag of internal deadlines, holidays, backlogs, miscommunications with the Business Service Authority (BSA), and so on. They say they are intending to process the ARRs and produce the ‘proper’ SD86C by the end of September”

“So the early issue of the SD86Cs has been worse than pointless – it has been positively dangerous. Any tax submissions made or pension decisions taken based on this ostensibly authoritative document now in your possession may be wrong, and for some high earning clinicians, very, very wrong. This could have a knock on effect on the tax payments currently being made, as the decision-making process may well be based on incorrect data.

Johnny warns that some dentists will at the very least need a “repair” to their tax submission be made by their accountant with the correct information, when it is eventually released.

He said in conclusion: “So check your SD86C’s before relying on it for any purpose. You have two months to inform the BSA that you do not consider it to be correct. If in doubt consult your accountant. Specialist advisers will be aware of what is going on - others will not. Your SD86C needs to be correct – either for now or for when you come to retire.”

Johnny Minford is the founder and Senior Partner at Minford Chartered Accountants and can be contacted at Johnny@minford.co.uk. He is a member of the National Association of Specialist Dental Accountants Lawyers group (NASDAL).

 NASDA (the National Association of Specialist Dental Accountants) has rebranded as NASDAL following the decision to assimilate the NASDA Lawyers’ Group. The result is a new name and enhanced role for an organisation that’s already well-established in the dental world.

Since its inception more than a decade ago, NASDA welcomed lawyers as associate members. As the business affairs of dentists have become more challenging, especially as a result of the complexities of the new and changing NHS contracts, and the impact of dental bodies corporate, there has been a growing need for accountants and lawyers to share information.

This has resulted in increasing numbers of lawyers joining NASDA so that the legal section now represents more than 25 per cent of the organisation. At their last meeting, the two specialist groups representing more than 50 professional firms agreed to merge and rebrand as NASDAL.

As part of this initiative, the organisation has a new website at www.nasdal.org.uk. However, other aspects of the organisation remain the same with Nick Ledingham as Chairman, Ray Gooding as treasurer, and Alan Suggett as Senior Partner at Minford Chartered Accountants.

On behalf of NASDAL Lawyers, Ray Goodman said: “We are delighted at the rebranding which acknowledges the increased synergy between the specialist dental accountants and dental lawyers. We are proud to be part of an integrated organisation whose members provide the highest levels of professional support to dentists.”

Running in memory of granddad

R unning in memory of granddad which lasts for more than three weeks, you should see a dentist or doctor immediately. The money raised will go towards helping improve the support for mouth cancer sufferers and their families, as well as highlighting the shocking facts about mouth cancer.

To sponsor Chris visit www.justgiving.com/MortimerChris. For more information on the Mouth Cancer Foundation visit www.mouthcancerfoundation.org.uk.