

Crystal clear

Dr Linda Greenwell, founder of the British Dental Bleaching Society, on why we need legislative clarity

More people than ever before are requesting whitening treatment to improve the beauty of their smile. In the appearance-driven society we live in, the general public are interested in attaining white teeth to achieve more personal success in their lives and more business success. The concept that their own natural teeth can be whitened safely to improve their smile is appealing.

With the new changes in the cosmetic regulations restricting the concentration of bleaching material that can be supplied to patients following a thorough assessment – and the recent legal case confirming that tooth whitening is the practice of dentistry – it is now essential that dentists and their trained teams run effective whitening programmes within their practice.

However, it is essential for the dentist and their dental team to all train on every aspect of whitening. This *Guide to Professional Tooth Whitening* highlights many aspects of professional whitening.

The voice

The British Dental Bleaching Society (BDDBS) was established primarily to train and educate dentists and their teams in competency in all aspects of tooth whitening. All members need to learn more about tooth whitening, and how best to treat each individual patient, so they can obtain excellent whitening results. Each member plays an important role and all staff needs training in these aspects of whitening whether it be the clinical, management or administration of their appointment sequences or marketing of the bleaching treatments at the practice.

Furthermore, the BDDBS was established to lobby for changes in the existing legislation. Although there have been changes, there is more work to be done on, for example, the treatment of under 18s who have severe dental discolouration, and the use of higher strength concentrations to be used for power bleaching. We will continue to work on this. There are issues associated with the supply of whitening by non-dental practitioners at beauty shows,

on the internet or in beauty clinics. Many of these illegal cosmetic whiteners market aggressively using products that are not properly tested or been shown to be effective. There is more work to be done to get this illegal practice terminated.

The Tooth Whitening Information Group (TWIG) has been established to get better information to the public on how to seek professional dental help when considering whitening treatment and how to report illegal whitening treatment. Tooth whitening treatments, when professionally done by a dental practitioner are effective and have therapeutic benefits in that it cleanses the gums and reduces plaque formation. There is now 20 years of scientific literature and evidence showing that tooth whitening using the dentist-supervised home bleaching treatment is effective, safe and predictable treatment for patients.



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