Small-diameter dental implants become more popular in the U.S.

Millennium Research Group’s U.S. Dental Markettrack has found that small-diameter dental implants (less than or equal to 3 mm) are becoming increasingly popular in the U.S. Revenues for these implants are growing faster than those of regular-diameter (greater than 3 mm) dental implants.

The U.S. market for small-diameter dental implants grew by more than 30 percent in 2007, generating over $20 million in revenues, the company says.

More than 80 percent of nurses cite staffing shortages as a major source of frustration.

The U.S. has more than 1,250 million nurses between 45 and 60, notes Marcia Fallar, RN, executive vice president of AMN Healthcare. If just 10 percent of those nurses retire or take non-nursing jobs in the next three years, that would remove more than 120,000 nurses from the workforce.

One area of improvement for nurses is that 58 percent of baby boomer nurses say that physicians being trained today are more respectful of nurses than physicians who trained 10 or 20 years ago. Results of AMN Healthcare’s 2008 Survey of Nurses 45 to 60 are available at www.amnhealthcare.com.

Job dissatisfaction could lead to a nursing shortage

Occupational burnout may pose challenges to health care in the U.S. A survey by AMN Healthcare, the nation’s largest health care staffing firm, indicates that many baby boomer nurses are facing career burnout. More than one-third plan to retire over the next three years or find a non-nursing job, work part-time, or work as travel nurses.

The survey of 1,850 nurses aged 45 to 60 found that 46 percent consider their job as a nurse less satisfying than it was five years ago. Only 45 percent of those surveyed said they would choose nursing as a career if they were starting out today, and only 48 percent recommend nursing as a career. More than 80 percent of nurses cite staffing shortages as a major source of frustration.

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Source: AMN Healthcare

PDA defends amalgam and blasts Philadelphia ordinance

The Pennsylvania Dental Association (PDA) warns that a Philadelphia ordinance requiring dentists to distribute brochures on restorative treatment options could be costly and burdensome to dentists while being alarming and confusing to patients.

In a letter to Dental Tribune, PDA President Dr. Jon J. Johnston says PDA wants dental patients to be properly informed about treatment options, but the Philadelphia ordinance is really intended as an attack against one restorative treatment option: dental amalgam.

“We are always working to ensure that our patients have the most accurate information possible when considering the best choices for their dental health care,” Johnston says. “PDA supports a comprehensive brochure based on the facts—in fact we have posted a brochure on our Web site (www.padental.org) that is available for download.”

He says PDA’s main concern with the creation of a new brochure is “the inclusion of a group whose agenda, without the benefit of scientific support, is the elimination of amalgam as a restorative option.”

“They advance their agenda by raw scare tactics and misinformation and have no scientific basis behind their claims,” he says. “Amalgam remains a safe, economical and effective restorative material as it always has been.”

Johnston warns that the bill could force dentists in Philadelphia to present and explain hundreds, or even thousands, of the brochures, significantly raising administrative costs.

“The wording of the brochures could pose additional problems. "PDA has made our case that the brochures should contain only factual, scientifically based and easy to understand language about these materials,” Johnston says. "The American Dental Association (ADA) has already composed an educational brochure for this purpose, and we have lobbied that the ADA language needs to be the basis of the Philadelphia brochure. "When you allow a group such as Consumers for Dental Choice to muddy the waters with its alarmist language, there is the risk that some dental patients will be discouraged from using a safe, effective and economical material like amalgam, again adding significant cost to dental care for these individuals should they decide to go with other options. This will be especially costly to public health payers." With regard to the bill’s implementation, the Philadelphia Department of Health has six months from when the ordinance was enacted (December 15) to draft the brochure. The city council will then review the brochure, and once it is approved, the Department of Health must notify dentists that the brochure has been finalized and must be used.

—John Hoffman

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