HK takes first step to regulate dental bleaching

HONG KONG: The government in Hong Kong has proposed a new legislation that would make it illegal for beauticians to perform dental bleaching and other cosmetic procedures classified as high-risk medical procedures. In the new guidelines under the Medical Registration Ordinance, only officially registered dentists and physicians would be permitted to do so, representatives of the Food and Health Bureau announced.

In addition to tooth whitening, the legislation would apply to Botox injections, chemical exfoliation and hyperbaric oxygen therapy. It is expected to come into effect in a few months from now once it has been accepted by a Legislative Council panel.

Cosmetic procedures offered at beauty spas and salons have become a thriving business in China’s Special Administrative Region, which has raised concerns about the safety of risky procedures undertaken by non-professionals. Several incidences have occurred in the recent past, including the death of a 46-year-old woman who had undergone blood transfusion therapy at a HK beauty centre in the Causeway Bay area last autumn. Since then, professional organisations like the Hong Kong Dental Association have repeatedly urged the government to address loopholes in current regulations that allow non-professionals to perform procedures that could potentially harm patients’ health or place their lives at risk.

“Several months after the passing of Ms Lam, the council requested that the Dentists Act be amended so that the practice of dentists is not interfered with by non-clinical professionals. As such, the government is expected to submit the amendments to the Legislative Council for approval,” Dr Alfred Yung, told the news agency.

With the proposed guidelines, Hong Kong is following other countries in the region that revamped their tooth-whitening regulations. New Zealand, for example, recently restricted the over-the-counter sale of tooth-whitening products with a high concentration of hydrogen peroxide. Earlier this year, Australia also changed its poison standard to stop the sale of tooth-whitening products containing more than 6 per cent of the harmful chemical.

Malament on tour in India

Ivoclar Vivadent has announced that Dr Kenneth Malament, a well-known prosthodontist from New York in the USA, will be holding a three-day lecture series on the integration of aesthetic dentistry into routine and complex prosthodontics in India this month.

In addition to the science and controversies involving modern dental materials, he will be discussing the concerns and factors for prosthodontists when working with patients who insist on aesthetic procedures, the dental material manufacturer said.

The lectures will take place from 26 to 28 November in the cities of Bangalore, Chennai and Mumbai. Dentists interested in attending can register through the Ivoclar Vivadent India website.

Distinguished by innovation

Healthy teeth produce a radiant smile. We strive to achieve this goal on a daily basis. It inspires us to search for innovation, aesthetic and complex solutions for dentistry procedures and the fabrication of quality, fixed or removable restorations, so that you find quality products at your disposal to help people regain a beautiful smile.