July 12, 2006

Good News!

One of our members, Dr. Michael Fleming, DDS from North Carolina, has been appointed as the Consumer Representative for the Dental Products Panel of the Medical Devices Advisory Committee of the Center for Devices and Radiologic Health of the Food and Drug Administration. His appointment was confirmed in time to be a panel member for the upcoming FDA hearing on dental amalgam and its potential neurotoxic effects. Dr. Fleming's appointment is for a period of 3 1/2 years and he will be responsible for representing consumer concerns before the Panel for any and all products used in dentistry, including those materials that require regulation.

While advisory panels within the agency do not directly regulate medical devices, the FDA relies heavily on the expertise and recommendations of these panels in their own determinations. The dental amalgam conference is not a regulatory conference, per se. Rather, it will be a review of the current evidence regarding the neurotoxicity of dental amalgam. However, the FDA may decide that regulatory action is necessary if the information reviewed at the hearing is worthy of such a response. So, this conference has the potential to dramatically alter the practice of dentistry as we know it.

The FDA is holding the dental amalgam hearings September 6 & 7 and will review and discuss peer-reviewed scientific literature on the subject. The FDA has told Dr. Fleming that this meeting promises to be one of the most significant and highly charged hearings of its type ito be held in over ten years. Heavy media coverage is expected as well as a jam-packed hearing room.

Congratulations Dr Fleming!