Backing the sunbed bill

Software to give tanning salons greater control...

The author – Steve Gregory, Managing Director of market leading salon software company SolarTrack – defines why his company has been actively backing the sunbed bill from the beginning.

SolarTrack is a salon management computer software system designed from the start to implement a better regulated tanning environment. Established in 2001, SolarTracks' salon software has been increasingly popular with salon owners as it gives them greater control of their salon. SolarTrack has a number of facilities to help salon owners and their staff take care of customers and ensure they do not over expose themselves on the tanning equipment.

In the light of the recent public health bill, which meant no-one under the age of 18 years old was permitted to use tanning equipment, all tanning shops were to have staff present at all times and provide information about the health risks of sunbed use. It was only a matter of time for England and Wales to follow suit.

SolarTrack has always had customers' safety at the heart of its software; from the moment a new client comes into the shop, the staff member takes the client's details before they can use the tanning equipment. The client's date of birth is asked; if their age is younger than the legal requirement, the age is shown in bold to warn the staff member this client is too young to use the sunbeds. Doctors' contact details are requested, skin type and a picture can be attached to the record card.

Once all details are entered, a disclaimer form is printed off for the client to read and sign. The disclaimer form explains the risks of using tanning equipment, provides a list of when it is advised to seek doctors' advice before using tanning equipment and provides information of what should be undertaken before, during and after tanning. SolarTrack records every transaction on the system – when making a sale, it is set up to warn staff that the client has already had x number of tanning sessions in that week, month or year and for how many minutes. This helps prevent clients over exposing themselves to tanning equipment.

These features help equip salon owners and members of staff to provide their clients with more awareness of ultraviolet light exposure and an informed choice before tanning.

There are many responsible salon owners in the UK who keep to the industry's voluntary code of practice. Paul Senior, owner of Skin Deep salon, Didsbury, Manchester, uses SolarTrack software. Senior has always implemented an 18 years and over policy for his tanning equipment. He recently took part in a discussion on the use of tanning equipment aired on GMG Radio, "It is really important to increase the minimum age of people using tanning equipment. I have always had a minimum age of 18 using my tanning equipment. I think this bill will help improve standards and people will be more inclined to make an informed decision."

SolarTrack backs the bill to ban all unmanned and coin operated tanning shops. Without staff present, there is always the risk of under aged children using tanning equipment and possible overexposure. There have been numerous cases in the media where children have been seriously harmed by using unmanned sunbed shops.

The system contains a number of facilities that will dramatically improve all aspects of a tanning salon's business, quickly and effectively. Alongside these aspects, it will help salon owners implement the new laws brought in by the public health bill.

☼ **SolarTrack**
Professional Tanning Software

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