

LDC CONFERENCE 2015

The 2015 LDC Conference kicked off with a formal dinner in The Grand Connaught Rooms, London. A historical venue where it is said the rules for the FA were laid down in 1863!

The main sponsor, Denplan, also supplied the after dinner speaker, Roger Matthews CDO of Denplan, who reminisced about the past and wondered what the future may bring. This year a new award was presented, well three actually, for our unsung heroes of dentistry. These were presented for what appears almost a life time's service to LDCs. The Chair of Conference, Jonathan Randall's speech this year again raised money for the Ben Fund...and was sub 14 minutes!

[Motions, motions, motions!](#)

Unanimously passed were 16, 20, 28 and almost two others with only two against. Only two out of the forty three motions were defeated. These related to associates having a policy that defined their terms and conditions when working in the NHS and asking Health Education England to provide free IOTN training for all GDPs. A motion put forward by Derek Watson, there representing the press, was to televise conference so that there is live reporting. Would this give a more accurate representation of the mood of conference? This motion was narrowly defeated as it was felt it would stifle debate.

16. This conference urges NHS England to adopt a greater degree of flexibility in relation to small practices in rural areas closing for dentists' and staff holidays when perfectly adequate substitute arrangements are offered for the care of patients with emergencies. Decisions that practices can't close because patients are not permitted to travel more than an arbitrarily set distance have a disproportionate impact in rural areas. Conference believes that this policy is ultimately going to make small rural practices unsustainable, harming the oral health of those populations.

[Passed unanimously and the word rural was substituted with all.](#)

20. Stress levels are now dangerously high for primary care dentists. Conference demands that GDPC take a firmer line with the Department/CQC/GDC in defence of the profession.

[Passed unanimously.](#)

28. This conference insists that the NHS fee uplifts must fully compensate dental practices, to reflect the additional costs to practices for the implantation of new regulations, including the Friends and Family Test.

[Again passes unanimously.](#)

Henrik Overgaard-Nielsen, current Chair of GDPC spoke about the current state of play with the prototypes.

John Milne, formerly Chair of GDPC, now a Senior National Dental Advisor for the CQC, brought his calm approach to his talk and urged us all to download and read The Dental Provider Handbook from the CQC website. Examples were presented where challenges and action were taken against dental practices. The parting words from Sampana Banga, Head of Dentistry Inspection were "we don't expect to be liked but hope to be transparent and honest regulator".

There was a presentation on the Dental Activity Review Programme from Carole Doble, Head of Dental Services, Sarah McCallum, Dental Activity Review Programme Lead and Carol Reece from NHSE. It was enlightening to hear that they can save, according to NHS Protect, up to £92 million

from the year 2014/2015 after conducting a review on patients re-attending within 28 days! So splitting treatments is what is being looked at. Realistically, some of these will be genuine, but still they were looking to claw back somewhere in the region of £52-£63 million from the estimated over claiming of the previous year where NHS Protect identified a potential claw back of £74 million. They want to help clinicians to focus on areas where they are “out of step” with their colleagues. So behaviour change is what they want from all and they will take action against the extremes. Look out for the letters.

At this point conference requested “the rule book” they work to and also some understanding by them from them on how dentists work. This debate got fairly heated as GDPC had previously requested, on more than one occasion, copies of the three types of letters that will be going out to dentists and also the Information Leaflet, these have still not been forthcoming.

There was a further presentation from a panel in the afternoon about the Contract Reform Policy. Helen Miscampbell, Serbjit Kaur, Carol Reece and David Glover led us through the fact that 10% of our contracts will be at risk and how improving oral health, access and value for money could be achieved from the existing financial envelope. This story was worthy of a place in the fantasy section of any library.

Presentations from the Benevolent Fund, DHST and the Dental Guild were all received and as ever KLDC continues to support all three and the work that they do for our profession and their families.

Anyway conference next year will be back to Manchester, with Nick Stolls in the hot seat.

Good luck to GDPC in actioning the motions passed by conference. Henrik, and Mick Armstrong, Chair of the PEC, have some tough tasks, but will not be shy.

A fun time lies ahead!

Liz Hartle.