

LDC Conference 8th June 2007

GDPC Report – Lester Ellman (Chairman)

The new contract has destabilised and demoralised NHS dentistry. Dentists' views were not taken into consideration when agreeing the new contract.

There have been significant repercussions for patients with high dental needs.

A BDA survey of dentists has shown:

- 97% believed that the contract did not get dentists off the treadmill
- 93% did not believe the contract encouraged a more preventative approach to care
- 95% were less confident of the future of the NHS

Problems that have occurred included dentists focussing on achieving UDAs rather than acting in the patients' best interests.

The 5% reduction of freetime is a myth. The treadmill has not gone but changed.

BDA/GDPC message

The BDA want:

- PCTs to receive the whole commissioning budget.
- UDA targets to be removed as the only measure of performance.
- Long term business stability by permitting dentists to transfer contracts to new owners.

The BDA is presently involved with a UDA contract with a zero value.

Future issues for the BDA to tackle:

- Funding
- VCJD and re-use of endodontic instruments (need compensatory funding)
- Maintenance of the self employment status for associates
- Increase local presence

Dentists Health Support Trust (previously known as the "Sick Dentists Scheme")

There were 70 new cases last year, an increase since the new contract was introduced.

If anyone wishes to contribute to this scheme, please send contributions to:

Brian Westbury
c/o Dental Protection
33 Cavendish Square
London

SPECIAL FORUM

Opposition debate on the future of NHS dentistry

The Minister of Health was not invited to the conference this year.

The two speakers were Dr Morrison (Shadow Health Minister for the Conservative Party) and Mr Lamb (Shadow Health Secretary for the Liberal Democrats).

Dr Morrison made the following points:

- The past few years have been disastrous for NHS dentistry. In April this year the Prime Minister admitted that access for all was not available, and had actually worsened under this government. T
- The new contract was inadequately negotiated with the profession.
- The PDS pilot schemes were popular with dentists as they didn't contain UDAs or bandings.

- Dr Morrison felt preventative medicine was really important and that payment for capitation was the way forward so that the UDA treadmill was eliminated.
- There would however be no extra funding should the Conservative Party return to power.

Mr Lamb made the following comments:

- The 2002 audit found that the existing contract provided poor value for money with unnecessary treatment being carried out and patient needs were not met in deprived areas.
- There should be high UDA values as a temporary measure for patients with high dental needs.
- There should be no charge for examinations.
- Patients should be persuaded to have Personal Dental Plans.
- A new audit should be commissioned to review the contract one year on to ensure that the contract was providing value for money and achieving access for all.

Both noted that the proportion of the health care budget set aside for dentistry has declined over the years.

Regional Liaison Groups (RLG) (Stuart Johnson)

There need to be regular national meetings of the individual RLGs.

RLGs need to listen to their grass-root members.

The move to local commissioning means that the RLGs do more than share information amongst those LDCs that attend. They need to ensure all LDCs are involved and that the whole country is covered.

They need a more formal constituted organisation.

RLG role:

- Sharing information between members of the LDC
- Representing dentists at SHA levels
- Facilitating delivery of BDA advice on local commissioning

LDC:

- Need to focus on local commissioning now with additional support from the BDA
- Advice to LDCs will be provided via RLG meetings
- LDCs need to join with the RLGs and contact the BDA to set up the inaugural meetings with the RLGs.
- BDA to develop its regional presence
- The BDA needs to have the correct details for all LDC secretaries.

Alternatives to UDAs by Lester Ellman

There is obvious clear opposition to UDAs from the profession. If you can think of an alternative to UDAs, then send your comments to your GDSE representative or the BDA at nhsreforms@bda.org.