

LDC Conference 12/6/21 by Zoom

Shaun Charlwood (Chair of GDPC)

96% of practices achieved 36 % of their NHS dental contract in the period January 2021. In April to March 2021, with 86 % achieving 45 %. In April there has been less UDA delivery, and it is anticipated that with holiday commitments that achieving 60% of NHS targets is overly ambitious. There is concern that with stress, heat, morale will have a detrimental affect on the mental welfare of dentists. It has been noted that financial support has been provided in Scotland and Wales for improved ventilation, due to Covid, but this has not been the case in England.

88% of dentists have felt there has been a significant impact on morale since Covid.

60% were concerned about hitting UDA targets

77% were worried about their finances if they failed to meet the targets

There is estimated to be 30 million lost dental appointments due to Covid

There is a call for SDCEP to develop a roadmap for safe relaxation of the restrictions, and to look for a change in focus of the NHS contract. Less is spent on NHS dentistry than 10 years ago

Health Watch (spokesperson from BDA)

There has been a barrier to access and care during Covid. Should there be a charge for the NHS examination? There has been a significant increase in contact to the BDA asking about handing back contacts, on average 40 per week, this could lead to over 1000 practices not providing NHS provision. A poor NHS framework is bad for professionals and ultimately for patients.

Ed Waller (Director of Primary Care Strategy and NHS contracts)

Urgent care is being prioritised over other courses of treatment. In phase 1 of the pandemic 600 UDC (Urgent Dental Centres) were mobilised who saw over 2 million patients since March 2020. Flexible commissioning is available to address local needs. There is a wish to improve access and inequalities but to operate within a set budget. There is a recognition that not all the challenges will be solved at once

Sara Hurley (Chief Dental Officer for England)

Dental Caries is the chief reason for children having a General Anaesthetic and requiring a hospital admission.

4 in 10 can't afford the cost of NHs treatment

Many associates want to leave the NHS

Motions

All the motions were accepted apart from standardisation of UDA 's. There was a special motion concerning discrimination (there is no place for discrimination in dentistry), which was agreed by 100% of the delegates.

Rebecca Harris and Jason Wong (Deputies of the CDO)

They are trying to meet the challenges of improving access and inequalities; this is not a new issue and was raised in a paper in the BJD in 2001. The disadvantaged experience a higher level of disease.

The UDA system is not fair for patients with high treatment needs, there is an issue in man power and there is a geographic imbalance.

Flexible commissioning may be used for Urgent Dental care, Oral Cancer and Children's General Anaesthetics. There have been Stakeholder workshops which took place on 20th May in the North. In Manchester there has been increased funding in urgent stabilisation.

There is a work force to determine how to get early career dentists into rural locations, the numbers have worsened since Covid. There are not enough NHS dentists

Colette Brigman (Chief Dental Officer for Wales)

In North Wales they are looking into a contract with no UDA's, and increasing the access for children with high dental needs. Each patient has an ACORN (an assessment of Clinical Oral Risk and Need) with the dentists concentrating on urgent care and priority groups and not seeing routine patients. There has been an increase in prevention with more fluoride applications being applied. There is an annual contract value for each dental practice

Dentistry and Climate Change (Steve Mulligan from Sheffield University)

1. Reduce – go digital to cut down on paper
2. Reuse – gowns, bibs
3. Recycle
4. Rethink – place prophylaxis paste on the back of a glove, so not using a dappen pot

Try to reduce incineration by encouraging waste collection to be sent back to manufacturers. Incineration of biomedical waste contributes to air pollution.

Try to encourage work force to walk to work to reduce carbon footprint, and leads to improved health and happier fitter staff. By increasing fluoride application which leads to reduction in treatment and so needing fewer dental visits. Latex gloves are more biodegradable.

Eliminate amalgam. Nitrous Oxide users should have scavenging systems to reduce carbon emissions. An excellent thought-provoking talk.

Mental Health and Wellness - Ros McMullan

The following websites were recommended

www.mhwd.org

www.zerosuicidealliance.com

www.supportfordentalteams.org

Also recommended was that a trained mental health wellness lead (champion) could act as a listening ear, to promote safe places within each dental practice

Undergraduate Training and Covid – Professor Callum Youngson

There were concerns before Covid as to whether dental students were prepared for practice, but this may be to changes in perception. The GDC has listed all the competencies that a dental student should have before qualifying, and that they should be regarded as 'Safe Beginners' and the students themselves should be able to assess their own capabilities and limitations. The graduates this year will have less experience, and if not confident should be given added support. Dundee and Glasgow Dental students are repeating their final year. Aberdeen dental students will graduate in December.

Due to Tier 3 lockdown, there was a lack of attendance at dental schools especially into open clinics. Each dental school needed to show how each dental student reached the required standard to qualify. The students themselves had more limited AGP experience, and had an increase in simulation training. They will be less experienced than in previous years

80% of dental students will qualify this summer. The 3rd and 4th year students have also not acquired the skills they have needed. The future graduates may lack confidence due to their inexperience

A document entitled Assessment of Graduates by dental schools can be found on the following website

www.dentalschoolcouncil.ac.uk