

LDC Officials' Day 29th November 2019

BDA Update

Mick Armstrong, Chair of PEC, gave a report.

There were many reforms due to be implemented by NHSE in the new year but the picture was not an optimistic one.

Dentistry had become a factor in the current election campaign, and that was all credit to BDA staff members who had been lobbying on dentistry's behalf.

The GDC had reduced the ARF and relaxed FtP protocols but there was still scope for improvement.

PASS schemes were being promoted and the BDA indemnity scheme had been introduced.

Prevention needed to be hugely supported by Government or else it would fail.

GDPC Update

Dave Cottam, Chair of GDPC, gave a report after thanking Henrik Overgaard-Nielsen for his sterling work prior to his resignation.

The fact that 4.3m adults were missing out on NHS dentistry had been top news on TV and radio for two full days recently. 'Missing Piece', the new BDA manifesto had been noticed by all political parties. It included many of the motions passed at the Birmingham LDC Conference earlier this year. One major point was that we must be paid for prevention.

Government commitment to Contract Reform continued but at a snail's pace. When would the prototype evaluation be completed?? Weighting criteria were a concern and some calculations used to model the new system did not hold true and would require many more patients to be seen. However, this could be the Government's hidden agenda.

Blend A or Blend B? GDPC wanted the practitioner to decide. It also wanted no UDAs involved in future activity payments and the roll-out process should be gradual and voluntary with practices opting in.

25% of Prototype practices faced clawback, 38% for UDA practices. During the transition phase there would be the need to ensure stability of practices who would be changing to a new financial system.

Flexible commissioning could help to relieve struggling practices. NHSE needed to encourage commissioners to engage locally.

The recent DDRB uplift in England had been 2.42% but the report will be delayed again next year. The deadline for the submission of evidence was January 13th.

BSA reviews were another big stick to threaten us. Warning letters had been sent to all practices even though only 417 outliers had been recognised nationally. GDPC had not been informed or consulted about these letters. It appeared to be another way to prevent us from claiming for work rightfully done.

Prison dentists would now have access to the NHS pension scheme.

The Orthodontic procurement process in the West Midlands had been abandoned and some others had been paused.

Several other speakers gave talks on a variety of subjects;

The Practitioner Health Service was now available across England having previously been confined to London and the South East. The service hoped to overcome the barriers of confidentiality, stigma and practicality to practitioners seeking mental health care. Stress factors were not reducing and the service now had 300 clinicians across England.

A speaker on environmental sustainability suggested that HTM 01-05 had been not thoroughly thought through and was damaging to the environment.

There was now a network of 'Freedom to Speak up Guardians' across the NHS. Speaking up protects patient safety and improves the lives of NHS workers. The process was; speak up-say thank you-take action-provide feedback-ask for feedback when dealing with complaints or whistle blowers.

Changes were being made to the NHS Choices scheme. The aim was to deliver a platform trusted by patients and providers. There were now more rejections of posts than previously and the 'average' star rating had been removed. Providers should sign up to the new comment response tool.

The status of Associates was also discussed. Traditionally they had been regarded as self-employed but this was coming under scrutiny. It was in the power of HMRC to change this status even if it had been 'approved' by the BDA.

If Associates were to become employees, HMRC could receive £7k per annum for each Associate. Legal opinion suggests that Associates are self-employed however.

David Cooper