John Milne, a dental practitioner in West Yorkshire, has been elected as the new chair of the British Dental Association’s General Dental Practice Committee (GDPC).

Dr Milne is a partner in a mainly NHS practice with two branches, one in Featherstone and the other in Normanton, near Wakefield. He also holds a clinical assistant post in orthodontics at Pinderfields Hospital in Wakefield.

Dr Milne said: ‘It is a great honour to be elected to chair the General Dental Practice Committee.

The profession faces a number of significant challenges as we begin 2009, with issues with the 2006 reforms still needing urgent attention and the economic downturn a concern for dentists and patients alike.

For the sake of both the profession and the patients we serve, it is important that we press strongly for constructive reform of the NHS contract.’

Dr Milne is a member of the Department of Health’s Key Stakeholder Group and featured in Lord Darzi’s Next Stage Review Group.

Dr Milne will be supported by the two newly-elected vice chairs of GDPC; Cornwall-based dentist Peter Hodgkinson and West London practitioner Henrik Overgard-Nielsen.

The GDPC, an autonomous committee of the British Dental Association, represents the interests of dentists working in general practice and act on their behalf. It is recognised by the government as representing NHS general dental practitioners.

Debating the future

The chief dental officers for England and Scotland will be debating the future of dentistry, along with the British Dental Association, at a keynote seminar in the summer.

The Westminster Health Forum Keynote Seminar on the Future of Dentistry will be held on 12 May at Westminster.

The seminar will examine issues around the future of dentistry, access to NHS dental treatment and dental contracts.

It is timed to coincide with the publication of the recently announced review into NHS dentistry and as the gross income protection scheme ends for dentists in England.

The discussion will bring together policy makers from Government and Parliament with key stakeholders and it will include how current strategies may change dental care in the UK and how they can be implemented across the primary care trust network.

The various sessions in the seminar will examine: the review into NHS dentistry and access to NHS treatment; recommendations for improving the dental contracts and funding allocation; addressing regional differences in oral health and barriers to participation; the changing role of dental practitioners; the role of the private sector; and dental practice in Scotland in comparison with England.

Dr Barry Cockcroft, Chief Dental Officer for England, Susie Sanderson, chair of the British Dental Association; and Margie Taylor, Chief Dental Officer for the Scottish Government will be giving keynote addresses at the seminar.

Angie McBain, president of the British Association of Dental Nurses will also be speaking.

For more information or to book a place at the seminar go to: http://www.westminsterforumprojects.co.uk/dietandhealthforum/diary.aspx