**NHS events**

Professor Jimmy Steele, chair of the independent review team for NHS dentistry, is calling for dental professionals to give their views on NHS dentistry at five ‘engagement events’ being held around the UK. The five sessions are being held around the country over the next two months. Professionals are invited to join NHS commissioners and patient representatives at any of the five engagement events being held in Newcastle, Birmingham, Bristol, Manchester and London during April and May. Since its appointment in December 2008, the review team has been investigating why there are variations in access to dentistry in England and how the NHS can deliver continuous improvements in the quality of care. At the events, Professor Steele will discuss the emerging findings of the review with people involved in delivering and improving NHS dental services, inviting them to contribute to the development of recommendations.

**Professor Jimmy Steele, chair of the Independent Dentistry Review Team said:** ‘I want to continue to listen to the views of dentists and their teams, patients and NHS staff and to take their advice on improving access, promoting prevention and ensuring NHS dentistry of the highest quality. I’d like to encourage dentists and their teams to share their experiences and opinions at these events and help us to start to develop our recommendations.’

The findings of the Independent review of NHS Dentistry in England will be published this summer.

**Dentist directory**

A new UK dentist directory, eDentics, has been launched as a tool for both dentists and patients. With over 8,000 dentists, orthodontists, cosmetic dentists; NHS dentists, many with UK dental review views and ratings by genuine patients, eDentics aims to be the largest and most comprehensive UK dentist directory to provide patients with services and UK dentists with free listings and many other additional features. eDentics enables patients to freely search for local dentists and read UK dentist reviews. eDentics’s UK Dentist Directory contains all kinds of dentists including dentists; orthodontists; cosmetic dentists; NHS dentists; Harley Street dentists and emergency dentists, who offer a range of treatments such as general biology, bridges, dentures, dental implants, mini-implants, orthodontics (both braces and Invisalign), pedodontics, porcelain crowns and veneers, restoration implants, root canal therapy and tooth whitening.

www.dental-tribune.co.uk

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**Money matters**

**More extractions?**

Extractions have gone up by 50 per cent in the last four years says new figures, but it’s important to ‘put these figures into context’ says Dr Cockcroft.

Shaping up

If your practice needs a makeover then it’s time to do something about it, so don’t be afraid of investing money as the rewards can be considerable.

Tax implications

If a self-employed associate turns out to be employed, the situation can have major NI implications for the principal. Tim Lee explains.

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**‘Derisory’ pay rise rise to hit the profession**

**Dentists** look set to get a 0.21 per cent increase in earnings following a recommendation of the Review Body on Doctors’ and Dentists’ Pay.

The Dental Practitioners Association, claims that as the Retail Price Index is currently 5.2 per cent—anything less than this is effectively a pay cut.

Jim Donaldson, chairman of the Dental Practitioners Association (DPA) said: ‘The DPPB seems to assume no responsibility for difficulties in NHS access.

Year after year we have tried to explain to them that dentists are motivated to either join or leave the NHS based on comparision (BDA) echoed the DPA’s concerns.

The government has broken its promise to provide a comprehensive dental service to the nation on a formula that, taking estimated decreased expenses into account, suggests GDPs will actually see a 1.5 per cent increase in net incomes.

However John Milne, chair of the BDA’s General Dental Practice Committee (GDPC), said: ‘Sadly, the basis of the formula which suggests that the increase might amount to 1.5 per cent in real terms does not take account of the effect of the devaluation of sterling and its effect on the prices of equipment and materials that are largely manufactured overseas.

These expenses, and dentists’ ability to access the finance necessary to meet them, are both adversely affected by the recession.

He added: ‘We appreciate that a measure of financial restraint is necessary in the current economic climate. Clearly, economic prudence is essential for everyone.’

However he added: ‘But it’s also important to remember that high street dentists are running businesses that provide vital healthcare to millions of people. Those businesses must be properly funded so that they can invest in their premises and equipment to deliver the highest quality care to their patients.’

The problems many patients have faced accessing NHS dentistry in recent years have been well documented.

Mr Milne claimed that the ‘solution to those problems is to build confidence in the future of NHS dentistry by properly supporting our current NHS practitioners, and sending a positive signal to newly qualifying dentists about the future of NHS dentistry.’

He said: ‘This settlement will do neither of those things.’

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**Clinical**

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Derek Watson

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**Clinical**

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