Mixed views for Scotland’s Action Plan

The Scottish Dental Action Plan has received a mixed and, in part, negative response from dental practitioners across Scotland, since its launch three years ago. A survey by the British Dental Association (BDA) found that only 57 per cent - a third of high street dentists in Scotland - believe that the Action Plan has changed dental practice for the better, since it was introduced by the then Scottish Executive in April 2005.

Although nearly a fifth of dental practitioners (17 per cent) are of the opinion that the dental action plan has actually made things worse, just under half of those surveyed (46 per cent) said they did not think the scheme had made either a positive or negative impact.

Andrew Lamb, BDA director for Scotland, said: ‘The results of this survey highlight ongoing concerns about the future of dentistry in Scotland. It is clear that the Scottish Government still has a number of issues to address if access to NHS dentistry for patients across Scotland is to be improved. It is only through constructive dialogue between the profession and the Scottish Government that these matters can be addressed. The Minister for Public Health, Dr Hamish MacNeice, has demonstrated a willingness to discuss these issues with representatives of the BDA’s Scottish dental practice committee. This must continue.’

The survey also investigated other issues facing dentistry in Scotland. For example, despite dentists investing heavily in practice facilities in recent years, 24 per cent of respondents said their practices were not allowed to comply with the decontamination guidelines currently being consulted on by the Scottish Government, which raises the spectre of possible forced practice closures. The potential impact of practitioners retiring, with regard to the accessibility of patients to NHS care, was also highlighted by the survey. It revealed that practitioners aged 50 and over has larger NHS patient lists than their younger colleagues.

New managers for IDH

Matt Jackson has also been recruited to the new role of director of private and specialist division. His role is to design and implement working practices for enhanced IDH’s customer service, marketing and profitability in the private and specialist division.

The division’s aim is to create a new business model for acquiring dental practices in a way which allows the principal dentist to retain a share of the capital value and continue to benefit financially from the development of their business.

Practice owners can therefore effectively hand over the daily responsibility of running their business while aiming to create long-term financial growth and above that which would be achieved as an independent outfit.

IDH is setting in place a range of business solutions to private practices which include financial modelling, marketing, sales and operational systems.

The IDH teams including Mr Barrow and Mr Jackson will be attending the 2008 Dental Show-case in October where they will be unveiling the new division.

CODE backs guidance review

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ews that the General Dental Council (GDC) is to re-write its guidance on non-surgical cosmetic procedures has been welcomed by dental and private sector development from October 1. Mr Barrow has more than 10 years of experience of implementing high quality and innovative systems.
“When we opened our new practice, cashflow was a key priority for us. We operate a “just in time” ordering system so that we don’t have too much money tied up in stock and Henry Schein Minerva’s stock audit makes this much easier. We regularly order on-line and because we know we can rely on Henry Schein Minerva’s excellent service and delivery, we can maximise our cashflow and credit terms.”

Alex & Abby – Michael Dental Care, Cheltenham