GDPUK round-up

Tony Jacobs shares the most recent snippets of conversation from his ever-growing GDPUK online community

The diversity of topics on GDPUK can be mind-boggling. What’s more, the site has been at its busiest ever during October and November with contributions from many new members as well as older ones. GDPUK readership is now at a staggering 10,000 hours per month, which equates to 40,000 15-minute visits a month.

Recent discussions have raged about the various communications regarding HTM 01-05, including letters in the British Dental Journal and Parliamentary answers. The Chief Dental Officer wrote that the Department of Health (DH) will produce scientific references to support the decontamination document “if required”, which Ann Keen told the House of Commons would be arising soon. Colleagues on GDPUK cannot believe the situation surrounding the scientific references; surely they would be ready at the touch of a button or the click of a mouse if they were the true basis of this derided document? In the meantime, a further letter was drafted by Tony Kilcoyne with 15 references all countering the edicts of HTM 01-05.

When the PDS Plus contract was published soon after BDTA Showcase (where GDPUK members met up on all three days) in many ways there was only a minor response on the site as the access contract with all its pitfalls had been dissected previously when the draft document and spreadsheet were leaked.

Among other topics discussed were clinical ones, as well as more general and non-dental ones – how to repair a wrecked dentition; advice sought on cementing all porcelain restorations; should the profession take up the flu vaccine; abfraction; strategies against key performance indicators; weight training as well as James Hull news coverage to name a few.

It was suggested that practices should carry out a risk assessment for latex allergies. Someone pointed out this was called a medical history. Others report they have tried to remove latex products completely, gloves, LA cartridges and dam, to name a few.

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‘Recent discussions have raged about the various communications regarding HTM 01-05’

During the month, there were some polls of GDPUK membership; about 80 per cent responding were male, and 75 per cent practice owners. When asked about source of income, practitioners are polarised – very few earn 50 per cent of their income from NHS, the large majority of respondents earn either mostly from NHS, or mostly private fees. The polls on the GDPUK forum software only allow one vote per member per poll, so they cannot be manipulated.

A kind soul had posted some video footage on YouTube immediately after the recent Manchester United v Chelsea football match, a young man could be clearly seen in the crowd, chewing on a toothbrush during the match. This was linked from the forum, and there was much surprise, even from a group of dentists, at this behaviour.

Tony Jacobs, 52 is a GDP in the suburbs of Manchester, in practice with partner Steve LaRusso at 406Dental (www.406dental.com). He has had roles in his LDC, local BDA and with the annual conference of LDAs, and is a local dental adviser for Dental Protection. Nowadays, he concentrates on GDPUK, the web forum for UK dentists to discuss their profession online, www.gdpuk.com. Tony founded this group in 1997 which now has around 7,000 dentistry visitors per month, who make 55,000 visits and generate more than a million pages on the site per month. Tony is now GDPUK.com in the brightest and most topical UK dental website.