Editorial comment

Unless you’ve been hiding under a rock for the past few days, you will have heard about the departure of Alison Lockyer as GDC Chair, and the rumours surrounding her departure.

In a job which can only really be akin to the England football manager’s job in terms of popularity (or possibly the Chief Exec of the CQC), Dr Lockyer had the unenviable task of trying to balance her position as head of the regulator with her position as a GDP, something which must have not sat well on more than one occasion. I wish Dr Lockyer all the best in getting back to the ‘quiet’ life of doing day to day dentistry.

I’m looking forward to seeing many of DT’s readers at this week’s BDA Conference and Exhibition in Manchester. The event is boasting to be the biggest and best, and the line-up does seem impressive. One piece of news to note is that at the time of going to press, Secretary of State for Health Andrew Lansley’s speech has been switched from Thursday 19th May to Friday 20th May at 11.15am.

Also, don’t forget to come by Stand A18 and say hello, leave your feedback and maybe even leave your card to be asked to write an article or two for us! See you there... explanatory

New vision for practice ownership

Dentists looking for an alternative way to own and manage a dental practice will have an opportunity to discuss the employee-owned practice concept at this week’s BDA conference.

Being launched by Baxi Partnership Healthcare (BPH), a dedicated session is being held at the BDA Conference on Friday May 20th to set out the fundamental pillars of the mutual model and how it can work for UK dental practices.

BPH’s mutual model aims to transform the provision of dental services by putting practice owners back in the clinical driving seat and freeing them up to deliver high quality patient care. Taking the best of what the corporate model has to offer, BPH’s model for a mutual dental future aims to invest values of honesty, integrity and professionalism into its core ethos.

BPH is a collaboration between Baxi Partnership Ltd, a company already established in the field of employee ownership, and dentist Simon Gallier. Dr Gallier commented: “Our employee owned model aims to shift the fundamental dynamics of existing approaches to dental practice, pointing a way forward that improves the offer for patients as well as practitioners, and promises a bright new future for dentistry.”

The concept has also drawn support from others in dentistry. Dr Amarjit Gill, outgoing BDA President said: “In a new age of low morale, this concept will suit dentists fed up of bureaucracy and who want to focus on good patient care”. Dr Eddie Crouch, a dentist in Birmingham and secretary of Birmingham LDC, said: “This exciting new concept in the dental industry will appeal greatly to those who are disillusioned with the ever increasing burden of running a dental practice and will allow them to enjoy treating patients again.”

To find out more about the ‘third way’ to manage a dental practice go to Charter Room 3 at the BDA Conference and Exhibition at 10.15 or visit www.baxipartnership.co.uk
A call from the front line

Coming back to civilian life after leaving the services, not through choice but through disability caused in the line of duty, can be a challenging period for a former Royal Marine and the adjustment may be fraught with hurdles and disappointments. One example that has been receiving attention recently is the offer to the hundred or so medically discharged Royal Marines leaving annually, who have been kept dentally fit by the Armed Forces, a choice of free dental care in the community where they settle.

Now, sympathetic dental practices can join a national scheme, The C Group and SmileStar, formerly known as the Marine Dental Care Campaign, to help some of those former Royal Marine personnel with free basic dental care for life. Already more than 60 practices around the UK are signed up to the scheme.

The inspiring scheme is being run by The C Group, a Royal Marines charity whose mission is to mobilise the business community to support the Royal Marines together with SmileStar Ltd, an organisation with charitable status based in Devon. Royal Marines applicants will be introduced to the scheme through the normal resettlement process and those who are interested will be passed through to SmileStar for appropriate administration and details of their nearest participating practice.

Colonel Hutton, the Chief Executive of The C Group, who has supported the scheme from its inception, explained: ‘Coming home and trying to settle into normal life is harder than people imagine and routine procedures such as going to a dentist can be immensely daunting. What SmileStar and its network of supporting dentists are offering is choice. A man can decide whether to go with the NHS system or take the opportunity to receive basic private dental care for free. This is a great offer and will help those who live in areas where NHS surgeries are working at capacity or where travel requirements may be excessive. There are numerous reasons to help these men who have served their country so bravely. This scheme will offer an extra helping hand to aid their rehabilitation. Practices around the country are signing up to the scheme to help in their area – we’ve been totally overwhelmed by the support the campaign is receiving already.’

At the launch of the scheme, which will take place on June 22nd in Ashburton, presentations will be given by Colonel Jim Hutton of the Royal Marines. Sixty four practices around the country have already joined the scheme including the Devon Dental Centre of Excellence, the Plymouth Dental Centre of Excellence and other Devon based practices such as Totnes’s Riverview Dental and Bovey Tracey’s Quality Dental Care. Of the 27 Marines that have taken up SmileStar’s offer we have currently managed to place 15 of them and are waiting for practices to come up in the following areas to place the other 12 Marines:

- Newport
- Portsmouth
- Yeovil
- Poole x3
- Lympstone
- Cowen South Wales
- Dover
- Bournemouth
- Taunton, Somerset
- Mid Glamorgan, Wales

Interested practices can find out more or register by calling Sam Cutts, Smilesstar at sam@mepc-ltd.co.uk or 01564654970.

Eighth Clinical Innovations Conference Hailed A Success

Organised by healthcare learning provider Smile-on, the AOG and the Dental Directory, the Clinical Innovations Conference 2011 impressed delegates yet again with its topical programme of lectures covering many of the latest developments in restorative and aesthetic dentistry.

More than 350 attendees gathered at the Royal College of Physicians for the two-day conference and exhibition which featured some of the leading names in dentistry today including the likes of Dr Julian Webster, Dr Eddie Scher, Dr Wyman Chan, Dr Tif Qureshi and Dr Wolfgang Richter.

This year’s event also played host to the London Dentalerry’s Annual DCIP Conference, which featured several highly relevant lectures for dental care professionals on subjects such as risk management, decontamination and medical emergencies.

The turnout was high and the atmosphere electric but nevertheless the conference’s relatively small size made for a more personal experience, featuring several ‘hands-on’ lectures and a compact exhibitors’ area where delegates could speak to suppliers in person.

Along with picking up plenty of valuable new skills and techniques, attendees were also able to receive up to 14 hours of verifiable CPD along the way.

For more information about the event call 020 7400 8889 or visit www.smile-on.com

Dr Wyman Chan presenting at the event
Dental visits considered ‘a luxury’

Simplyhealth’s Annual Dental Survey 2011 shows that patients could be risking their dental health with over a quarter of the population viewing visits to the dentist as a ‘luxury’.

The survey of 10,000 UK patients has found that men are the worst offenders with more than a third considering dentist appointments unnecessary, compared to almost 19 per cent stubbornly believe they can take care of their teeth themselves. However, women are no ‘tooth fairies’ either, with 45 per cent saying dentist visits are ‘too expensive’ compared to 55 per cent of men.

James Glover from Simplyhealth said: “It’s surprising that so many patients see visiting the dentist as a luxury. We’re not talking about a holiday, or a new car, or protecting your dental health, which is an everyday health need.”

Younger patients place far less importance on their dental health, with almost a third (31 per cent) of 18-24 year olds saying they’d prefer to have dinner with the in laws rather than get their teeth checked.

Yet, 41 per cent say they’d prefer to have dinner with the in laws with bad teeth and more than 60 per cent say they wouldn’t date someone with bad teeth and more than 60 per cent say they wouldn’t date someone with bad teeth.

“My investigations into patients attitudes to dental health, on one hand, two thirds say they wouldn’t date someone with bad teeth and more than 60 per cent say they wouldn’t date a new car, but protecting your dental health is an everyday health need. This may be why only half have seen a dentist in the last year. In contrast 25 per cent of over 55s see the dentist as a luxury, but 71 per cent have seen the dentist in the last year.

“Dentists can provide so much information and guidance that people aren’t taking advantage of. For instance Simplyhealth’s research has found that only 34 per cent would think to speak to their dentist about identifying oral cancer.”

There’s also a contrast in patient’s attitude to dental health. On one hand, two thirds say they wouldn’t date someone with bad teeth and more than 60 per cent say they wouldn’t date a new car, but protecting your dental health is an everyday health need. Yet, 41 per cent say they’d prefer to have dinner with the in laws than get their teeth checked. Almost 50 per cent would rather take out the rubbish and 41 per cent would prefer to clean the toilet.

Smiles top attractiveness poll

A ‘smile’ has topped a poll among the most important physical features when it comes to attraction between men and women.

A smile was rated highly by 56 per cent of respondents, closely followed by faces (55 per cent) and eyes (51 per cent). Dress sense, body shape, hair and height were also measured, with the latter bringing up the rear on 25 per cent. Interestingly, it was a non-physical attribute – personality – which was the clear winner of the survey. Ninety per cent of respondents rated this human attribute most important when it comes to attraction.

The results have been published as part of the British Dental Health Foundation’s annual campaign – National Smile Month – now in its 35th year. This year the theme is ‘The Smile Factor’, which aims to remind people that their mouths, teeth and smile is fundamental to all aspects of their life – whether career, personality, relationships, attraction or all-round good health.

Despite the importance of smiles and teeth to everyday life, many people appear to have a poor image of the nation’s ‘Smile Factor’. The survey reveals that only 25 per cent believed that the nation had ‘good teeth’, and approaching half the population were not happy with their smile or teeth - stained or yellow teeth being the most common concern (57 per cent).

Chief Executive of the British Dental Health Foundation, Dr Nigel Carter, said: “As a nation we probably spend more time and money looking after our hair and the clothes we wear, rather than caring for our teeth. The survey is a great reminder that we should be giving greater attention to our teeth – not just because it improves oral health – but because it gives us the confidence to smile, which makes a major difference to our relationships, careers and overall image.

“During National Smile Month, we hope everyone will consider what they can do to improve their Smile Factor. Hundreds of dental practices across the UK will be supporting the campaign and it’s an excellent time to seek their help and advice.”

A ‘thank you’ that raised $1m

Oscar-winning actor Michael Douglas, who was diagnosed with throat cancer last year, headlined a fundraiser for the Montreal Hospital, the hospital that first detected his disease.

During his speech at the event, Douglas recalled the devastating moment when he was diagnosed with cancer and how Dr Saul Frenkiel of Montreal’s Jewish General Hospital had requested a biopsy. Previously, several American doctors had failed to diagnose the cancer and had, according to reports, said Douglas was in good health: it was soon discovered that the cancer was at an advanced stage.

To show his gratitude for the Montreal Hospital, Douglas offered to help raise money for the McGill University-affiliated hospital by signing himself up as the honoured invitee for a $375-a-head gala dinner, with VIP tickets selling for $750. The money raised will be given to McGill University’s head and neck cancer fund.

Mixing with guests and having photos taken, Douglas was reported to appear energised.

According to reports, both Douglas and his wife, Catherine Zeta-Jones, put themselves up for auction: one such live auction was a golf outing, which was auctioned for $180,000. By the end of the night the charity event had raised more than $1 million.

BDA museum close to major acquisition

The BDA’s museum has its sights set on a rare oil painting as its next acquisition. The Dentist, painted in 1929 by Sir John Lavery, features dentist Conrad Ackner in situ treating his patient, the artist’s wife Lady Lavery.

The painting is significant in terms of both dental and art history, being the only known accurate depiction of the early twentieth century dentist in a surgery, and by one of the leading portrait painters of the time.

A rare find, the painting is set in Ackner’s Welbeck Street practice in London and reveals aspects of the clinical environment including an early x-ray machine and headlamp, examples of which are in the museum’s collection.

Using the painting as a centrepiece, plans are in place to mount an exhibition including a scrapbook compiled by Ackner’s staff, which lists the King of Norway and actress Marlene Dietrich amongst his patients.

The first time the two items will be seen together, they will be a highlight on guided tours and he featured during events and as part of the museum’s school programmes.

The BDA is appealing for donations to help acquire the painting so that it can be made a permanent part of its collection. Currently on loan and on display in the BDA’s Information Centre, it has been independently valued at $60,000. While funding has already been sourced through the Art Fund, the MLA/V&A Purchase Grant Fund, the BDA and private donations, a shortfall of £0,000 remains before the list price can be met.

Head of BDA Museum Services, Jason Finch said: “The opportunity to purchase this unique painting is too good to miss and we are desparately close to our target.

“Not only is the work historically significant in its rarity, it also provides us with an accurate depiction from which the dental profession and public can gain valuable insight into the history of dentistry.

“We are calling on all interested parties to help us keep this important work at the BDA permanently, in what we believe is its rightful home.”

To make a donation, or for further information, individuals should contact Jason Finch by phone on 0207 555 5852, or by email at jason.finch@bda.org.uk
A dec goes the extra mile for B2A

Thirteen representatives from dental equipment manufacturer A-dec recently took on the challenge of the infamous Coast2Coast bike ride, and fighting arduous headwinds all the way, completed the 151 mile bike ride in three days!

Cycling from Whitehaven on the west coast to Tynemouth on the east coast, across the very hilly Lake District, the Pennines and the Northumberland moors, and despite the at-times daunting terrain, falls, bruises, punctures, sunburn, headwinds, and facing early retirement with a snapped derailleur, the team finished together in high spirits on the afternoon of Monday 2nd May.

Fuelled by energy drinks, flapjacks, oh-so-many bananas, pain relief and deep heat, not to mention the key ingredient (TEAMWORK), all 11 riders completed the challenge with an immense sense of achievement and pride.

The group is raising funds for Bridge2Aid, their partner charity who carry out amazing work in the Mwanza region of Tanzania and across the area, plus other UK charities which are close to the fund-raisers hearts.

Charlotte Cligg and her partner Ben, Jo Gamble, Stacey Roberts, Tracey McCulloch and her husband David, Brian Anderson and his wife Sarah, Ashley Woodruff, Ciaran Hynes and Charlie Cope – supported by Sarah Treble and Eugene O’Malley, aim to raise more than £7,000 for Bridge2Aid, NSPCC, MS Society, Breast Cancer Campaign and Leukaemia & Lymphoma Research.

To make a donation, please visit visit.uk.virginmoneygiving.com/team/A-dec.

With patients most likely to mention pain on a dental visit the early stages of gum disease may be ignored. The Corsodyl Campaign for Healthy Gums is designed to raise awareness of the risks of gum disease and the initial signs to look out for. For your free Gum Care Guidance Pack including a range of materials for you and your patients visit www.gsk-dentalprofessionals.co.uk

BDA President

Dr Janet Clarke, Clinical Director of Birmingham Community Healthcare Trust Community Dental Service (CDS) and Honorary Clinical Lecturer at Birmingham Dental School, will become the 125th President of the British Dental Association (BDA) on Thursday, 19 May. She will be presented with her chain of office and make her inaugural speech as BDA President at the opening of the 2011 British Dental Conference and Exhibition at Manchester Central Convention Complex, Manchester.

Dr Clarke was awarded her Bachelor of Dental Surgery Degree by the School of Dentistry, University of Birmingham, in 1981, and a Master of Community Dental Health in 1989. As clinical director at Birmingham Community Healthcare Trust CDS, Dr Clarke manages an NHS dental budget of over £6 million. She oversees the provision of the community dental service for vulnerable patients in Birmingham, Sandwell, Dudley and Walsall.

Dr Clarke has significant experience of representing the dental profession. Locally, she has served as Chair of the BDA’s West Midlands Division of the CDS Group, and as president of the BDA’s Central Counties Branch. On the national stage, she chaired the BDA’s Central Committee for Community and Public Health Dentistry (the forerunner of the current Salaried Dentists Committee) and successfully led the negotiations to introduce a new contract for salaried primary care dentists in 2005. Her contribution to dentistry is widely recognised. She was awarded an MBE in 2010 for service to dentistry, and two years earlier she was appointed by the Secretary of State to work alongside Professor Jimmy Steele in his Independent Review of NHS Dentistry.
House of Parliament stages NSM launch

O
ral health campaigns, the British Den-
tal Health Foundation, launched the National Smile Month at the Houses of Parlia-
ment on Thursday 12th May.

The annual event, held at Westminster, signalled the start of the UK’s largest oral health campaign, which this year cel-
brated its 55th anniversary.

Many leading figures from the world of dentistry were in attendance for the launch of the event which runs between May 15 and June 15 2011, going under the theme of the Smile Factor.

Hosted by Parliamentary sponsor the Rt Hon Sir Paul Beresford MP, the gathering in-
cluded speeches from some of dentistry’s leading experts including the Foundation’s Chief Executive Dr Nigel Carter and its President Daniel Davis.

Dr Carter said on the launch of Smile Factor: “Many might underestimate it but a smile can be a very influential fea-
ture. It can shape our lives, our relationships and careers and be a very powerful show of who you are, even without having the confidence to do so.”

“Those who are not happy or are self-conscious about their teeth, could be missing out on showing off their very own ‘Smile Factor’.

Others are being held back by poor oral well-being and its impact on their general health. This year’s campaign is designed to challenge those perceptions and get you smiling again.

“Getting people to talk about their teeth and dental habits is vital in our goal of improving the state of oral health not only in the UK but worldwide. ”

“We have had a tremen-
dously successful week, particularly in the last couple of months, and we must work harder to ensure this year’s Na-
ional Smile Month can build on that success.

“The launch is a superb way to kick-start the month. It is an utterly marvellous setting of which to stage such an event.”

Sponsored by four giants of oral health care, Plati-
um Sponsors Oral-B, Wrig-
ley and Listerine, along with first time Silver Sponsor Macleans, the campaign will yet again provide an exciting opportunity for everyone to get involved in promoting good oral health.

During the course of the month, the Foundation will be looking to promote their three key oral health messages.

Prioritising toddler nutrition

T
he Infant & Toddler Fo-
rum - experts in child,
nutrition and develop-
ment - is stepping up its Dimitris, Belinda Stilma-
son, and CEO Mark Top-
ley, talking about the difference volunteers have made to the provision of oral health care for the community in Tanzania. Thursday will also see a Volun-
teering Forum chaired by Habib Bendahmane, part of the FDI and Chris Holmgreen from WHO, of which B2A are a co-sponsor.

B2A are delighted to be hosting a number of events at this year’s BDA in Manchester, on the growing
fluence on early years’ nutrition have a significant role to play in preventing long-term health problems, yet clear guidelines are lacking. The recent School Food Trust report highlights an urgent need for Government and all stakeholders, including health practitioners and parents, to work together to address this need.

Britain is facing an entirely preventable epidemic of obesity and diet-related ill-health, with a generation set to die before their parents. Health agendas need to focus on supporting practitioners, par-
ents and carers with ef-
ficent tools to help change be-
aviour.

‘Ten Steps for Healthy Tod-
der’, an easy-to-use guide on

What to offer to, what eating behaviours to encourage and how best to manage mealtimes, is the Infant & Toddler Forum’s contribution to help meet this need. Endorsed by the Pre-school Learning Alliance, Child Growth Foundation, National Obesity

Forum the British Den-
tal Health Foundation, the ‘Ten Steps’ are designed to encourage positive changes to toddler feeding with small easy actions.

Dr Atul Singhal, Chair of the Infant & Toddler Forum, said: “Since their launch last year, the ‘Ten Steps for Healthy Toddlers’ have been widely implemented in different settings by health and childcare professionals, par-
ents and carers. As well as be-
ing a simple, extremely useful tool for those feeding toddlers at home, the ‘Ten Steps’ is a per-
fect resource to help implement the Government’s public health strategies.

“Continuing its work on early intervention through good toddler nutrition and eating be-
aviour, the Forum is develop-
ing activities to drive best prac-
tice where there’s a need for practical support and direction. Throughout 2011 we will con-
tinue to work with our partners to raise awareness and encour-
age implementation of the ‘Ten Steps’. In turn, we hope health and childcare professionals will adopt the expert advice as best practice and share it with the parents, carers and toddlers with whom they interact.”

The Forum plans to encour-
age wider adoption of the ‘Ten Steps’ and sharing of best prac-
tice with training and educa-
tion programmes throughout the UK, to impart the principles and practical implementation of the ‘Ten Steps’. Supporting those who work in the early years sector, including children’s centres and nurseries, will be a priority to help ensure all children get the best start in life.

For more information on the Infant & Toddler Forum and to download free resources, visit www.infantandtoddlerforum.org (healthcare professionals) and www.littlepeopleplates.co.uk (parents and carers).

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