



Report of the General Dental Practice Committee

The General Dental Practice Committee (GDPC) met on Friday, 4 October 2024.

GDPC Constitutional Review

1. We noted that the Committee had agreed amendments to its constitution in an online vote, held following the last meeting. These would form the basis for the elections, for [which nominations are currently open](#). Tom King, Head of Policy and Research, provided an overview of the GDPC constitutional review process, noting that the constitution was reviewed at the end of each triennium. After considering various options, discussions, and conducting a democratic vote, the constitution was amended to reflect the replacement of area teams with ICB boundaries for the purpose of elections and representation. I added that the amendments would be monitored throughout the next triennium, and reassessed if necessary.

Dental Contract Reform and Related Issues

2. I provided updates on my recent meetings with Health Secretary Wes Streeting and Dental Minister Stephen Kinnock. During my discussion with Wes Streeting on 8th July, he candidly acknowledged that NHS dentistry is broken and demonstrated a strong commitment to addressing these challenges. I emphasised that marginal changes to the contract would be insufficient and stressed the need to move away from the UDA system. Streeting highlighted his focus on delivering 700,000 urgent appointments=. Overall, I found the meeting encouraging, as Streeting seemed to be taking meaningful steps in the right direction.
3. Despite being new to the role, Stephen Kinnock had been clearly well-briefed. In our meeting, I reiterated the importance of shifting from a treatment/activity-focused model to one rooted in prevention and on improving the oral health and overall health of patients. It is essential that a reformed contract provides a system in which dentists want to work. Another meeting with Kinnock is scheduled in the next month to track progress.
4. I highlighted the Committee's achievements over the triennium, including securing billions of pounds of funding for struggling practices during the pandemic, uplifting the UDA value to £28 in England, and raising the number of UDAs for molar endodontics. While these would not solve the broken system, nonetheless, they were a significant achievement. We noted that the band two sub-division had made an impact on UDA delivery and had made treating high needs patients somewhat easier.
5. Regarding the New Patient Premium (NPP), we felt that while it was effective in encouraging dentists to take on new patients, but the remuneration remained insufficient.

6. I mentioned my recent contribution to Lord Darzi's review of the NHS, ensuring that he was aware of the current issues facing NHS dentistry. These concerns were reflected in [his final report](#).
7. On the former prototype practices, recent interviews by the BDA with dentists who had participated in the programme had found a number of positive outcomes, which included increased quality of care, delivering skill mix, maintained patient access over 36 months, and reduced pressure on dentists. We were of the opinion that the evaluation did not accurately represent the participants' experiences and failed to highlight the positive results. We agreed that any future models for the contract must address health inequalities and access issues.

Pensions

8. Phil McEvoy, Head of Pensions, updated us on the McCloud remedy, and the fact the Pensions Agencies were struggling to get information out on time. He stated that some individuals could face problems filing their tax returns due to delay in the information released but reassured us that the HMRC and Department of Health and Social Care have been lobbied and were aware of the issue.

Reports from the Devolved Nations

9. In Northern Ireland, short term schemes and oral health improvement plans had been launched, though the BDA had not been consulted. While a £9.2 million funding increase was provided, it was still short of what was required to boost dental care. Additionally, Northern Ireland had secured a derogation from EU rules on amalgam use. The NI Health Committee had held evidence sessions with both the BDA and the Department of Health, and following the latter it was writing to the Minister to clarify timelines for action to be taken to support NHS dentistry.
10. In Scotland, payment reform had been implemented last year.
11. In Wales, contract reform negotiations had terminated. There was ambiguity regarding future steps for consulting on the reforms that had been agreed in negotiations.

DDRB and Contract Uplift

12. Peter Crooks, Chair of the Review Body Evidence Committee (RBEC), briefed us on the 52nd DDRB report and the recommendation for a six per cent pay uplift. As you will be aware, following the announcement on the pay uplift, there is a process to determine the uplifts to be applied in terms of the costs of delivering NHS care. This process is in various stages in the different parts of the UK, and the BDA will communicate to the profession as soon as there are outcomes as to what the uplift to fees and contracts will be.
13. Speaking about the next report in relation to the 2025/26 uplift, the DDRB had requested for the evidence to be submitted by November 2024, with a view to trying to move towards implementation from 1 April in the years ahead.

Care Quality Commission

14. Robert Middlefell briefed us on the recent changes at the CQC, which aimed to become more efficient and less risk-based in its regulation. The CQC had been criticised in a recent review. There were some dental practices that hadn't been inspected for some time and these were likely

to be a focus for upcoming inspections. Many of us expressed frustration with the registration process and the new provider portal.

Local Dental Committees

15. We expressed our gratitude to Agi Tarnowski for a very well-chaired LDC Conference in June 2024. Charlie Daniels, the Chair for LDC Conference 2025, updated us on the theme for the conference which was 'Resilience in Dentistry'. The Conference was scheduled for 5 and 6 June 2025 in Newcastle.

Thank You

16. This was my last meeting as the Chair of the GDPC and as a GDPC member. I expressed my gratitude and appreciation to the Vice-Chairs, members of the Committee, and the BDA team for their hard work, expertise, and support.
17. The BDA elections are currently open for nominations until 17:00 on Monday 28 October, I encourage anyone interested to put themselves forward: bda.org/elections

Shawn Charlwood

Chair, General Dental Practice Committee
October 2024