

e update



How to cope when a CQC inspector calls

CQC inspections of dental practices seem to have kicked off in earnest this month with feedback from some practices in Derbyshire that they have had just five days' notice of a visit.

It is an anxious time. Even when we know we are prepared and feel confident that our procedures and

processes reflect CQC guidelines, it is fear of the unknown that makes us feel worried. Having not had a CQC inspection before we wonder if we will fulfil their requirements.

For the lowdown on what to expect and where to go for guidance, turn to page 11.

Inside this edition . . .

Read all about it



For all the latest news in the world of dentistry turn to pp.4-5

Rewarding stars



Have you turned your practice around? Enter our awards! More on p.7

Be prepared



How to cope with flu, snow & the party season. More on p.15

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Contents

Contents

3 Read all about it

This month, read details about the BDA's award winners, Dentaid's instrument amnesty success and more...

6 Eager to improve?

There are plenty of interesting courses coming up to help you learn how to drive the success of your practice and fulfil your CPD requirements.

7 Recognising your contribution

We take a look at just how important your contributions are to the dental practices you manage. Turn to page 7 for more.

11 A CQC inspector calls

Glean an insight into what a CQC inspection entails. More on page 11.

12 Where have our patients gone?

Sim Goldblum from The Dentistry Business explains how to fill the gaps in our appointment books caused by FTAs. More on page 12.

13 Toothpaste just got chic

Chic and delicious? It can only be our product of the month, Dawood & Tanner's tooth cleansers. Read more on page 13.

15 Cope with snow, flu and parties

The Christmas season brings its own challenges, as Ellis Whittam expert Jane Hallas explains on page 15.

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BDA celebrates excellence in dentistry

Leading practitioners from across the dental community - including ADAM's very own Honorary Vice President Hew Mathewson - were honoured recently for their contribution to their profession at the sixth BDA Honours and Awards Dinner.

The ceremony, which was sponsored by the British Dental Trade Association (BDTA), included the presentation of awards by associations representing a range of dental professions, as well as the BDA's own honours.

Kevin Lewis attained the rare distinction of being made a BDA Honorary Member, a title which recognises long, exceptional and valuable service to the BDA, as well as personal commitment to the operation and welfare of the Association.

BDA Fellowship, which honours outstanding and distinguished service to the BDA and the dental profession, was awarded to Hew Mathewson CBE (pictured) and Graham Brown.

The John Tomes Medal, which recognises scientific eminence and outstanding service to the dental profession, was awarded to Professors Derrick Wilmot and Nairn Wilson CBE.

David Macaulay and Peter Frost were both awarded BDA Life Membership. The BDA Certificate of Merit



for Services to the Profession was presented to Lance Hale, Russ Ladwa and Janet Speechley, whilst the BDA Certificate of Merit for Services to the Association was presented to Menna Lloyd. Andrew Lockhart-Miramis and Paul Langmaid CBE both had their names added to the BDA Roll of Distinction for outstanding service.

The 2011 British Association of Dental Nurses Outstanding Contribution to Dental Nursing Award was presented to Fiona

Ellwood. The Orthodontic National Group for Dental Nurses and Therapists' Outstanding Contribution to Orthodontic Nursing Award was presented to Maureen Dickinson. Gail Marsh's name was added to the British Association of Dental Therapists' Roll of Distinction. Peter Davey received a Fellowship from the Dental Technologists Association and Terry Abbott was awarded the British Dental Trade Association Award.

BDA President, Janet Clarke MBE, said: "We are delighted to host these awards which celebrate excellence across the whole dental family. They are our opportunity to say thank you to all those who contribute their time, expertise and goodwill for the betterment of the dental profession and oral health in the UK. Our congratulations, and those of the BDTA, which has generously supported the occasion, go to all the winners."

Record number of managers qualify with UMD Professional

A record-breaking 72 dental practice managers and dentists have achieved an ILM management qualification with UMD Professional Ltd in 2011.

The successful students all achieved a qualification awarded by the Institute of Leadership and Management at one of three different levels, either through attending a workshop-based course or studying via distance learning.

The successful managers can now look forward to a presentation ceremony in London in January 2012.

"We are delighted to be celebrating the achievements of all those who have worked so hard for their qualifications, and congratulate everyone on their success. The number of successes represents a really exceptional result and also demonstrates the importance that managers and dentists

place on having a management qualification," said Fiona Stuart-Wilson, Director of UMD Professional Ltd.

"These results also highlight the continued success of UMD Professional in providing effective management training, and they consolidate our position as the leading provider of management qualifications in dentistry."

UMD Professional has more Level 5 and level 7 Diploma in Management regional workshop programmes starting in the New Year, and continues to offer a distance learning route to the level 3 and level 5 qualifications.

A limited number of grants are still available for the level 5 and 7 in some areas; more information is available from Penny Parry of UMD Professional on 020 8255 2070 or at penny@umdprofessional.co.uk



Great response to Dentaaid amnesty

Many visitors to the Dentaaid stand at the recent BDTA Showcase brought donations of instruments as part of the charity's instrument amnesty.

These instruments will be sorted, graded and given a new lease of life as part of Dentaaid's portable instrument kits. Among the items were also reconditioned handpieces and new scaler tips which will be included with the refurbished surgeries that the charity regularly sends out to developing countries.

Andy Jong, Dentaaid's Chief Executive is pictured (right) with a large wheelie bin full of donated instruments and said: "We want to thank everyone who took the trouble to bring instruments to Showcase and also to those who called and said they would be posting donations to us as they were too heavy to carry. These instruments will be used in our charitable projects all round the world, bringing better oral



'A welcome development'

Dental Protection welcomes the announcement from the Department of Health that there will be a public consultation about the regulation of healthcare workers with HIV that currently prevents some members of the profession from working normally.

Existing regulations are more than 20 years old and do not take into account the pharmaceutical advances in controlling infectivity, nor do they recognise the current standards of audited infection control that dental surgeries are expected to achieve.

Kevin Lewis, Dental Director said; "Dental Protection has always championed the interests of members of the dental profession who are seen to be unfairly treated. The introduction of effective antiretroviral therapy in the 1990s combined with the absence of any proven transmission in the dental setting makes it totally unfair to continue to force members of the dental team to quit their chosen profession.

The changes to the regulations proposed by the Department of Health are a logical step that restores fairness for these members of the dental profession as well as safely managing the dental needs of the population.

Over the last ten years, Dental Protection has led the way in this debate and the organisation will be actively contributing to the consultation process in order to protect the interests of its members and of the wider dental profession."

health care to people in great need."

Dentaaid is also seeking to equip Cambodian hospitals and dental clinics with replacement autoclaves at the request of the Cambodian Health Ministry and would welcome further offers of these items in order to fulfil the needs that have been expressed. Please call the Dentaaid office on 01794 324249 if you have an autoclave to donate.

HQ Christmas closing dates

Just to remind members that ADAM HQ will be closing for the festive period on Friday, December 23rd at 4.00pm and re-opening on Tuesday, January 3rd at 9.00am.



Get in touch. Send your news & views to denise@adam-aspire.co.uk

Training & development diary

Date & location	Name of event & provider	Cost & notes	Contact details
Jan, London, Man'r, Bristol, Leeds, Scotland, Belfast	The Dentistry Business Accredited Programmes in Dental Practice Management	L4 is £2,100 and L7 is £2,500	www.thedentistrybusiness.com
10 Jan Plymouth	Growth through marketing seminar. Denplan	Free for Denplan members , £40 for non-members	www.denplan.co.uk/dentists/members/events-and-training.aspx
17 Jan Grinstead	Growth through marketing seminar. Denplan	Free for Denplan members , £40 for non-members	www.denplan.co.uk/dentists/members/events-and-training.aspx
19 Jan Manchester	The health focussed practice for patient care and profit. Sheila Scott & Practice Plan Workshop	£150. £50 for practices connected to PP or free for PP clients	www.practiceplan.co.uk/workshop
20 Jan London	Law, ethics & record keeping. BDA, GDC & Carestream Dental.	£100 for practice managers	www.bda.org/training
20 Jan London	CORE CPD Safety and Safeguarding. Dentabyte Management Masterclass	£75	www.dentabyte.co.uk
20 Jan London	Level 7 Diploma in Executive Management (ILM) with UMD Professional	£4,800	email penny@ umdprofessional.co.uk
24 Jan Darlington	Growth through marketing seminar. Denplan	Free for Denplan members , £40 for non-members	www.denplan.co.uk/dentists/members/events-and-training.aspx
Jan, London, Newcastle, Swindon, Tewkesbury, Loughborough, Maidstone, Luton, Gatwick, Basildon	Level 5 Diploma in Management. UMD Professional Dental Practice Management Programme	£2,040+vat (5% discount if paid in full)	email penny@ umdprofessional.co.uk
26 Jan London	The essentials of staff management.	£200 for practice managers (ADAM 10% discount)	www.bda.org/training
27 Jan London	The essentials of staff management.	£200 for practice managers (ADAM 10% discount)	www.bda.org/training
31 Jan Glasgow	Growth through marketing seminar. Denplan	Free for Denplan members , £40 for non-members	www.denplan.co.uk/dentists/members/events-and-training.aspx
31 Jan Leicester	Reduce the cost of practice staff CRB checks - Leic & Rutland LDC training workshop	£40	Email colin.blackler@btinternet.com
Feb 3 London	Level 2 Child protection (am) & Consent and complaints (pm). Dentabyte CPD4CQC	£75 for each session	www.dentabyte.co.uk
Feb 7 Cheltenham	Growth through marketing seminar. Denplan	Free for Denplan members, £40 for non-members	www.denplan.co.uk/dentists/members/events-and-training.aspx
10 February London	Handling complaints and improving communication skills. BDA	£100 for practice managers	www.bda.org/training
Feb 21 Luton	Growth through marketing seminar. Denplan	Free for Denplan members, £40 for non-members	www.denplan.co.uk/dentists/members/events-and-training.aspx
24 February London	Child protection; the dental team's responsibility. BDA	£100 for practice managers	www.bda.org/training
Feb 24 Cardiff	Business planning and financial management for practice owners and managers. Andy McDougall	£100 for practice managers	www.bda.org/training
Feb 28 Belfast	Growth through marketing seminar. Denplan	Free for Denplan members, £40 for non-members	www.denplan.co.uk/dentists/members/events-and-training.aspx
March 2 London	Record keeping. Dentabyte CPD4CQC	£75	www.dentabyte.co.uk



Rewarding your contributions

We know how much management and administrative teams contribute to the success of a practice, and a practice manager is fundamental to that achievement. Regardless of whether the practice is NHS, private or mixed, a strong and focused manager can make the difference between getting by and getting ahead.

Looking back gives us inspiration

In writing this article we looked back at previous entries to the BDPMA's Practice Manager of the Year Award and discovered just how valuable managers' contributions were, according to the principals who sent in nominations. Indeed these principals must have delegated a great deal of responsibility to their managers and felt vindicated by the results they achieved.

Many of the principals who sent in award entries invested a considerable amount of time (some of the nominations were 20 pages long!) exclaiming the intrinsic worth of their manager. It is very satisfying, even now, to read their responses in answer to the question, 'My manager is central to our practice success because ...' The following represent some of the highlights:

- Missed appointments are down, late payments have been drastically reduced and even our private patients pay on time.
- We now have a practice with a strong and supportive team. Consequently the work environment is the best it has been in my 20 years of practice.
- The practice has gone from strength to strength. Each month we achieve our target and beyond.
- She took over the staff management with enthusiasm and flair: it was truly a wonderful thing as any practice owner would understand.
- Our practice manager has expanded our practice into a successful, thriving business.
- Put quite simply, I could not run the practice without the help and support of our practice manager.
- She has taken us to another level and lifted a huge weight from the partners' shoulders.
- She has developed and trained a highly motivated and financially successful dental team.
- She has built a high-performing and united team who are aware of the practice vision and understand their individual roles and responsibilities towards



its achievement.

- My practice managers have enabled me to drive forward with my vision for the practice.
- I don't think we would be where we are today without the input of our practice manager.

The rewards of an award

We have no doubt that despite a few years since our last awards, managers across the country continue to make an invaluable contribution. We hope that our enthusiasm for the future of dental practice management and our industry has whet your appetite enough to publicly applaud your own achievements or those of a member of your administrative team. Remember this year's awards, sponsored by Denplan, will not only recognise excellent practice managers but also practice administrators and treatment co-ordinators, with the winner of each category winning £500, an engraved trophy and a framed certificate.

- Visit www.adam-aspire.co.uk for an entry form.

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ADAM Conference 2012: *The nuts and bolts of practice management*

The ADAM Conference in partnership with MDDUS, is the only event of its kind in the UK for dental practice managers and administrators and we have developed a relevant, diverse and interesting programme that kicks off on Friday, May 18 in Harrogate.

Highlights of the event will include a mock disciplinary hearing, which for those of us who have never had the misfortune to attend one, will be very interesting and exciting.

Friday afternoon gives us all the opportunity to get to know one another and to participate as members in the future of the Association via the Annual General meeting.

Saturday is the main event when guest speakers impart their wisdom on a range of topics close to our hearts and minds: customer service, performance management, financial control, making the most of human resources, and developing assertiveness skills. This promises to be a jam-packed programme that will leave you buzzing with ideas and a desire to get back to the practice to implement a host of new initiatives.

To crown the event is our gala dinner, which will give members, friends and supporters an opportunity to dress up, network, eat, drink and be merry, and to recognise the efforts of the finalists of the ADAM Awards – and that could include you!

Jill Taylor, ADAM's president, said: "There aren't many events in the dental calendar designed with only practice managers and administrators in mind, so we are hoping this will be popular.

"To crown the event, we are very much looking forward to the ADAM Conference Dinner and Awards Ceremony, which promises to be an exciting end to an enthralling conference."

● **Early bird tickets are now on sale - turn to Jill's column on page 17 for prices and more information.**

ADAM conference Majestic Hotel, Harrogate 18 -19 May 2012

Friday		
14.00hrs	Registration, exhibition and refreshments	
15.00hrs	AGM (ADAM members only)	0.5 hrs CPD
15.30hrs	Refreshments and exhibition	
16.00hrs	Welcome and overview of conference - Jill Taylor and Hew Mathewson	0.25 hrs CPD
16.15hrs	Mock disciplinary hearing	2hrs CPD
19.30hrs	Buffet supper and exhibition	
21.00hrs	Conclusion of mock disciplinary hearing	0.5 hrs CPD
Saturday		
08.30hrs	Registration, exhibition and refreshments	
09.00hrs	Successful Service Delivery - Jann Gardner	0.75hrs CPD
09.45hrs	Performance management - Roger Matthews	0.75hrs CPD
10.30hrs	Exhibition and refreshments	
11.00hrs	Utilising the skill mix - Margaret Ross	0.75hrs CPD
11.45hrs	It all comes back to numbers - Andy McDougall	0.75hrs CPD
12.30hrs	Exhibition and refreshments	
13.30hrs	Parallel session 1 Understanding your team (workshop)	1.5hrs CPD
	Parallel session 2 TBC	1.5hrs CPD
15.00hrs	Refreshments and exhibition	
15.30hrs		
- 17.00hrs	Parallel session 3 Assertiveness skills Parallel session 4 Dealing with bullying and harassment	1.5hrs CPD 1.5hrs CPD
19.30hrs	Drinks reception	
20.00hrs	Dinner followed by ADAM Awards, casino & disco	
	* Please note small changes to this programme may occur	

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Be prepared - CQC really is here!

CQC inspections of dental practices seem to have kicked off in earnest this month with feedback from some practices in Derbyshire that they have been given five days' notice of a visit.

It is an anxious time. Even when we know we are prepared and feel confident that our procedures and processes reflect CQC guidelines, it is fear of the unknown that makes us feel worried. Having not had a CQC inspection before we all wonder if we will fulfill their requirements.

To glean an insight into what an inspection entails and what it is all about it is worth checking out the report of Collins House Dental Practice, which was one of the first practices to be inspected. This report can be viewed at <http://preview.cqc.org.uk/directory/1-189933634#dentists> and by clicking on each of the five standards, detailed sections of the report can be viewed including the inspector's comprehensive comments.

If you are a Denplan practice you will probably already know of the useful resources provided through their secure online portal at www.denplan.co.uk. Guidance on how to prepare for such a visit is contained within their 'An Inspector Calls' report. For everyone else, here is a brief summary of the inspector's approach as indicated in the Collins House report.

An inspector calls – the lowdown

Who was interviewed?

The inspector spoke to 11 patients – six in person and five by phone. He also spoke with the partner, three associates, four nurses, two receptionists and the practice manager. So one thing is for certain, your whole team must be adequately briefed and they all need to be aware of the protocols, systems, policies and procedures of the practice.

To avoid the team feeling stressed by the visit, make certain you do brief them properly. Encourage them to be as welcoming, positive and enthusiastic as they are with your patients, after all, that is what CQC want to see evidence of, how the team cares for the dental welfare of patients in their care.

What else did s/he want to see?

Have any accreditation documentation on hand such



as Denplan Excel, BDA GP, along with documentation relating to infection control, decontamination, health & safety etc. Ensure you have GDC, CRB and any other relevant professional codes of practice details handy, in addition to your practice procedures manual.

Was everything investigated?

If you review the report you will see that not all outcomes were inspected but as you do not know which ones will be chosen on your day of inspection, it is vital that you are prepared for anything where you stated in your original response that you complied. The Collins House inspection focused on findings from only five of the outcomes.

Be prepared

Someone once said that a winning effort begins with preparation. Visit the link and learn from what has been undertaken already. Identify any areas of potential weakness in your practice and work to overcome them. And most of all, talk with the team to ensure they feel comfortable with discussing any of the outcomes they may be asked to illustrate.

● If you have had an inspection or think you have done a great job at getting prepared, please send us your tips to share with other ADAM members.



Feature

What's happened to our FTAs?

Winter has certainly arrived, and with it come the inevitable consequences - traffic delays, power cuts, team and patients feeling cold and grumpy and unfortunately, even larger gaps in our appointment book, writes Sim Goldblum of The Dentistry Business.

Of course, gaps result for many different reasons - the conventional cancellation/rebook, the unexpected absence of a dentist or hygienist, an unconvincing treatment offer that is rejected, and the dreaded FTA. Let's focus on the FTA, as it is insidious and can cause the unwary a significant hole in the wallet.

For many practices, it is one of the performance indicators that can certainly become key. In my experience, FTAs may range from 5% to 30%. Earlier this year, the BDA conducted a survey which indicated that practices could be losing up to 2 weeks a year through FTAs.

There are three things that we can do to reduce the number of FTAs in practice; analyse, educate and communicate.

Analyse

We must understand the scale of our problem and this is relatively easy to do with any of the current practice management software systems:

- Check what happened last month and in each of the preceding 12 months to establish the trends on a monthly, quarterly and annual basis.
- I suggest that you also see what the FTA experience is for each of your dentists, therapists and hygienists to understand if there is a problem with a specific individual.
- Calculate how many hours each "producer" has lost in productive time over the last 12 months and calculate the resultant loss of income to themselves and the practice.

Educate

Share the data at your next team meeting and explain its importance to all concerned (including the financial impact):

- Explain how important it is to tell each patient how the regular assessment, check-up or hygienist appointment helps keep their teeth in the best condition possible and prevents unpleasant gum disease.
- If one of your dentists, hygienists or therapists seems to encounter a higher percentage of FTAs than the other team members, perhaps there is something in their attitude or communication process that is discouraging patients from attending; it is much easier to deal with such a problem when there is clear evidence of an issue.



Communicate

Once we understand the scale and nature of our FTA problem and have made our team aware, we can develop our internal fixes:

- Practice our surgery communication techniques
- Help our reception team with a new script, to reinforce the importance of keeping appointments
- Create a practice policy for FTAs including our "three strikes and you're out" policy which the PCT will accept
- Update our practice information leaflet to ensure that our policy on FTAs is clearly explained.
- We might decide that referrals from dentist to hygienist are done personally by the dentist, to emphasise the importance we place on their role.

Finally, we must communicate with our patients! We must not give our patients "permission to FTA", so let's congratulate those patients who do attend - the waiting room notice should indicate "X percent of our patients were appreciative of our services and attended last month or last quarter", emphasising the importance of attendance. Ensure that we are reminding patients of their appointment by phone call, e-mail or text message - whichever they prefer; and the reminder needs to be within 48 hours of the appointment.

Sim Goldblum from The Dentistry Business is a business executive with extensive experience in business planning, marketing and finance. For more information visit www.thedentistrybusiness.com



Toothpaste gets a makeover

Product of the month

“For me, clean teeth and healthy gums epitomise natural beauty. Your smile is part of your personality, and I’m making it my mission to encourage the British public to look after their teeth and keep their smile beautiful.”

Dr Susan Tanner MRD, RCS, MSc, BDS



The ADAM editorial team is always on the look out for new and exciting products that we can let our members know about. The latest to catch our eye is Dawood & Tanner’s Tooth Cleansers - the first range of dental care products to be designed exclusively by professional dentists.

Formulated by Dr Andrew Dawood and Dr Susan Tanner, internationally renowned dentists with more than 40 years’ combined experience, these products are a revolutionary new concept in tooth care. The range not only succeeds in making toothpaste look appealing (so nothing like a traditional toothpaste), but tastes delicious too.

Having spent years witnessing first-hand the consequences of irregular brushing with an ineffective toothpaste, Dawood & Tanner set out to create a tooth cleanser range that would inspire people to incorporate tooth-brushing into their beauty regime.

The chic packaging looks great on the bathroom shelf, whilst the unique blends of natural essential oils are refreshingly different. The tooth cleansers come in four flavours, all having low foaming properties:

- Sicilian Lemon - lemon curd at first with an aftertaste of a popular honey and lemon lozenge
- Garden Mint - very natural smell and taste of rich

green garden mint leaves with notes of grass and apples

- English Peppermint - mild and delicious. Old fashioned glacier peppermints without the guilt
- Brazilian Lime - a zesty burst, reminiscent of freshly cut lime quarters

Dawood and Tanner have used their expert knowledge and years of experience to select three essential ingredients that are proven to care for teeth and gums. Sodium Bicarbonate neutralizes damaging plaque acids and gently restores the natural whiteness of teeth, unlike other whitening toothpastes which are damaging and abrasive. The right amount of Sodium Fluoride strengthens the surface of the enamel and reduces sensitivity and Xylitol helps to prevent tooth decay.

Dawood & Tanner Tooth Cleansers are £4.99 each. They are available from larger Boots stores and www.boots.com and can also be stocked by dental practices. For more information visit www.deliciousteeth.com

About Dawood & Tanner

Dawood & Tanner is a multidisciplinary specialist dental practice based at 45 Wimpole Street, London. All aspects of implant, cosmetic, restorative, and children’s dentistry are covered, as well as maxillofacial, and plastic surgery.



PM shares her secrets for success

Marie Hobden is the practice manager at Surrenden Dental Practice in Brighton. This month she reveals how to run a successful Mouth Cancer Action Month campaign.

Providing an excellent standard of dental care to our valued patients is hugely important to us, but unfortunately it became increasingly difficult to maintain these standards under the ever-changing NHS regulations which limit the levels of care we could provide. For these reasons we decided to go completely private earlier this year.

Supporting a good cause

By giving something back to the local community, our team at Surrenden Dental Practice rallied to the call of Mouth Cancer Action Month to help check for symptoms of the disease. We offered free mouth cancer examinations every Thursday during the month of November.

Helping to screen for mouth cancer, or helping to educate patients and the public to examine their own mouths, is one of the most positive steps any healthcare professional can undertake during Mouth Cancer Action Month. Encouraging people to self-examine also means they can watch for the warning signs themselves and act quickly. At current rates the incidence of mouth cancer is likely to double within a generation.

Household budgets are tight

Surrenden Dental Practice appreciates that household budgets are tight for many people at the moment. We felt that offering people on our doorstep a free mouth cancer examination was a great way to support our local community. It was also a good way to promote awareness of the illness and at the same time help to develop the goodwill of our practice.

Our mouth cancer examinations were publicised to the local public by means of a banner. Banners are a great way of drawing attention to any display.

The local press were great

The local press were also keen to cover local events in the area, especially for a good cause and we had a press



Ed O'Toole, one of our principal dentists, and his nurse Joanne Hardwick carry out a free screening for mouth cancer during our hugely popular MCAM awareness campaign.

release in our local newspaper and we were very lucky to also have a press release and a link to our website on our local radio stations website – Heart, Sussex & Surrey FM. This was also a great way of raising awareness.

Within one day all slots had gone

Within one day of our press release and banner going up, all our Thursday slots were filled and we were fortunate enough to be able to add extra slots.

The majority of the public seen during our free mouth cancer examination screening month were absolutely fine with no suspicious areas or concerns, however we did make six urgent referrals to the local hospital for further investigation.

Staff received specific training

Prior to November, all staff were trained during an informative practice meeting so if anyone called complaining of a non-healing mouth ulcer or any of the other symptoms, staff would know what advice to give.



Dealing with snow, flu and parties

Jane Hallas, (pictured), Employment Law Principal at Employment Law and Health & Safety specialists Ellis Whittam, looks at the challenges that the winter weather presents to practice managers and administrators.



Winter is upon us. As I write this, we are all hoping that we will not have a repeat of last December's snows. As you read this, you may have a better idea of what is in store!

Even if the weather doesn't give us problems with absentee staff, winter brings with it an increased risk of staff going absent for a variety of reasons, such as colds and flu and even the aftermath of Christmas parties!

From an employment law point of view, there are some steps you can put in place to be ready for the issues winter can bring. First, you can introduce a severe weather policy. This can make the point that employees should not attempt to get into work where local radio has advised it is unsafe to do so but otherwise should make an effort.

Employees should be required to telephone you before their start time to let you know if they are delayed or not coming. The policy should set out what happens to payment for the day. In the unlikely event that employees can do their work from home, they should be paid for the hours they work. Employees who can only work productively at the practice can normally be required to take the day as unpaid or as a holiday.

If severe weather conditions cause a big delay in getting to work, you can provide that lost time will be unpaid or

made up by agreement. Make sure that your employees are reminded of the policy whenever the weather forecast looks bad!

Remember that all employees have a right to a reasonable amount of unpaid time off to deal with emergencies involving their dependants. 'Emergencies' for these purposes include where child care arrangements break down or there is an unexpected incident at school. So, whilst there is no legal obligation to pay employees who can't get to work because bad weather means they have to look after their children unexpectedly, they cannot be disciplined for not turning up to work.

An absence management policy is your best bet in dealing with odd days taken as sick. It is important to apply your policy consistently and to ensure that, following every absence, no matter how short, employees are required to complete a self-certificate form.

Managers should meet with employees to discuss their self-certificate form, ask how their health is and whether they are fit to work. This will demonstrate that the employer takes attendance seriously and that no absence will be overlooked. If absences become excessive, a meeting must be held under the policy to set targets for attendance. Failure to meet targets can lead to a further caution and ultimately dismissal.

Remember before introducing any policy always discuss it first with your employees to gain their input and to help them buy in to the reasons for its introduction.

Ellis Whittam provides employers with fixed fee, unlimited support on Employment Law, Health & Safety and Human Resources. Many services such as webinars and monthly e-briefings are free. To find out more you can [email](mailto:jane.cuffin@elliswhittam.co.uk) Jane Cuffin, call her on 0845 226 8393, visit the [website](http://www.elliswhittam.co.uk) and follow them on [Twitter](https://twitter.com/elliswhittam).





Feature

Can you be a winner - even if you lose?

It is the award season – well it is for the dental industry anyway, with the Private Dentistry Awards early last month and the Dentistry Awards just last week. But what is the point of industry awards and do they deliver any tangible benefits?

It takes time & effort to enter

It takes a lot of effort to enter awards. You need to get the team on board. You have to prepare your entry, which takes time and effort. There is the stress of waiting to hear if you have passed muster and made it to the finals. And then of course there is the expense of attending the event, which can be costly if you take the whole team. So why go through all that?

Awards can be very rewarding, even if you don't win. A practice we know recently entered the Private Dentistry Awards for the first time. Their entries were well considered, heartfelt and well presented. They made it to the finals, took the whole team to the event and did not get a mention, despite entering three categories.

They were bitterly disappointed but talking to them after the ceremony, they were also united in their loss and motivated to continue to pursue their goals. For them the experience of putting their entries together helped them to realise what a great team they were and that was highly motivational. Winning would have been the icing on the cake but the process of entering the awards helped them to bake a lovely cake!

Another practice we know left the Private Dentistry Awards and the Dentistry Awards as winners and could not have been more delighted. Principal dentist Clare Chavasse and PM Sharon Nanson of Titchfield Dental Health in Southampton (pictured) felt vindicated after winning in the Best Patient Care category at the Private Dentistry Awards and Best Team at the Dentistry Awards. After many years of hard graft to build a patient-centric practice the public acknowledgement of their success was incredible and you can just imagine the PR benefits of circulating news of their win to the general public.

Making good use of their website, social media pages, local press and radio, and their patient base, the Titchfield



team will use their national award for many months to come, to encourage new patients to visit and to reaffirm why existing patients have made the best decision by continuing to attend the practice. The team is highly motivated and rather than it being a short-lived thing, it actually pays long term dividends because such a public acknowledgement sets an expectation that the team will work hard to fulfil day in and day out.

But is it worth it?

So are awards rewarding? We think so. Winning is obviously great for team building and confidence, and for marketing purposes to generate new business. But simply the process of entering and acknowledging your successes can be a great boost; especially when we are all working like crazy to stand still.

Think about entering something in 2012 – perhaps acknowledging the contribution of a team member in the ADAM Awards would be the ideal place to begin!



Get in touch. Send your news & views to denise@adam-aspire.co.uk

Column

Get your early bird tickets now

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all of our members a very merry Christmas, a happy New Year and a well deserved break!

While most people are looking only as far as Christmas, we are already focusing our attentions on May - and we are very excited to announce the programme for our conference in Harrogate, as detailed on page 9.

Starting with our AGM on the Friday, what follows is a relevant and interesting agenda for Friday afternoon and all day Saturday, culminating in a black-tie dinner with the presentation of our

Welcome to my regular column. Each month I hope to keep you informed about ADAM news and to talk about issues that affect, annoy and delight us as practice managers and administrators. *Jill*



ADAM Awards.

Early bird tickets are now on sale and the conference brochure will be available soon to download from our website. For members, prices start at just £64 for Friday, £120 for Saturday or £165 for both days. Tickets for the ADAM Gala dinner and Awards Ceremony cost £45 and include a three-course meal and two glasses of wine. Early bird tickets are available until March 14. Please email denise@adam-aspire.co.uk or call HQ on 01452 886 364.

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