

February 2012

e update



Catch that worm! Conference Special

The countdown is on so don't miss your opportunity to make a massive 20% saving off your conference tickets with our early bird offer - only available until March 14.

Member prices start at just £64 for Friday and £165 for both days.

Tickets for the Gala dinner and Awards ceremony cost £45 and include a three course meal and two glasses of wine.

You will receive your conference brochure and booking form in the next week so make certain you look out for it!

www.adam-aspire.co.uk

Inside this edition . . .

Read all about it



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

Conference info



This edition is dedicated to Conference. Read more inside...

Legal insight



Join ADAM's mock disciplinary hearing. More on p.14

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Contact us

Association of Dental Administrators and Managers
3 Kestrel Court
Waterwells Business Park
Gloucester GL2 2AT

t 01452 886364
f 01452 886468
e denise@adam-aspire.co.uk

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Exciting volunteer opportunities offered

Bridge2Aid currently has two exciting opportunities available at its Hope Dental Centre (HDC) in Mwanza.

The charity's aim at HDC is to have a Tanzanian-led clinic and it is working well towards this goal but needs an extra 'push' this year with the training and development of the clinical and administrative teams.

To do this Bridge2Aid would like to invite a business manager and a principal clinician to come and spend a year – 18 months with the team. The roles are described below and would be ideal for a married couple or two individuals.

HDC Business Manager

Overall aim: – to enhance the clinic systems and processes ensuring the clinic is running efficiently and effectively, giving patients a positive experience

- to oversee the day-to-day working of HDC
- to work alongside the HDC practice manager and her assistant developing their management, leadership and administration skills.

- to review and update current policies and procedures

- to introduce an effective target / bonus scheme based on realistic KPIs

- to review stock and material management process
- to train and develop the team

Key skills:

- previous experience as practice / business manager essential

- previous dental nursing experience desirable but



not essential

- team player
- good teacher and trainer
- adaptable to new and challenging situations

HDC Principal

Overall aim: – to promote efficiency and quality within HDC and ensure all clinical procedures are delivered to a high standard.

- training and development of dentist and therapist with the aim of developing a new principal / lead clinician.

- working alongside the business manager to ensure effective day to day running of HDC

Key skills:

- experience in principal role desirable – 3 years as associate essential

- teacher / trainer skills essential

- willingness to adapt and work in more challenging situations

- team player

Other information

Start date – September 12 or sooner!

These are volunteer positions and assistance with basic living costs is available and will be worked out with the successful applicants. Please contact Jo@bridge2aid.org before 27th February 2012 if you would like to know more about these opportunities.





NHS Choices moderation 'must be fair'

The BDA has appealed to NHS Choices to consider the way that comments about dental practices posted on its site are moderated.

The appeal has been made following feedback from a number of BDA members about the way that the site allows serious but unsubstantiated allegations to be made about practitioners anonymously and the often-slow process for moderating inappropriate comments.

The BDA is also concerned that many primary care trusts appear to be retaining the editing rights for practice profiles on the website, despite previous assurances that the ability to edit would be opened up to practices as the feedback functionality on the site was rolled out.

Dr John Milne, Chair of the BDA's General Dental Practice Committee, said: "Dentists have very reasonable concerns

about the way that malicious or even fictitious feedback can be given anonymously via the NHS Choices website. We're asking NHS Choices to take those concerns on board and act to ensure that this facility isn't abused and that the way the site is moderated and edited is fair and efficient.

"Feedback is extremely valuable to dental practices because it helps to drive improvements for patients and dentists therefore welcome constructive comments from their patients. But malicious unattributed comments from individuals who may not even be patients at a practice are not only unhelpful, but could also be damaging. In seeking to achieve the very laudable aim of promoting patient choice, we must be careful not to unfairly sacrifice the reputations of clinicians. The issues the BDA is raising will help to ensure that dentists are treated fairly."

Patients' confidence in dental professionals is high

New research, commissioned by the GDC, has found 94% of patients are confident in the dental treatment they're receiving and 95% are satisfied.

Two independent opinion surveys, one targeting dental professionals and the other patients and members of the public, have looked into issues surrounding the regulation of dentistry and the standards of treatment.

In the last 12 months alone 65% of those asked had visited a dentist and 70% were very or fairly confident that if they needed to make a complaint it would be resolved fairly, whether by the GDC or another appropriate body.

The surveys found that the public believe regulation and registration of dentists is important, but 44% of dental patients do not check whether their dentist or dental care professional is properly registered, which anyone can do on the GDC's website www.gdc-uk.org

A significant majority of those asked (68%) are confident that the GDC is an effective regulator. Many identify with the GDC's aims and agree that the GDC protects the patient (80%), has a clear regulatory role (72%) and is trustworthy (66%). 48%

of dental professionals believe the level of regulation as a whole is about right, with 39% saying it is too much.

The research featured a series of questions that explored registrants' views about standards and professionalism.

The key drivers of patients' confidence included: behaviour, quality of care and good communication. The results are being fed into the GDC's wider review of its 'Standards for dental professionals' guidance.

The GDC has already run registrant events across the UK and issued an open call for feedback on its website. Early in 2012 it also held a formal consultation – giving everyone the chance to have a say on this key piece of work.

Chief Executive and Registrar of the GDC, Evlynne Gilvarry said: "The findings of this research will inform and influence our work in protecting patients. For example, the evidence about the value and importance for patients of communication and people skills is a key message being fed into the review of our Standards guidance for dental professionals that's taking place at the moment."



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 |
|-------------------------|--|---|--|
| 23 February Bristol | The perfect front desk with Emma John | £200 (BoD members £120) | www.businessofdentistry.co.uk |
| 24 February London | Child protection; the dental team's responsibility. BDA | £100 for practice managers | www.bda.org/training |
| 24 February Cardiff | Business planning and financial management for practice owners and managers. Andy McDougall | £100 for practice managers | www.bda.org/training |
| 28 February 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 London | ILM Level 7 Diploma in Executive Management Provider: UMD Professional Ltd | Call Penny Parry on 020 8255 2070 for fees | email penny@ umdprofessional.co.uk |
| 2 March London | Record keeping. Dentabyte CPD4CQC | £75 | www.dentabyte.co.uk |
| 6 March Leicester | Growth through marketing seminar. Denplan | Free for Denplan members, £40 for non-members | www.denplan.co.uk/dentists/members/events-and-training.aspx |
| 7 March Leicester | Risky times: how to keep out of trouble for the GDP & DCPs. S. Yorks/E. Mids Deanery | £21 half day or £36 full day | www.pgde-trent.co.uk |
| 7 March Birmingham | Managing team performance – how to get the most out of your team. Denplan | From £75 for Denplan members. £50 discount for non-members | www.denplan.co.uk/event-sandtraining |
| 8 March Cambridge | CQC Essentials – giving you the know-how & confidence to meet CQC requirements. Denplan | From £75 for Denplan members. £50 discount for non-members | www.denplan.co.uk/event-sandtraining |
| 13 March Gatwick | Managing team performance – how to get the most out of your team. Denplan | From £75 for Denplan members. £50 discount for non-members | www.denplan.co.uk/event-sandtraining |
| 16 March London | Periodontics – a team approach. BDA | DCP £195, BDA member £265, non-member £345 | events@bda.org |
| 20 March Essex | Managing team performance – how to get the most out of your team. Denplan | From £75 for Denplan members. £50 discount for non-members | www.denplan.co.uk/event-sandtraining |
| 20 March Leeds | The perfect front desk with Emma John | £200 (BoD members £120) | www.businessofdentistry.co.uk |
| 22 March Manchester | Treatment co-ordination for profit with Laura Horton | £100 (BoD members £60) | www.businessofdentistry.co.uk |
| 22 March Northampton | CQC Essentials – giving you the know-how & confidence to meet CQC requirements. Denplan | From £75 for Denplan members. £50 discount for non-members | www.denplan.co.uk/event-sandtraining |
| 29 March Nottingham | CQC Essentials – giving you the know-how & confidence to meet CQC requirements. Denplan | From £75 for Denplan members. £50 discount for non-members | www.denplan.co.uk/event-sandtraining |
| 30 March Manchester | Working smarter - not harder. ADAM workshop with The Dental Business Academy | £75 for ADAM members, £150 for non-members | Jan@ thedentalbusinessacademy.co.uk |
| 30 March London | Dento-legal study day. Dental Protection | DPL Xtra/ DCP/FD member £169, DPL £199, non-memb £249 | http://www.dentalprotection.org.uk/newsnews/events/ |
| 17 April West London | Treatment co-ordination for profit with Laura Horton | £100 (BoD members £60) | www.businessofdentistry.co.uk |
| 18 April Birmingham | WoW customer journey with Les Jones and Medenta | £200 (BoD members £120) | www.businessofdentistry.co.uk |



Countdown to Conference

Spring is here and along with it comes the countdown to conference. This edition really is a bumper conference special. Much more information to follow throughout the e update including the full conference programme and special introductions from some of our expert speakers.

The early bird closing date is March 14th. If you haven't already booked your place then now is the perfect opportunity to take advantage of the massive 20% reduction in rates. Before March 14 members pay just £65 for Friday, £120 for Saturday, £165 for both days and £45 for the grand dinner on the Saturday evening.

We are all very excited about conference and thoroughly delighted with the diverse range of speakers joining us from across the breadth of the country. We know you will find the event stimulating

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*



and rewarding. And get out your glad rags because our casino theme gala dinner on Saturday night is an event not to be missed.

Before conference we have our "work smarter not harder" workshop. This is being run in conjunction with the Dental Business Academy in Manchester on March 30 - please visit our website for details. I for one am certainly looking forward to being there and taking back tips to implement into our practice.

In April the ADAM team will be chairing a session at the BDA conference. Hannah and I will be on our stand D43 for the three days - please do come along and say hello. We are looking forward to working with the team at Breathe for the session and would love it if you could come along and participate too.

A you a conference virgin?

Most people will freely admit to feeling concerned about attending meetings on their own. Will people speak and mix? Will I know anyone? These are all normal feelings. There is nothing worse than feeling isolated and vulnerable at an event you have chosen to attend or have been asked to attend on behalf of your employer!

You may feel just the same when faced with the decision to attend the ADAM annual conference. You have to weigh up the benefits of attending a rewarding and informative conference with the downside of coming alone.

One solution is to bring along another member of your team, someone you already know and who may assist you to run the practice. Feedback from past events suggests that the practices that have benefited the most are those where two or more team members have attended a course, event or conference together.



The shared learning can be passed onto the rest of the team in a confident way, and you might both take home different valuable and profitable tips from the speakers. After all, we all like different things and respond to different ways of learning.



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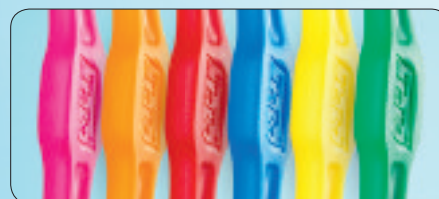


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Understanding your team - & yourself

Using DISC personality profiling, Liz Price from MDDUS will explore the ways in which we view ourselves and our teams to help achieve better practice management. Her enlightening workshop will take place at the ADAM Conference at 1.30pm on Saturday, May 19.

Successful management of teams is reliant on effective communication. In your role you are likely to have experienced encounters where others have reacted negatively, often unexpectedly, to the information or instruction you are conveying. Often there are people within the team that we 'just don't get'! Some individuals are seen as optimistic, friendly and talkative whereas others can be perceived as less social and negative.

Positively influence behaviours

Research has consistently shown that behaviour can be grouped together in four main categories. These categories can be identified and measured using DISC personality style analysis. Undertaking DISC analysis during this workshop is likely to change the way you view yourself and others within your team allowing you to appreciate, accept and positively influence behaviours to achieve better practice management.

An understanding of behavioural styles can help you target your message to each individual or to the team so that it is received in the most positive way. For example, some individuals are naturally more task-focused than others and so when discussing a change in working that is on the horizon, it is useful to provide them with more information about the process and detail of the proposed change. Understanding these aspects of the change will help them accept and feel more comfortable with the change earlier.

Are you task or people-focussed?

Other individuals are predominantly people-focussed and so are likely to receive the change more positively if time is taken early on to reassure them that support will be readily available throughout the process.

Understanding your own preferences is equally important as whether you are more comfortable dealing with tasks

or people will determine how well you might naturally communicate messages towards others with a different preference. This workshop will explore your own limitations and practically examine different strategies of communication you might wish to develop.



Reduce tension in your team

In addition to the natural tension that exists between individuals on whether they are more comfortable with tasks or people, there is further tension around the pace with which individuals want change to occur. You will see differences across teams with some individuals impatient to see the change happen, and others appearing more reluctant and less engaged. If you are able to understand the underlying feelings and needs behind individual or team resistance, you will be able to tailor your communication to reduce its effect.

Increase performance

During this workshop an understanding of behavioural analysis using the DISC model will help you to move forward to examine your team. This will help you to better understand their associated strengths and weaknesses, including the particular preferences across the team that are likely to cause tension or stress. It will also help identify conditions you can create to positively influence motivation, morale and increased performance - individually and across the team as a whole.

● Liz Price is Training and Consultancy Manager at UK-wide medical and defence organisation MDDUS

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Utilising the skills within your team

At 11am on Saturday May 19, guest speaker Margaret Ross will discuss the ever-changing face of dentistry and how all DCPs can contribute to patient care.

Dentistry has evolved quite significantly in recent years with a number of new Dental Care Professionals (DCPs) joining the team, all of whom can contribute to patient care. In addition to this, the clinical remit of certain groups has been extended, meaning that the delivery of care may be undertaken by a broader range of individuals.

Dental hygienist-therapists are highly skilled individuals who undertake either a three or four year training programme in the UK, mostly in a university setting. Graduates can undertake approximately 70% of routine dentistry amongst both the adult and child population, thus allowing the dentist to concentrate on more specialised areas of treatment. Research has demonstrated there is a clear lack of knowledge of some dental professionals about the remit of this group, which in turn leads to many of their clinical skills being underutilised.

Clinical dental technicians are already qualified dental technicians who, following a recognised course of training and formal examination, are able to provide complete dentures directly to the public, without having the requirement for a dentist's referral. This is the only DCP group who have direct access to the public, albeit for limited forms of treatment. Direct access for other DCP categories is under discussion at the moment and the outcome is awaited with anticipation.

Orthodontic therapists are another relatively new registrant group who following qualification, are able to undertake a significant amount of routine orthodontic care. They work in either specialist orthodontic practice or hospital departments, alongside specialists or consultants. Much of the education of orthodontic therapists takes place in the workplace with a very much 'hands-on' approach.

Other extensions of clinical duties include those undertaken by extended duty **dental nurses**, where the application of fluoride varnish is now permissible following appropriate training. This is in addition to



several other formal qualifications available to dental nurses, all of which increase the already significant contribution they make to patient care.

All DCPs must be registered with the General Dental Council and are required to complete a five year cycle of Continuing Professional Development, which includes a range of core subjects. This is intended to ensure that all dental professionals remain up to date in their education, thus protecting the patient which is one of the prime functions of the GDC. Appropriate use of skill mix in dentistry should lead to a more efficient structure of patient care, with those professionals who are suitably educated and qualified assuming roles for which they have been trained. This presentation will explore the remit of DCPs and discuss skill mix within the dental team.

Margaret Ross MPH, DIPDH, DIPDHERSH FAETC

Margaret is a senior lecturer for DCPs and co-director of the dental therapy training programme for qualified dental hygienists, in Edinburgh Postgraduate Dental Institute.

She sits on numerous committees within both the Scottish Executive and NHS Education for Scotland. She is also a member of the Advisory Boards for DCPs of both the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh, and the Faculty of General Dental Practice (UK).

Margaret has lectured extensively both locally and nationally, and her research interests are within education and the development of DCPs.



Conference

Workshop is set to enhance confidence

Assertiveness skills: at 3.30pm on Saturday May 19, MDDUS training and consultancy manager, Liz Price will teach practice managers and administrators the best ways to regain control, resist pressure and feel more confident in their ability to say 'no'.

Managers and administrators in dental practice are generally the central point of contact for the wider team. It can be difficult to resist the often unreasonable pressures and demands that are placed on you. This can lead to feelings of frustration, anger at yourself and others and low self esteem. As well as internal symptoms, a lack of assertiveness can result in poor performance where you find yourself juggling many demands to the detriment of quality and increased occurrences of psycho-somatic problems such as headache or backache.

It's not just about getting your own way!

Assertiveness is not just about getting your own way and, in fact, is often described as:

'standing up for your own rights in such a way that you do not violate another person's needs' and 'expressing your needs, wants, opinions, feelings and beliefs in direct, honest and appropriate ways' [Back & Back, 2005].

There are a variety of reasons why individuals do not engage in assertive behaviours including; gender, a lack of confidence, avoidance of conflict - not wanting to 'rock the boat' -and the need to be polite, liked or to not let others down. In fact, behaving non-assertively can lead to others perceiving you as aggressive, developing a lack of respect for you or experiencing irritation that you seem unable to say no which can often lead to letting colleagues down.

Practical & interactive workshop

This practical and interactive workshop is designed for delegates who would like to feel more confident in saying 'no' in appropriate situations and for those who would like to resist pressure and have more control where they currently feel they have none. It will allow you to explore a difficult relationship you have with a colleague and review how you might change this for the future.



Confidence is key

Confidence is central to assertive behaviour and the workshop will explore techniques to enhance your confidence including building competence and self-efficacy and will illustrate techniques to challenge natural 'faulty-thinking processes'. We will also practice how to positively phrase communication which will allow you to assert your needs more effectively.

In addition, situations will determine the level and type of assertive behaviours you may wish to adopt. These will be explored in the context of delegates working together on some commonly experienced scenarios which require assertive responses to both aggressive and passive colleagues.



It all comes back to numbers

Andy McDougall from Spot On Business Planning is set to cut through the technical jargon with his straight-talking approach to assist practices in achieving their financial goals and turning around poor performance. His session takes place at 11.45am on Saturday, May 19.

Finance is not the friendliest word. For most of us, the financial aspects of our jobs fill us with dread. We think of finance as that specialist subject that accountants do; it's all numbers.

Then there is all that technical jargon: accruals, depreciation, cash flow, forecasting etc., it might as well be a foreign language! But it doesn't have to be that way and if you were to dip your toe into the proverbial waters of finance you might actually discover that every other aspect of managing the practice becomes a lot clearer and easier to achieve.

Common sense finance

If the truth be known I have always found that once a level of confidence is reached with regard to finance, the foundations of practice management fall into place. Firstly we need a good grasp of what the terms mean; to have them explained in a common sense and practical way so that suddenly the mist clears and confidence is boosted. Then we move onto understanding how all of these seemingly different terms and techniques fit together.

Managing by numbers

Once we start to interpret numbers we have transformed our skills from processing transactions like invoices to managing by numbers. In this new world we begin to realise that our budget is actually part of something much bigger called a business plan – in fact it is the financial element of the business plan.

The objectives you set for the different aspects of practice life must have a financial value. Every aspect of the business must be accounted for – sales and treatments, marketing, people, purchasing, stock levels, your pricing policy; the cost of everything that goes on in the practice – literally. You then use your budget and the objectives to steer you business through the year, taking note of

when your actual performance deviates from the plan and taking the necessary corrective action to get things back on track. For instance it could mean running additional promotional activity when sales are down against budget or looking for ways to reduce your overheads (costs) when times get tougher.



You will understand the difference between cash and profit and you will be able to spot months in advance when cash might become tight giving you ample time to talk to your bank manager. Your bank manager will be impressed with your command of his language and realise that you are in control of your practice.

Numbers will rule

You will suddenly start to think about everything you do at work in relation to numbers. Have we planned to award pay rises at that level? Can we afford to purchase that new machine and if so when will it pay back? Should we be carrying stocks at that level? The numbers are now alive and you understand their impact – you are finally in control.

Andy's business planning expertise has for the last five years been helping members of the dental community respond to the dynamics of an increasingly commercial and competitive environment. He also hosts courses and seminars for practice owners and managers and is a popular guest speaker at dental shows across the UK.



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

Conference

Join our mock disciplinary hearing

Employment law advisers Liz Symon and Janice Sibbald from MDDUS, the UK-wide medical and dental defence organisation, will be staging a mock disciplinary hearing from 4.15pm on Friday, May 18. Here they tell us more about this rare insight into a daunting and formal legal process, that will take the form of an interactive workshop.



● Liz Symon



● Janice Sibbald



During the mock hearing, we will be looking at a real life case that investigates a potential breach of patient confidentiality within a dental practice setting and the misuse of social networking sites such as Facebook.

The increasing use and popularity of social networking sites brings with it a variety of potential issues and can lead to disciplinary action being taken and confidentiality issues with patients.

Those who attend the workshop will gain an insight into what can often be a daunting and formal process and will hear advice on how to avoid such a situation arising.

This interactive workshop has been developed to

equip you with the knowledge and skills to deal with any disciplinary issue by providing practical guidance from establishing the facts, presenting the case to the right of appeal and ensuring all statutory procedures are followed.

You will have a chance to air your views on how you think the judgement should go before hearing the outcome and an explanation of the reasoning behind it.

The mock disciplinary hearing focuses on a practice manager who receives a complaint from a patient about a potential breach of confidentiality. As the scenario unfolds, it looks at various issues from how to deal with the complaint to what process needs to be followed and what rights the employee has.



Dealing with bullying & harassment

MDDUS employment law adviser Janice Sibbald will hold an interactive session on Saturday May 19th at 3.30pm that will provide you with the opportunity to discuss this complex and sensitive topic of bullying and harassment in dental practices.

The reason it can be particularly complex is that what an employee perceives to be bullying behaviour still needs to be taken seriously and acted on, even if after careful investigation the behaviour is not deemed as bullying. Such claims need to be handled sensitively, objectively and promptly.

Bullying and harassment is characterised as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour.

Perhaps your practice has a culture where offensive language or inappropriate behaviour is now the norm? Will



employees just suffer in silence in fear of losing their jobs?

In this modern world, making remarks about people's gender, age, sexuality or religious views has to be taken seriously as all staff in your practice have the right to work in a safe environment without fear of harassment.

Some employees may feel that they are being assertive in a situation where in fact their manner can come across as aggressive and intimidating. What should you do as a practice manager?

We will provide you with practical hints and tips to avoid any internal grievances in relation to bullying in the workplace and ensure that your employees have mechanisms for raising any concerns.

This includes ensuring that your practice's bullying and harassment policy and standards of what is acceptable is clearly communicated at recruitment and induction stage as well as being kept alive for existing staff and revisited on a regular basis.

ADAM Conference, 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 Understanding the role of a TC - Laura Horton | 1.5hrs CPD |
| 15.00hrs | Refreshments and exhibition | |
| 15.30hrs | Parallel session 3 Assertiveness skills | 1.5hrs CPD |
| - 17.00hrs | Parallel session 4 Dealing with bullying and harassment | 1.5hrs CPD |
| 19.30hrs | Drinks reception | |
| 20.00hrs | Dinner, ADAM Awards, casino & disco | |
| | * Please note small changes to this programme may occur | |



Are you under the cosh with COSHH?

Advertising feature

Last month we highlighted how SUSAN's procedure on employee appraisals provides not only the paperwork but also the guidance to help you be the ultimate dental practice manager. This month we're taking a look at Health & Safety.

The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 state you must be committed to the provision and maintenance of a safe and healthy working environment for all staff and visitors to the practice, and seek to eradicate or minimise any risk of harm caused by hazardous substances.

1. Create a policy and a procedure. The first step in ensuring you are a safe practice is to have a clear policy ('why' we do it) and procedure ('what' we do) for this important aspect of Health & Safety at work.

2. Compile a list. Then you must compile a practice-specific list of all of the possible substances that could cause someone harm when they are in your practice. This means the patient, a team member, a carer or visitor. The list starts with blood and saliva, obviously, but should include pretty much every dental material you use, along with cleaning solutions etc.

3. What's the risk? Then you have to assess exactly what the risks associated with each substance are and how you can eliminate or minimise them. This is the tricky bit! Fortunately, companies now provide data sheets for many of the products available, giving you this information. But can you ever find them?!

4. Train your team. Each team member needs to know what the risks for each substance are and how they should use it in their daily practice.

5. Prove your compliance. Are you doing what you say you're doing? Can you prove it? CQC Regulation 15, Outcome 10 Safety and Suitability of Premises is just one of the aspects of practice that COSHH falls into. An audit trail including a policy and procedure, an up-to-date list and all of the available data sheets, plus a record of staff training will be strong written evidence. Don't forget that the inspectors

will also be interviewing your team members, so you have to make sure they are familiar with the practice's policy and procedure, too.

SUSAN'S SOLUTIONS

How can SUSAN help you comply with the COSHH Regulations efficiently and with the minimum of fuss?

1. Create a policy and a procedure. SUSAN has hundreds of expertly written and thoroughly researched policies and procedures, and COSHH is no exception. All you have to do is customise a couple of fields to make it your own.

2. Compile a list. SUSAN already has over 350 commonly used substances in the system. All you will have to do is highlight the ones you use at your practice. Forget writing reams of paper!

3. What's the risk? And where do you find and store those data sheets? Don't worry, SUSAN has those as well. Because they're stored on the system, you and your team can access them from a computer whenever you like at any time of the day (or night!).

4. Train your team. The easy to read and access format, means SUSAN is a pleasure to use and your team will quickly become familiar with everything they need to know about COSHH.

5. Prove your compliance. This is where SUSAN really helps. Our team of experts is continually updating SUSAN's content so that you don't have to do the research. SUSAN's in-built audit trails also mean that you can prove which team members have read each section. The team members can quickly look something up without trawling through piles of paperwork in your office. This means they are less likely to harm themselves or anyone else – which is surely the point of COSHH, isn't it?

COSHH is just one small aspect of the Health & Safety compliance dental practices must adhere to. SUSAN has all of these covered in easy to read, easy to access formats, all updated to save you time and stress. Do you have a Health & Safety question you need help with? Contact the Ask SUSAN team on www.asksusan.co.uk now or come and see us in the exhibitors' area of the ADAM Conference to find out more!



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Marian Grimes, PM, 740 Dental

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