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**Welcome to my regular e-update Column which each month will highlight the key events and news for busy practice managers and administrators.**

As Vice President for the past two years I've always

been aware that, come June 2013, I'd be stepping up into the role of President – but despite this I'm still coming to terms with the fact that it's actually happened!

I'm sure it will sink in over the next few weeks but I'm so proud and privileged – and thrilled – to be given the opportunity to be President of the Association I know and love. It's such an honour and I'm looking forward to every minute of it!

Those of you who attended our 20th anniversary Conference in Oxford earlier this month will, I hope, agree with me that it proved to be a great success, with interesting speakers presenting on a range of topics relevant to today's practice managers and administrators. A personal favourite of mine was the presentation by Suzi Jones from Deafwise – her enthusiasm and energy was truly inspiring!

I'm grateful to our conference partners DPL for their support before and during the event, and to Denplan for sponsoring our ADAM Awards – you can read more about the Conference itself on page 7 when our new Vice President Niki Boersma will share with you her experience of the event and tell you a little about this year's Award Winners.

The great thing about being Vice President for a couple of years before taking over the 'top job' is that during this period you get to see the Association from a different perspective. This has been invaluable in helping me develop my own thoughts and ideas about how to take the Association forward during my tenure as President. I won't say any more at this stage, but in next month's Practice Focus I'll outline some of those plans in more detail – so watch this space!

Finally I'd like to say a big thank you to everyone who attended our conference in Oxford, from sponsors and speakers to exhibitors and volunteer helpers, but especially to the delegates for their participation and energy. It's all too easy these days to sit on the side lines and criticise – far better in my view to get involved and make things happen. And that's what they did by their participation at the event.

And last but not least one big thank you to Jill Taylor for her work during these past two years as President, and for her support, advice and guidance throughout that period.

**Hannah Peek**



**In this continuing series focused on YOU, this month we meet and ask questions of the recently crowned ADAM 2013 Practice Manager of the Year.**

**Name:** Clare Maidlow **Age:** 44

**Job:** Practice Manager for Maple Orthodontics

**Where do you live (and with whom):** I live in Woodley, near Reading, with my husband Simon and 5 year old daughter, Lily.

**Hobbies:** I have played hockey for Reading Hockey Club for the past 20 years and this year I am captain of the Ladies 3's team. I also coach the under 6's children on a Sunday morning, and enjoy going to the gym and running. In the time that's left - if there is any - I make cakes for special occasions for friends and family.

**How did you end up working in dentistry?** I've worked within the dental profession for the past 24 years. I qualified as a Dental Nurse in 1991 whilst working in general practice in Reading. I worked at the Royal Berkshire Hospital for 5 years in the Oral Surgery and Orthodontic Department but then moved away from my clinical role and into a sales position, selling specialist orthodontic products for 3M Unitek.

After 5 years at 3M Unitek, I met Michael Cheung at Maple Orthodontics. I had met Michael some years earlier when I worked at the Hospital and he kindly asked me to become part of his team and offered me the position of Practice Manager which I've now been doing for 7 years.

**When did you first get involved with ADAM?** Since becoming a Practice Manager I've met with many colleagues holding similar roles, and it was as a result of their recommendations that I decided to join ADAM about a year ago.

**What do you enjoy most about your role?** As a Practice Manager, no two days are the same – there's always something to be done that you never expected when you walked into the practice that morning!

This, along with the day to day management of the Practice, means that, for me, it's a challenging, exciting and rewarding role, especially as I work with colleagues who have become close friends over the years. I also love the patient interaction as I'm able to ensure that the reputation of the Practice is maintained and that we're seen as a close working team.

As Practice Manager I take great pride from how the Practice has been able to grow in recent years, not just in patient numbers but also in reputation. It's very rewarding to see how some of our team have developed since they joined us – as a direct consequence of the Practice's encouragement to enhance their career paths.

**What's the most challenging part of your role?** It can be difficult to get the right balance between running the Practice on a day to day basis whilst at the same time maintaining close relationships with patients and colleagues; but hopefully I manage to get the mix about right!

**Would you recommend a career in dentistry?** If you're a 'people person' then YES, absolutely! No matter what you decide to do, whether it's as a Dental Nurse or an Orthodontist, it's an excellent profession to work in, largely because of the people it attracts.

**And if you hadn't gone into dentistry, what would you be doing?** If I hadn't found the dental profession I would probably now be working in another part of the care sector, possibly nursing or working with disadvantaged children.



**Clare Maidlow**

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### ADAM Member wins Scottish Dental Show 2013 Award

Blackhills Clinic in Aberuthven walked away with two awards at last month's Scottish Dental Show held at Hampden Park, Glsasgow.

Blackhills was named Best Nominated Referral/Specialist Practice and their practice manager – and ADAM member – Trudie Imrie picked up the award for Dental Business Manager of the Year.

Congratulations to Trudie!



### Tracey Stuart appointed ADAM Honorary Vice President

At the ADAM Annual General Meeting held in Oxford on 7th June 2013 Tracey Stuart was appointed Honorary Vice President.

Tracy is an experienced, qualified Dental Nurse & Dental Business Development Manager, and has developed a large number of dental practices.

As well as managing practices and developing the team Tracy has worked as a consultant for Frank Taylor and Associates and has a great understanding of how a dental business should perform.

ADAM President Hannah Peek said *'I know that when Tracy works with dental teams she shows them what to do rather than spending the session talking at them. She has walked in the shoes of every team member and so understands the challenges they face on a daily basis. I'm sure she'll prove to be a great source of advice and guidance to ADAM in her role as Honorary Vice President.'*

### Fantastic training course discount for ADAM members

Last month's edition of e-update announced the launch by The Dental Business Academy of their completely revised

BTEC level 4 qualification for Practice Managers, and promised news this month of preferential terms for ADAM members.

ADAM members will benefit from an amazing **30% discount** – for more information go to <http://thedentalbusinessacademy.com/product-category/practice-managers/>

### High Court confirms tooth whitening is dentistry

The General Dental Council (GDC) welcomes a decision by the High Court that tooth whitening is the practice of dentistry and should only be undertaken by regulated dental professionals.

The High Court ruling came when it overturned a Magistrates' Court's decision to acquit Ms Lorna Jamous of the offences of practicing dentistry and unlawfully carrying on the business of dentistry when not regulated by the GDC.

On 10 May 2013 judges at the High Court in London convicted Ms Jamous of the two offences.

Only dentists, dental hygienists and dental therapists (working to the prescription of a dentist) can carry out tooth whitening.

For more information please contact Moira Alderson at the GDC on 020 7344 3726 or [malderson@gdc-uk.org](mailto:malderson@gdc-uk.org)

### DCPs are reminded to pay their annual fee by 31 July 2013 to stay registered and eligible to work

Dental care professionals (DCPs) are being reminded by the General Dental Council (GDC) to pay their annual retention fee (ARF) by 31 July 2013.

Payment must be received on or before that date if they want to remain on the GDC's register and be eligible to work. No payments can be processed after the deadline.

All dental care professionals must be registered with the GDC to work in the UK. The ARF is £120 for dental nurses, dental technicians, dental therapists, dental hygienists, clinical dental technicians and orthodontic therapists.

For details of how to pay go to <http://www.gdc-uk.org/Newsandpublications/Pressreleases/Pages/DCPs-are-reminded-to-pay-their-annual-fee-by-31-July-2013-to-stay-registered-and-eligible-to-work.aspx>

# Anniversary Celebrations in the Cotswolds

**Niki Boersma, newly appointed Vice President of ADAM, shares her views of this year's Conference**

Those of you who attended this year's ADAM Conference – on 7th and 8th June 2013 at The Oxford Hotel, Oxford, in the heart of the Cotswolds – will, I hope, agree with me that it was a great success.

The event, which celebrated the 20th Anniversary of the Association, yet again delivered a terrific range of topics, each presented in a professional and, in almost every case, entertaining manner. And as a result the day and a half just flew by – always a good sign!

So, what were the headlines for me? Well here are a few personal thoughts, in no particular order:-

## Day 1

- The AGM takes place and – suddenly - I'm Vice President! No turning back now, not that I ever considered doing so – I can't wait to get started!
- Excellent up-date by our Conference partners DPL covering a wide range of issues, from Direct Access through to cross infection - followed swiftly by a talk on how to keep everyone healthy and safe in your dental practice.
- The Annual Dinner holds a particular interest for me as my husband and I run our own B & B – so I'm always interested in the logistics of preparing and serving so many good quality hot meals in such a short space of time. The Hotel staff worked tirelessly and it all went like clockwork. I'm not sure we're quite in this league yet, but then again our volumes are a bit lower!
- Master of Ceremony Stephen Hancocks was terrific, his informal style matched the circumstances perfectly and his jokes very funny – and you could tell them to your granny!
- Next up, the ADAM Awards, sponsored by Denplan, and the opportunity to celebrate some of the hard work that goes on day in and day out (often un-noticed) in practices across the country. Congratulations to all three winners:-

Practice Manager of the Year: **Clare Maidlow**  
Treatment Coordinator of the Year: **Lisa Parker**  
Administrator of the Year: **Karen Wheeler**

Two more treats worthy of mention at the Dinner; firstly the Jazz trio who provided background music at various points throughout the evening; and secondly the caricaturist who entertained at each table and provided many of the delegates and guests with a unique and personal (but not always flattering) caricature of themselves as a memory of the occasion - they were brilliant!

## Day 2

After a brief morning introduction by our new President, Hannah Peek, it was straight into HR matters, with two presentations on how to recruit and retain a successful team – and how to measure their performance and recognise and reward their success.

Clinical Governance and Pensions both had an airing in the afternoon as did Managing Patient Complaints and all were, again, presented in an entertaining and interesting manner – some more so than others if I'm honest!

But the highlight for me was Suzi Jones of Deafwise who delivered an amazing presentation in which she described the key things your team need to know and do to engage with deaf patients. Presented by Suzi and her husband, both of whom are deaf, the slot proved to be thought provoking and a real eye opener for everyone – and exceptionally entertaining.

Reflecting after closure of this year's Conference, Hannah said:

*'It couldn't have gone better! The conference facilities were great: the speakers were first rate; the topics were directly relevant to practice managers and administrators; and both the Dinner and the Awards were a huge success. Thank you again to DPL and Denplan for their continued support.'*

I couldn't agree more!



# The use of IT and Social Media within a Practice

Effective IT and Social media platforms are very useful tools for promoting a practice and keeping in touch with patients and suppliers. They present a unique and cost effective opportunity to promote your business in a very public domain.

Their use however can also have a devastating effect on a practice and it is therefore vital that all practices have a robust policy in place setting out the permitted use of social media and any restrictions that may be necessary.

A good IT and social media policy will instruct employees and associates on their use both within and outside the workplace.

It is also important to regularly monitor the use of IT and social media given the potentially catastrophic effect on the reputation of the practice of inappropriate material being published online. For this reason and to protect the practice we would always recommend including a clause in any contract of employment or associate contract confirming that the practice will monitor all use of IT and social media. This will include the monitoring of internet access, emails and social media sites.

At the outset it is important to emphasise in the policies that a serious breach is likely to result in dismissal for gross misconduct. Without a clear statement in the policies any such dismissal is likely to be unfair and may give the employee an entitlement to make a claim in the tribunal.

Practices should decide whether they wish to allow employees to access the internet and social media sites at all



during working hours. It may be that certain employees are authorised to access such sites provided that they are doing so in order to promote the practice. It may however be that the practice takes a more relaxed approach and allows reasonable access to the internet and social media sites provided that it does not interfere with their other duties. Either way, the policy of the practice should be clear and all employees and associates should be made aware of it.



Even in circumstances where access to the internet and the use of social media during working hours is prohibited, employees should be instructed that if they publish an opinion online or on a social media site that could in any way be linked to the practice or their role within the practice, whether they are posting it as part of their usual work duties or in a social context, then they should ensure that the opinion is clearly expressed as their own and not that of the practice.

Employees should also be instructed not to make any derogatory or disparaging comments about the practice, its employees or associates or any patient or supplier online or on any social media platform given the potential for such comments to be copied beyond the employee's own network and become public. As well as affecting the reputation of the practice such comments may also breach patient confidentiality.

The use of social media sites for bullying and harassment has also recently been in the press. All practices should have an equal opportunities policy and an anti-bullying and harassment policy to protect against such conduct but the social media policy should make it clear that bullying and harassment via social media networks will be viewed as a serious breach of the social media policy.

The internet and social media sites are such valuable tools that many practices are quite rightly embracing their use and using them to cost effectively market their services. It is however important that practices protect themselves and ensure that up to date and detailed IT and Social Media policies are in place.

**If you require any further information or assistance in drafting bespoke IT and social media policies please contact Sally Morris at mfg Solicitors LLP on 01905 610410.**



Sally Morris is Partner and Head of Employment at mfg Solicitors LLP and has considerable experience in advising dental practices on employment and HR issues that may arise.





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# Infection Control – Does your practice meet National Standards?

Dental practices dedicate a lot of time and money to ensure they meet infection control guidelines. Governing bodies such as The Department of Health's HTM 01-05 and CQC outcome 8 carefully regulate the standard of protocols conducted in all UK practices, and each premise is assessed regularly. The health of both dental professionals and their patients depend on the practice's compliance with these regulations. While those in the dental industry have generally proven their diligence, it is essential not to let complacency creep in.

In order to enhance and maintain high levels of infection control, it is crucial that all staff are properly trained to recognise and act upon potential cross-contamination. For example, all dental professionals should ensure their basic personal hygiene is very good, by always wearing clean uniforms, having long hair tied back and ensuring they wash and disinfect their hands correctly throughout the day.

There are many other areas within the practice that can harbour pathogenic micro-organisms, and these must all be addressed frequently and thoroughly. The Dental Unit Water Lines (DUWL) are one such possible source of infection, as bacteria can build-up inside the pipes and be transmitted to patients or even staff when the chair unit instruments are used.

All surfaces throughout the practice also pose a potential threat to both staff and patients, from the reception desk, to the children's play area, to the surgery rooms. With so many people entering the practice in a single day, different micro-organisms are brought inside and transferred around the premises constantly. It is therefore highly important that the surfaces of all equipment and furniture are effectively decontaminated on a very regular basis.

In order to do this efficiently, it is important to consider the products or brands used. Those that protect against a variety of different pathogens are particularly effective, limiting the growth of a broad spectrum of infections such as *MRSA*, *TB*, *Hepatitis A,B* and *C*, and *E-Coli*. The pathogenic bacteria and viruses that cause these infections can survive on dry, inanimate surfaces for a long period of time, if not treated efficiently. In extreme cases – and hopefully very rare ones – *C. difficile* can last up to 5 months, *Staphylococcus aureus* (including *MRSA*) up to 7 months, and *E.coli* can persist for up to 16 months!

Recent trends of reported *MRSA* and *E.coli* cases in fact show declines of 43% and 37% respectively, between Q3 2010 and Q2 2012.<sup>ii</sup> Despite this however, it remains crucial

that all healthcare professionals maintain diligent infection control protocols. This not only encourages further reductions in the number of reported infections, but also helps prevent different mutations of pathogens and so inhibits the development of new and potentially more dangerous 'superbugs'.

The best of the infection control products available in the industry are effective in low concentrations, against a variety of bacteria, fungi and viruses. The chemicals used within these products should also be considered, as some surface materials within the practice will be more sensitive than others and will require gentler disinfectants to prevent any damage. It is of course also important that these products don't pose any risk to patients or staff in direct contact with treated surfaces, and that any waste can be disposed of safely, with the smallest threat to the environment as possible.

Infection control experts schülke provide an extensive product range to cover any eventuality, all fully compliant with HTM 01-05 and CQC regulations and specifically designed to suit the healthcare industry. The mikrozid® range includes liquids and wipes to effectively clean and disinfect all surfaces within the dental practice, including both alcohol-based and alcohol-free products. The Plus Rewards Scheme also entitles practices to savings through repeat purchases of any branded schülke products, no matter which dealer is used.

However, even with the best products available, if dental professionals do not have the knowledge and skills to perform effective infection control procedures, both staff and patients may be at risk. Providers such as schülke also offer training for all members of the dental team, ensuring they are properly equipped to fight the spread of infections and diseases.

Regardless of practice size or job role, it is essential that staff have the knowledge and the tools to do so effectively. As a member of the dental team, it is your responsibility to offer the safest environment for patient as possible, and that starts with infection control.

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26 & 27 September 2013 London	The essentials of staff management <i>British Dental Association</i>	BDA Training essentials £115 for Practice Managers	<a href="http://www.bda.org/training">www.bda.org/training</a>
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