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Get in touch!

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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.

They say that time flies when you're having fun – well it's never been truer than during my two years as President of ADAM, which draws to a close in a few weeks' time when I hand over to Hannah Peek as my successor.

It's been an honour and privilege to be your President for these past two years, and a real pleasure to work with my fellow Executive team members during this time. Living and working in Scotland has meant that I've spent more time than usual travelling south to various dentistry events throughout these past two years, so I can't deny it will be nice to spend a bit more time at home and a bit less time on the road!

My 24 months as President has coincided with a period of change within the dental profession, and with more change to come - the precise implications of Direct Access, which officially took effect from the beginning of this month, have yet to be fully understood.

But as with all changes within dentistry, practice managers and administrators need to ensure that they're up-to-date and fully aware of what's happening, and understand what it means for their patients, their clinical colleagues, and themselves.

What better reason do you need to maintain your ADAM membership?

This month's e-update brings you the latest news from the profession, including articles on:

- planned changes to employment legislation that will affect all employers
- how you can develop fresh ideas to help keep your patients happy
- a BTEC level 4 distance learning programme for practice managers.

I look forward to seeing you at our Conference & Dinner at the Oxford Hotel in Oxford on 7th and 8th June.

Jill Taylor,
President



In this continuing series focused on YOU, this month we meet and ask questions of Hannah Peek who will be appointed ADAM President at our Conference in June.

Name: Hannah Peek

Age: 38 years young!

Job: Practice Manager

Where do you live (and with whom): I live in Romford in Essex with husband Chris and baby Henry - who will soon celebrate his first birthday.

Hobbies: As the mother of a near one year old, hobbies seem to be a thing of the past, although if the opportunity arises I love to have lunch with some of my girlfriends.

How did you end up working in dentistry?

When I left full time education I really didn't know what I wanted to do and in truth it was quite by chance that I found myself employed as a trainee dental nurse.

I must confess at first I really didn't think it was for me, but the turning point was when I was given a Leverson's textbook and suddenly I found the job began to be more interesting.

Over the years my career gradually developed and I've now been a Practice Manager for 14 years.

When did you first get involved with ADAM?

I first joined ADAM (or BDPMA as it was then) back in 2006. I'd been a member for a little while when I saw a request the role of assistant regional mentors being advertised - these mentors help to organise seminars across the country and to promote the association. My employers encouraged me to apply for the role and I was successful.

I soon became a mentor, then regional manager for the South East, followed by team manager; and more recently I became Vice President. I take up the role of President at our AGM at the June Conference next month.

What do you enjoy most about your role?

I've always loved being involved with people and I'm a great organiser, so my favourite part of the role is a combination of working in a large team, meeting our patients and running the practice, with decisions being made on a variety of issues each and every day.

What's the most challenging part of your role?

I think it's when you find yourself stuck in between the dentist principal on the one hand and your team on the other hand – with both sides looking to you for a solution - that's when you realise that 'the buck' stops with you!

Would you recommend a career in dentistry?

Absolutely - after 'falling into it' I can't believe how lucky I am to have found a career that I enjoy and that brings fresh challenges almost every day - no time to be bored!!

And if you hadn't gone into dentistry, what would you be doing?

Probably saving the world and converting everyone to vegetarianism – or, more likely, working in an office - bored rigid and willing the clock towards 5:00pm!



Hannah Peek

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Dental Protection announces “Journeys”

In addition to providing indemnity to 70% of the UK dental profession, Dental Protection (DPL) also has a long history of providing members with innovative educational material. The publication of the *Annual Review 2013* continues that tradition.

Called “Journeys”, this year’s publication focuses on the variety of directions for travel that colleagues have experienced as a result of the different personal choices and decisions that make up a professional career.

Many of the journeys are initiated by individuals; whilst some are them are a direct result of the systems and processes that third parties have imposed on the dental team.

Some of the situations described in the case studies reflect the importance of knowledge and technical competence, whilst others have developed from a progressive accumulation of experience. Although any of the destinations visited in this publication will be familiar, others will provide a more challenging trip into the unknown.

Most importantly, all of the articles in this year’s publication reflect journeys that have the potential to inspire personal and professional development.

Kevin Lewis, Director of Dental Protection said:
“This year’s Annual Review will help members to find something of value in every experience - whether our own experiences of those of others, and whether they happen to be good or bad, painful or exhilarating at the time.

Several of the articles are personal stories told by members of Dental Protection from different parts of the world as well as by those who have lived the experience with them, helped and supported them. All of can be enriched by the insights that they share with us.”

For more information contact David Prosser
T: **020 7399 1397** E: david.croser@mps.org.uk

GDC announcement as barriers to direct access come down

From May 1 2013 patients can book directly with a dental hygienist or dental therapist who offers a direct access service.

At a meeting on 28 March 2013 the General Dental Council (GDC) voted to remove its barrier to direct access for some dental care professionals after considering the possible impact on patient safety.

In the past every member of the dental team had to work on the prescription of a dentist. This meant that patients had to be seen by a dentist before being treated by any other member of the dental team.

Following a detailed review of evidence, which had been gathered since 2011, and a full discussion, it was agreed this should change.

The most significant changes are for dental hygienists and dental therapists. Guidance for all DCPs and what this decision means for them can be found on the [GDC website](#).

It is important to remember that:

- All registrants must be trained, competent and indemnified for any tasks they undertake.
- All registrants must continue to work within their ‘Scope of Practice’ regardless of these changes.
- All registrants must continue to follow the GDC’s ‘Standards for Dental Professionals.’

In addition, the dental team is reminded that this decision does not make direct access mandatory. No dental care professional has to offer it.

Dental professionals are encouraged to get in touch with the GDC if they have any questions.

Email: information@gdc-uk.org

Department of Health publish key changes in HTM 01-05 2013: Decontamination in primary care dental practices

Follow the link below to read this important document:
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/170689/HTM_01-05_2013.pdf

A message to ADAM members from 2020 Dentistry : ‘You have a voice - Use it’

‘Dental care services are witnessing historical change, with fundamental implications not only for patients but the whole of the dental team. ADAM members can and should play a constructive role in the reshaping of dental care.

www.2020Dentistry.com is a communication platform for shared learning on the progress and outcomes of the dental pilots. Our aim is to give voice to and engage with the dental team, in particular those working at pilot sites.

Register and start your blog, set up your discussion group/forum and share your ideas with others in the dental community. Contributions are anonymous, unless you choose otherwise.’

For more information email:
samira.salbi@2020Dentistry.com

ADAM is delighted to be involved in this year’s **BDA Scottish Scientific Conference and Exhibition** which is being held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Glasgow on 6th September.

It promises to be an excellent event, and current ADAM President Jill Taylor will be hosting one of the afternoon sessions - entitled ‘successful appraisals and team meetings’.

This year’s event breaks down into four key themes:-

- Clinical focus
- Pain management
- Core CPD
- Dental team

For more information go to www.bda.org/scottishscientific

Power to the Practice Manager!

Andy Toy, Chief Executive Officer at The Dental Business Academy, tells ADAM members about their revised Distance Learning Programme for Practice Managers.

Here at The Dental Business Academy we're proud to announce our completely revised and fully updated Dental Practice Manager course which has been designed specifically to meet the demands of our highly regulated profession.

The role of Practice Manager has NEVER been more important in dentistry than it is today. Whether it's coping with CQC compliance, balancing the books or dealing with the dental team, every practice needs to have someone to keep the team on track.

To be an effective Dental Practice Manager (DPM) in today's world you need to be more than an experienced nurse or receptionist. The modern DPM needs to have the knowledge and skills to be the practice expert in HR, Compliance and Financial Management - it's a challenging and very responsible role.

It's a rewarding one, too! At The Dental Business Academy we believe that a qualified DPM is an investment that pays for itself time and time again - a competent and effective DPM will be worth their weight in gold!

Our course has been carefully designed to match the demands of dentistry in the 21st century.

Content

The content is right up-to-date - it's been written by the highly respected team of Janet Goodwin BA (Hons) and Fiona Ellwood BA (Hons).

Janet is well known as a GDC Council Member, DCP Chair at the FGDP (UK) and a Chief Examiner for the City & Guilds, and Fiona is BADN President-elect, Director of Education for The Dental Business Academy and a highly experienced Dental Educator of long-standing.

You can feel confident that you will be learning from the best in the business!

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management, including:

- leadership and management styles;
- standards and compliance in dentistry;
- team working;
- project management.
- customer-centred practice;

There's an assignment to complete at the end of every unit, each one of which is designed to use the DPM's experience in practice - to make sure it's both relevant and practical. This means the practice will benefit from the training from the very beginning.

To find out more about the course go to
www.thedentalbusinessacademy.co.uk

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A fantastic deal with specially discounted terms for this course that's worth £££'s - watch out for news about this in the next few weeks - by email to members and on our website at www.adam-aspire.co.uk

Janet Goodwin BA (Hons) Business Management



Janet is currently working with many organisations providing governance, management and education, these include:

- A Council member of the General Dental Council, also Chair of the Standards Working Review Group, and a member of the Business Finance Committee.
- The Faculty of General Dental Practice (UK) as Chairman of the DCP Committee, a Key skills Assessor, and member of the External Affairs Group, and the Policy Steering group.
- City & Guilds as Chief Examiner of Dental Nurse qualifications.

She is also involved on the board of an educational establishment in the Midlands developing dental nurse qualifications and is a Trustee for the British Dental Health Foundation.

Fiona Ellwood RDN 1986, BA Ed (Hons), Cert Ed (Univ. of Greenwich), PG Cert Mentoring in Dentistry, FBADN, LCGI, Cert OHE, FETC 1 & 2, NVQ IV & Assessor.



Member of: BADN - President elect, IfL, NOHPG, IVA, Associate member FGDP (UK).

Fiona has been instrumental in helping Dental Care Professionals to reach their full potential for many years. During this time she has developed successful training businesses based in the Midlands, focusing on bespoke training initiatives for the whole team. She is a former examiner for the National Certificate and the Diploma and Oral Health Education award for DCPs.

In addition, Fiona has a qualification in Practice Management and has been actively involved in the course development. She is The Director of Education for The Dental Business Academy and BTEC Centre Manager.

Planned Changes to Employment Legislation

The government has committed to a policy of de-regulation and as a result there are a number of changes being made to existing employment legislation in an attempt to boost economic recovery. It is hoped that these will reduce the number of claims being made against employers in the Employment Tribunal and promote early resolution of issues. Whether that actually happens remains to be seen and it is my view that the changes will merely change the tactics of both employees (claimants) and employers in making and responding to claims.

Compulsory use of ACAS

In April 2014 it will become compulsory for claimants to submit their dispute to ACAS before making a claim in the tribunal. They will then be offered pre-claim conciliation for a period of 1 month. If the conciliation is refused by either party or if it is not successful in resolving the issues then the claimant will be able to issue proceedings in the tribunal within 1 month.

Employment Tribunal Fees

From summer 2013 claimants will be required to pay fees to the Employment Tribunal. The first fee will be payable when their claim is submitted and the second fee will be payable in the weeks leading up to the hearing. It is expected that this will reduce the number of speculative claims being made to the tribunal in the hope of receiving a payout. It is however also likely to have the effect of reducing settlements as claimants will wish the fees already paid to be included in any settlement and employers may withhold from settling claims that they otherwise would have settled hoping that the claimant would not pay the hearing fees and will withdraw their claim. Given that the hearing fee for a claim for unfair dismissal will be £950 it is clear that some claimants will not wish to risk losing such a significant sum and may withdraw their claim at this stage.

Financial Penalties

In the event that a claim does get to tribunal then from April 2014 Employment Tribunals will have the power to impose a financial penalty on employers who lose at tribunal in addition to any financial awards made to the claimant. This penalty will be up to 50% of the financial award with a minimum threshold of £100 and a maximum cap of £5,000. Clearly this is intended to encourage employers to settle claims before a hearing in order to avoid such penalties.



Changes to Parental Leave

There are also a number of changes to family friendly legislation aimed at encouraging parents back to work and giving them more flexibility. In particular in 2015 a new system of parental leave is proposed that will replace existing maternity and paternity leave and will allow both parents to decide how they want to split the leave entitlement. Eligible employees will be entitled to a maximum of 52 weeks leave between them with 39 weeks of the leave being paid.

Right to Flexible Working

The right to request flexible working will also be extended to all employees with 26 weeks service and not just those who are parents. In addition, to assist employers the current statutory procedure for considering flexible working requests will be abolished and employers will merely be required to follow a reasonable procedure when considering such requests.

Sickness Absence Changes

Another issue being addressed by legislation is sickness absence. It has been recognised that this can cause huge difficulties to businesses so the government are proposing more flexibility to employers. In particular, fit notes are to be amended so that a GP must consider an employee's ability to return to any work and not just the work required for their specific role. It is also proposed that after a 4 week period of absence an employee should be referred to a state funded independent assessment service who will advise the employer on how they can support the employee to return to work. It is hoped that this will reduce unnecessary absences and will help employers support employees in returning to work.



If you wish to discuss any aspect of employment law please contact Sally Morris, Head of Employment Division at mfg Solicitors LLP on 01905 610410.

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Keeping patients happy

Headlines are awash these days with news detailing state cutbacks and numerous well-known retailers going into administration. As a consequence to the nation's "tightened belts", it's no surprise that patients are now spending less on their dental care and becoming more price-conscious. Times may be hard, but dentistry is a service that patients will always need for the good of their oral and overall health.

However, these days, patients either expect more for their money and/or a better service for their money. Therefore, if practice managers want to increase the average amount of patient spend, it's important that the whole team develops fresh ideas that keep patients happy, and not give them any reason to convert to the competition.

This includes:

Offering the best customer service

It is imperative that the practice team recognises the importance of excellent customer service, rather than just "good" or "satisfactory" levels. Improving customer service techniques on the telephone, as well as face-to-face, opens the door to a whole host of benefits; more patients, greater treatment plan acceptance and improved patient communication, to name just a few.

Patients are the lifeblood of any practice and what they think can have an influence; but whether this is a positive or negative influence is up to the team. Therefore it is important patients become fans of the practice as this will lead to more referrals and great testimonials, which can also be used for future marketing exercises.

Also, start to review complaints procedures. Is the team trained to effectively handle difficult situations or complaints with empathy, should they arise? If not, it's time to make sure they are, especially if patients' demands are to be met and their custom retained.

Providing a 7-star service

The impact that a highly motivated team has on the entire practice should not be underestimated. For this to be successful, the whole team must have a shared practice vision and understand the present aims and aspirations for the future. Building a 7-star team that will go the extra mile for patients is important in helping practices deliver a 7-star service, the best customer service possible.

As part of offering patients a 7-star service, strong communication skills are a must. Each team member should ask questions that encourage better patient conversation and uncover their needs and wants. Building a great rapport and making patients feel comfortable is a huge factor in helping to retain patients. This will also help staff feel comfortable when discussing treatment costs. A confident and tactful approach here can help increase treatment plan acceptance.



Increasing treatment plan acceptance

If patient treatment plans are followed up correctly and in a timely manner, this can increase treatment plan acceptance. Following up patients, post-appointment, shows that the practice cares and is trying to help them reach their smile goal.

Educating patients on the importance of their oral health, so they understand why particular treatments are being recommended, will also help to ensure they attend for regular check-ups. It's vital that patients understand advice and recommendations as this will help them make an informed choice, an issue which was recently raised by the OFT in its most recent report into UK dentistry.

On the other hand, cancelled appointments can have huge cost implications, so it's important to effectively manage this situation. Whilst it's understandable that patients are not always able to attend their appointments, if appropriate protocols and effective appointment reminders are in place then the negative effects of this can be minimised.

Value-added service

Competition amongst practices is fierce. To improve patient retention, it's not enough to just offer the best clinical experience, customer service is just as important; both should equally be a part of the value-added service the practice provides.

Practice managers are advised to continuously look at ways to improve patient retention, as well as attract new patients. With the help of a reputable company, it might be a good idea to undertake a mystery shop exercise so that you can see where potential weaknesses lie, because even the smallest changes can make the biggest difference.

Ensuring yours becomes the "go-to" practice in your area will not only do wonders for the practice's profile, but it can also have a significant impact on the future success of your business.

About the author

Gary Morgan is the business owner and lead trainer at Milestone Experts.

Gary has over 20 years sales and customer service experience and 12 years experience in training and coaching at all levels. He has compiled a *7-Star Dental Practice Programme*, which is designed to increase patient numbers, whilst simultaneously maintaining existing patient numbers.

Gary Morgan's Milestone Experts offer training, consultancy and coaching for individuals and teams, whatever their role within the dental practice.

For more information, visit www.milestoneexperts.co.uk; call 020 8337 5937; or email gary@milestoneexperts.co.uk

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commencing May 2013 London, Aylesbury Stevenage and Tewkesbury	ILM Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management <i>UMD Professional Ltd</i>	Distance learning and modular courses also available	Penny Parry 020 8255 2070 or penny@umdprofessional.co.uk
5 June 2013 Manchester	CPD Essentials covering: · Infection Control · Ethics and Complaints · Medical Emergencies · CPR · Mouth Cancer <i>Denplan</i>	Non-Denplan practices: £200 per delegate Denplan Practices: Contact the Denplan Events Team for a possible discount	eventsandtraining@denplan.co.uk
6 June 2013 18.00 - 21.00 Solihull	A time to buy/a time to sell - seminars with unbiased insights and tips for buying or selling a practice: CPD, refreshments and supper. <i>Dentistry Business</i>		Further details and enrolment at www.futuredentistry.co.uk
7 June 2013 Leeds	Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults <i>British Dental Association</i>	£115 for Practice Managers	www.bda.org/training
13 June 2013 18.00 - 21.00 Rotherham	A time to buy/a time to sell - seminars with unbiased insights and tips for buying or selling a practice: CPD, refreshments and supper. <i>Dentistry Business</i>		Further details and enrolment at www.futuredentistry.co.uk
14 June 2013 London	Handling complaints and improving communication skills <i>British Dental Association</i>	£115 for Practice Managers	www.bda.org/training
18 June 2013 Southampton	CPD Essentials covering: · Infection Control · Ethics and Complaints · Medical Emergencies · CPR · Mouth Cancer <i>Denplan</i>	Non-Denplan practices: £200 per delegate Denplan Practices: Contact the Denplan Events Team for a possible discount	eventsandtraining@denplan.co.uk
18 June 2013 18.30 - 21.00 Preston	Recruitment techniques and Employment Law - CPD, refreshments and supper. <i>Dentistry Business</i>		Further details and enrolment at www.citation.co.uk/dentistseminar2013
21 June 2013 Birmingham	Business planning and financial management <i>British Dental Association</i>	£115 for Practice Managers	www.bda.org/training
25 June 2013 Cambridge	CPD Essentials covering: · Infection Control · Ethics and Complaints · Medical Emergencies · CPR · Mouth Cancer <i>Denplan</i>	Non-Denplan practices: £200 per delegate Denplan Practices: Contact the Denplan Events Team for a possible discount	eventsandtraining@denplan.co.uk
commencing September 2013 London	ILM Level 7 Diploma in Executive Management <i>UMD Professional Ltd</i>	Distance learning and modular courses also available	Penny Parry 020 8255 2070 or penny@umdprofessional.co.uk
1 October 2013 Bristol	CPD Essentials covering: · Infection Control · Ethics and Complaints · Medical Emergencies · CPR · Mouth Cancer <i>Denplan</i>	Non-Denplan practices: £200 per delegate Denplan Practices: Contact the Denplan Events Team for a possible discount	eventsandtraining@denplan.co.uk
Commencing October 2013 London, Manchester and other UK locations (subject to demand)	1 & 2 year university accredited Dental Practice Management courses <i>Dentistry Business</i>	Non-Denplan practices: £200 per delegate Denplan Practices: Contact the Denplan Events Team for a possible discount	eventsandtraining@denplan.co.uk
9 October 2013 Leeds	CPD Essentials covering: · Infection Control · Ethics and Complaints · Medical Emergencies · CPR · Mouth Cancer <i>Denplan</i>	Non-Denplan practices: £200 per delegate Denplan Practices: Contact the Denplan Events Team for a possible discount	eventsandtraining@denplan.co.uk
20 November 2013 Stratford-upon-Avon	CPD Essentials covering: · Infection Control · Ethics and Complaints · Medical Emergencies · CPR · Mouth Cancer <i>Denplan</i>	Non-Denplan practices: £200 per delegate Denplan Practices: Contact the Denplan Events Team for a possible discount	eventsandtraining@denplan.co.uk

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