



CONFERENCE NEWS

Scottish Conference of Local Dental Committees

Stirling Court Hotel, University of Stirling, Friday 20 April 2018

Conference Report

Introduction from the Chair of Conference

It was my pleasure and honour in my inaugural year to Chair the 19th Annual Conference of Scottish Local Dental Committees at the excellent facilities of Stirling Court Hotel. This event continued the tradition of being not only a great occasion for colleagues to catch up and discuss the latest in dental politics, but also as an enjoyable social event with friends from past and present.

The theme this year was “The past, the present and the future” and we had three key speakers: Steve Tidman, Alan Whittet and Shona Robison, Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport who gave excellent presentations followed by “question and answer” sessions. In the year the Oral Health Improvement Plan was introduced in Scotland, my appreciation goes to the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport for giving us further insight into Scottish Government’s plans. The announcement of the introduction of an occupational health service (OHS) for all GDPs and staff from the 1 June 2018 was welcomed.

As always, a great deal of work is required to achieve a successful conference and my gratitude is extended to my Conference Agenda Committee (CAC) with special mention to Nicola and Elaine from the BDA team.

We were fortunate to have excellent support from our sponsors this year with Simplyhealth Professionals providing us with our first Platinum Sponsorship. Our thanks also go to Braemar Finance, Chasedevere, Christie & Co, Condis,



Calcivis, MDDUS and Optident, and we look forward to welcoming them all back next year. My thanks also go to the PSD representatives for offering advice and guidance to delegates on the day.

Finally, I would like to say a huge thank you to all who contributed to our greatest ever charity collection of £700 which will be donated to Cancer Research UK.

I look forward to seeing you all again on the 26 of April 2019 for our 20th anniversary.

[David McIntyre, Chair 2018](#)

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Pre-Conference Dinner – Thursday 19 April 2018

An enjoyable black tie dinner was held at the Stirling Court Hotel. The Chair welcomed delegates and guests and spoke about the current issues facing the profession, highlighting the awaited outcomes of the Scottish Government's Oral Health Improvement Plan.

The Chair offered his congratulations and was delighted to present three Lifetime Achievement Awards to Clive Bell, Greater Glasgow and Clyde LDC, Dave Howie, Tayside LDC and Grant Robertson, Lanarkshire LDC.

For the first time the Conference Agenda Committee decided to award lapel medals to all the past Chairs of Conference. Presentations were made to: John Craig, Chair from 2000-01, Kieran Fallon, MBE, Chair from 2002-03, Elizabeth Glass, Chair from 2008-09, Tony Coia, Chair from 2010-11, Laura Milby, Chair 2012-13, Jeff Ellis, Chair from 2014-15 and Jacqueline Frederick, Chair from 2016-17. Bobby Broadfoot, Chair in 1999 and Margaret Willis, Chair from 2006-07 were unable to attend the event and medals have been sent to them. A medal was sent to Frank Toner's widow, Frank was Chair from 2004-05.



Conference – Friday 20 April 2018 – Morning Session

The Chair welcomed everyone to the 19th Annual Conference and explained that the theme was today, tomorrow and the future. He also said that for the first time ever Conference was pleased to have a Platinum sponsor, Simplyhealth Professionals. He urged delegates and guests to visit all eight sponsors during the refreshment breaks.

He then referred to paper SLDC2018/02, Standing Orders of Conference, noting that the Conference Agenda Committee (The Committee) had made several track changes to the document with an aim to putting the content into plain English to make it easier to read. Delegates subsequently voted unanimously in agreement with the changes.

Steve Tidman, Economist

Steve Tidman was Conference's first speaker and began by explaining that dentistry was no different to other service sectors, that it was all about demand and that his presentation would cover nominal terms and real profitability.

He said that the current drop in income in real terms had not been seen since Victorian times and that the profession was facing a nominal drop in net income of 6.7% and in real terms 22.7%. The fall in profitability has also affected England and Wales where the nominal drop in income was 11.7% and in real terms 26.9%, for Northern Ireland the nominal drop was 9.3% and in real terms 24.9%. Steve stated that at the lowest level, Scotland was £5k below England and Wales and £7k below Northern Ireland. He spoke about NHS Digital which gathers data using HMRC figures which is presented to the DDRB, it is non-controversial evidence. Steve stated that the DDRB has called for more work to be undertaken regarding the formula used to calculate uplifts. In recent years, the failure to award has not kept up with inflation leading to the fall in nominal and real terms.

Steve referred to the National Association of Specialist Accountants and Lawyers (NASDAL), which has over 500 practices across the UK and collects

information annually to benchmark the profit and loss accounts of dentists in practice. This information is gathered from HMRC and the NHS, the published data does not include practices which are 100% private. He referred to the profession being labour intensive with high unavoidable fixed costs which were affected by inflation.

Steve ended his presentation by explaining that GDP gross income had dropped by 9.9% in 2008-09 which was 9.1% in real terms and the expense ratio had increased by 8.9% in 2008-09 and 1.8% in real terms, therefore income had not kept up with expenses.

A lively question and answer session followed.

Alan Whittet, Senior Dental Adviser, Practitioner Services Division

Alan Whittet gave an interesting and informative presentation, and began by listing PSD's priorities and highlighted all aspects of PSD's work, which he said was carried out in the best interests of patients. He explained that he and his team were there to provide support and give advice to the profession with an aim of having good customer contact.

Alan referred to the BDA / SDPC survey conducted in 2016/17 into the Quality and Performance of Services provided by PSD noting that PSD and BDA Scotland had since worked together to address the key issues identified in the final report which included the implementation of a new telephone triage system. Alan said it was not in anyone's interest to have a 'them and us' culture, a view that had been reported at that time of the survey, he said it was PSD's aim to work in a more collegiate way.

Alan spoke about a number of current PSD initiatives, the e-Dental Programme included a new digital platform to improve dental payments, e-prior approval was in place and work continued towards the implementation of e-ortho prior approval. Alan urged delegates to keep in touch with their Practice Management System supplier during this time

of change in the move towards a fully e-dental service. He said PSD had recently carried out Roadshows across Scotland in an aim to engage and educate the profession about PSD services, the SDR and regulations. PSD would like to expand their educational role, but to do that more financial resources were needed.

Alan noted that with over 3,100 dentists across Scotland he had a team of four full time Dental Advisers (DAs) and three Dental Reference Officers (DROs) the same team numbers as many years ago, when GDP numbers were less. He said that the team was supplemented by two sessional dentists on a weekly basis. Alan stated that DAs had been shadowing DROs in clinics with an aim of providing a more consistent service. He said that he had met with the CDO when he first took up post and they had discussed the interpretation of the SDR and he believes that PSD's approach is now far more consistent.

Alan finished his presentation by stating that PSD had partnership agreements in place with NHS Boards and were keen to work more collaboratively with them and with NHS Education for Scotland. Another lively question and answer session took place and covered issues such as DROs visiting dental practices and timeframes on clawbacks.

Shona Robison, Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport

[Ms Robison thanked the Chair for his invitation to speak to delegates and noted how timely it was since her presentation would be about the Scottish Government's Oral Health Improvement Plan \(OHIP\).](#)

Ms Robison said that dentistry had come a long way since the time of the last action plan in 2005 and dental access problems. She spoke of the success of the Childsmile Programme, and thanked the audience for their contribution towards the improvement in Scotland's oral health, but said there was still work to be done to reduce the inequalities such as those faced by the elderly population.

Ms Robison stated there was a lot of content in the OHIP, many items would be implemented over the medium to long-term and would require input from the profession, she noted the work could not be done alone. She gave assurances that the OHIP would not destabilise dental practices and that it was about 'evolution not revolution'. It was planned to phase in an OHRA with a stronger focus on periodontal treatment, and the need for the profession to discuss risk factors such as smoking, alcohol consumption and diet with their patients. She said this may lead to some patients being seen less frequently by their dentist and some more frequently. Ms Robison stated that all factors would be taken into account and decisions will rely on evidence based data.

Ms Robison also spoke about the proposed oral cancer referral pathways, the extension of Childsmile to older children and a key issue was to address dental care of the ageing population. She announced that by the end of this financial year, Scottish Government planned to implement a joint working group for GDPs and the Public Dental Service to address the shared care arrangements focusing initially on care homes and eventually moving on to those living in their own homes.

Ms Robison referred to the 8,700 children who require general anaesthetics in Scotland, and that prevention was the key measure to overcome this problem. She referred to the proposal in the OHIP to have accredited practitioners with enhanced skills which would lessen secondary care referrals for patients, and would allow them access to services closer to home. Ms Robison then spoke about the Community Challenge Fund stating that an initiative would be launched later this year.

Ms Robison made a major announcement to Conference stating that Scottish Government would be introducing an occupational health service as laid out in Acton 34 in the OHIP: 'the Scottish Government will introduce an occupational health service for GDPs, members of the dental team and other practice staff.' This would be implemented on 1 June 2018.

OHIP Action 38 states that Scottish Government will establish a number of short-life working groups and Ms Robison made a final announcement that an overarching steering group would be set up in May 2018 by the CDO, and that input from key stakeholders would play a central part. She ended by saying that there would be regular update to the profession on the work of the groups.

Ms Robison and M Taylor, Chief Dental Officer took a number of questions from the floor. D McColl, Chair of the Scottish Dental Practice Committee took the opportunity to thank the Cabinet Secretary for the funding of an occupation health service for GDPs and their teams. The first question was about the lengthy waiting time in NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde for child extractions under general dental anaesthetic and the lack of response to BDA Scotland's request to resolve the issue. Ms Robison was concerned to hear that children can wait up to six months for treatment whilst in pain, and gave her assurances that if the

matter required to be escalated to her office she would personally intervene.

Other questions related to: participation and registration figures, practice-based allowances, low morale in dentistry and evidence which points to young dentists planning to leave the profession, funding for the proposed Directors of Dentistry and water fluoridation and the lack of Scottish Government proposals to implement it.



Elections Results 2018 – 2019 Session

Congratulations to the following dentists who were all re-elected unopposed to posts at Conference:

Auditors to Conference: W Hutton and G McKirdy

Treasurer to Conference: E Glass

Representatives to the Conference Agenda Committee: L Milton and E Winter

Representatives to the 2018

UK LDC Conference: none

Representative to the SDPC: C Murphy

Representatives to the Board of Management of the Scottish Dental Fund: J Craig and R McBurnie

Gordon Morson, Scottish Association of Local Dental Committees (SALDC)

Gordon provided an update on the work of the SALDC over the last 12 months which included funding

difficulties and losing SALDC members, although he was pleased that Greater Glasgow & Clyde LDC had appointed a representative to SALDC.

Gordon went on to say that following questions raised at last year's event about what the SALDC did, they had amended their constitution. He said that he had written to the CDO seeking information about the timescales in relation to the OHIP, and whilst the CDO had responded, the updates provided by the Cabinet Secretary had provided clarification.

Conference Treasurer

E Glass provided a report on the Conference accounts which were in good order, although some LDCs had not paid a levy this year and she noted concerns that the number of active LDCs was reducing. She also reminded Conference about the valuable service provided by the Dentists' Health Support Programme.

Scottish Dental Fund

John Craig, Chair, and Jim Law, Treasurer of the Scottish Dental Fund gave a presentation on the Board's finances. It was noted the implementation of electronic banking was working well. SDPC claims and LDC contributions were reported to be lower than last year. It was noted that the Guild rate had risen to £295 wef 1 April 2018. It was proposed there be no change in the SDPC honoraria calculation method, but that the sessional rate of £295 be calculated for the Chair at 7.5 sessions, which is equal to £2212.50 and for the Vice Chair at 4.25 sessions which is equal to £1253.75. Delegates voted unanimously in favour of the proposals.

It was proposed that there be no change in the SDF honoraria calculation method and reflect the sessional rate of £295 for the Chair: 1 session of £295 per annum, Secretary: 1 session of £295 per annum and the Treasurer: £295 per month i.e. 2 sessions @ 50% sessional rate.

Delegates also voted unanimously in agreement of the proposals. Delegates unanimously agreed to maintain the LDC levy of £2.40 per capita per month.

SDPC amended their constitution in 2017 to allow them to invite up to two associates to SDPC meeting in order to encourage younger dentists to become involved with SDPC and dental politics. A motion was put forward: This Conference propose that Item 3.1 of the SDF constitution be amended to allow sessional payments to be paid to any Scottish GDPs invited by SDPC to attend meetings of SDPC. The BDA had previously agreed to pay for the travel and subsistence expenses. The change would not recognise VDPs. The motion was passed by delegates unanimously.

Phil Grigor, National Director BDA Scotland

Phil Grigor introduced himself as the new National Director BDA Scotland stating that he had been in post for ten weeks. He provided a brief presentation on his reflections about the dental landscape which included the OHIP, changes within dentistry, regulation and the implications of Brexit. He spoke about the role of the BDA in Scotland in representing the profession, influencing key stakeholders and lobbying politicians.

Conference - Afternoon Session

The afternoon began with a presentation from David McColl, Chair of the Scottish Dental Practice Committee. David began by stating that he had been elected as Chair of SDPC in February 2018 with Gerard Boyle as his Vice Chair. He provided a brief overview of the role of SDPC and went on to speak about some of the key issues SDPC had addressed over the last 12 months.

The work of several SDPC working groups had concluded with reports and recommendation papers published: Changing the Balance of Practice Earnings, Decontamination, Stress in the Dental Workplace. The SDR Working Group and Development Programme for Adult Dental Services were both currently on hold until more is known about how the OHIP will progress. David went on

to speak about the OHIP and that the CDO had previously highlighted Scottish Government had five initial priorities for Scottish Government:

- Practitioners with Problems
- New Domiciliary Care Provision
- Director of Dentistry (DoD)
- Occupational Health Provision
- Community Challenge Fund

He mentioned again how pleased he was that funding was to be provided for occupational health services for GDPs and their teams.

He noted that Scottish Government statistics on fluoride varnish application show only 30% of 3-5 year olds receive fluoride varnish as part of Childsmile, which he believed to be misleading, stating that the opportunistic figure was 47%. He also said that SDPC had been asking for zero codes in the SDR for many years in order to provide accurate fluoride varnish data recording.

David referred to the current joint BDA/SDPC and Scottish Government DDRB expenses survey which he encouraged GDPs in the 92% NHS committed bracket to complete, saying after that last two exercises this one would take 30 minutes to complete and was in a user-friendly format. The exercise will conclude in May 2018 and participation in the exercise will help to achieve better expenses fee awards in future.

David noted concerns about the number of hours allocated to clinical audit projects by NHS Education for Scotland (NES) and had been in direct contact with NES to suggest that a more robust and transparent methodology should be implemented, as well as improved communication between NES reviewers and GDPs.

David also spoke about the increase of costs for Emergency Drug Kits, explaining that SDPC had been discussing this matter with the CDO since the British National Formulary guidance change in 2017. He said it was unacceptable that GDPs were experiencing a 53% rise in the cost of kits. The CDO had reported that Scottish Government had looked at cheaper unlicensed alternatives, but that the Chief Pharmaceutical Officer's advice was that unlicensed alternatives could not be recommended. Scottish Government had advised on 12 April 2018 that a short-term alternative solution had been implemented and the cost of the kits revised and reduced.

David reported that he is a member the BDA Pensions Committee and also sits on the Scottish Public Pensions Agency Committee.

David reported that SDPC had made a request to the CDO for an extreme weather payment following the disruption caused by 'The Beast from the East', however Scottish Government had declined noting that GDPs should consider business interruption insurance. BDA Scotland and SDPC will consider a follow-up survey of the Quality and Performance of Services provided by PSD later in the year.

David finished by stating that SDPC will set out a new approach when considering motions at their May 2018 meeting. Once a motion is passed as SDPC policy it will be referred the SDPC Executive Sub-committee for discussion to decide how the policy will be taken forward. He will report back to Conference next year on the work undertaken for each motion.

Motions 2018

The following motions were debated during the afternoon session:

- **Oral Health Improvement Plan**

This Conference urges the SDPC to fully support the ambition of the Oral Health Improvement Plan and actively engage with the Scottish Government to ensure the delivery of its commitments.

Ayrshire & Arran LDC

Defeated by Conference by a majority

- **Oral Health Improvement Plan**

This conference seeks an assurance that a robust mechanism will be implemented by Scottish Government to monitor and ensure that no practice is financially destabilised by a reduction in NHS income following the introduction of the Oral Health Improvement Plan.

Greater Glasgow & Clyde LDC

Passed by Conference by a majority

- **General Dental Practice Allowance**

This conference demands an assurance that the General Dental Practice Allowance will be maintained under any new proposals outlined in the government's Oral Health Improvement Plan.

Greater Glasgow & Clyde LDC

Passed by Conference unanimously

- **Statement of Dental Remuneration (SDR)**

This Conference believes a further increase in Statement of Dental Remuneration fees is required to address the drop in the profession's earnings of over a quarter since 2009. Scottish Dentists remain the lowest paid in the UK and the recent 2.25% uplift in fees is not sufficient.

Lanarkshire LDC

Passed by Conference unanimously

- **General Dental Council**

This Conference believes additional funding and supporting is required to provide the necessary services to help dentists suffering from stress and anxiety to work related matters.

Lanarkshire LDC

The motion was amended by G Robertson and seconded by J Wink. The amended motion was passed by Conference by a majority

- **General Dental Council**

This Conference believes that the General Dental Council's registration fees, currently the highest of any UK health regulator, should be lowered significantly.

Lanarkshire LDC

Passed by Conference unanimously

- **General Dental Council**

This conference calls for the Scottish Government to engage in dialogue with the GDC with a view to providing local investigation and resolution of complaints at health board level for complaints referred directly to the GDC.

Greater Glasgow & Clyde LDC

Passed by Conference unanimously

- **General Dental Council**

This conference commends the recent work the GDC has done to change how it manages complaints and in particular its' Fitness to Practice processes and, as a result of this, no longer calls for the formation of a Scottish Regulator.

Ayrshire & Arran LDC

Votes on the motion were a equal. The motion was defeated at the Chair's discretion

- **Implementation of an Independent Body**

The conference calls for an independent body to allow anonymous reporting of adverse clinical and practice events. The events can then be reviewed and learning shared back to the profession.

Greater Glasgow & Clyde LDC
Passed by Conference by a majority

- **Practitioner Services Division – Recovery of Overpayment**

This Conference demands Practitioner Services Division comply with Scottish legislation in imposing strict time limits when making retrospective claw backs from Dentists.

Lanarkshire LDC
Passed by Conference unanimously

- **Conference Representation of the Profession**

This conference realises that its membership is not representative of the whole profession and will work quickly to encourage a more inclusive membership that includes practice managers, dental care professionals and young associates.

Ayrshire & Arran LDC
Defeated by Conference by a majority

- **Combined Practice Inspection**

This conference proposes the introduction of a meaningful Combined Practice Inspection allowance in the SDR, which reflects the negative impact on cash flow occurring as a result of lost clinical time during a Practice Inspection.

Greater Glasgow & Clyde LDC
Passed by Conference by a majority

- **Combined Practice Inspection**

This conference calls for a minimum requirement of 500 registered NHS patients before a practice is eligible for a Combined Practice Inspection, undertaken by an NHS Board.

Greater Glasgow & Clyde LDC
Passed by Conference by a majority

- **Quality Improvement – e-Significant Event Analysis**

This conference has no confidence in NES in the administration of audit, e-Significant Event Analysis (e-SEA) or Quality Improvement projects. We call for a complete review of their processes with transparency and clarity, with hours awarded that reflect the total amount of time invested in the project. A robust external review process must be in place for appeals as this represents best governance practice.

Greater Glasgow & Clyde LDC
Passed by Conference by a majority

- **Free Replacement Claims for Patients aged 65 and over**

In order to address the challenges of providing care for an elderly dentate population, this conference demands the reinstatement of free replacement claims for patients aged 65 and over and a substantial increase in the continuing care payment for this age group.

Greater Glasgow & Clyde LDC
Passed by Conference by a majority

Feedback from delegates this year indicated they were dissatisfied with the quality of motions. It is important that the conference agenda committee receives motions within the set timescales to allow informed debate during conference. Please ensure your LDC submits motions when requested later in the year.

2018 Conference Feedback

As in previous years, the staff at Stirling Court Hotel provided a great service throughout conference.

Conference was disappointed that there were no Vocational Dental Practitioners at this year's Conference for the first time in many years. This was partly due to a study day which took place on the same day.

Congratulations to Emma Foggo, the winner of this year's 'Heads and Tails' charity quiz. A total of £700 was raised for Cancer Research UK.

44 evaluation forms were completed and returned out of a total of 69. The majority of comments were positive, indicating conference was a success. Respondents all agreed that the conference addressed the issues affecting general dental practitioners in Scotland. Positive comments were made about the venue, facilities and the conference speakers.

Additional comments included:

- Continue to have good quality speakers relevant to current issues in dentistry today
- Very impressed with Cabinet Secretary input
- Excellent Conference
- Better thought out motions
- Shorter lunch break
- To network with LDC member dentists from across Scotland and to gain some insight into the challenges faced by clinicians within the NHS (from a sponsor)

Conference closed on a positive note with the Chair reminding delegates of the importance of providing clear and concise motions within the set timescales, to allow informed debate at next year's Conference.

2019 Conference

Conference is an expensive event, it takes a lot of preparation and its continued success depends on the attendance and participation of the delegates. Make sure you have next year's date in your diary and bring a friend!

Next year's event will be held on Friday 26 April 2019 at the Stirling Court Hotel.

