

Dudley LDC Chair's annual report 2018

Throughout this year I have represented the LDC at national and local levels. We had our annual LDC conference at the NEC in June, continuing with the 2 day format, from lunchtime Thursday to Friday afternoon. We debated a large number of motions, including one on positive discrimination to try to get more women in leadership positions within LDCs. There was a panel debate with Sara Hurley, Henrik Overgaard Nielsson, Nairn Wilson, Paul Worskett and Nikki Patel. More updates on the progress (or lack of) of the prototype practices, and more concern regarding increasing numbers of practices facing clawback after failing to reach their contracted targets.

At officials day in London in December apart from further updates on contract reform there were concerns regarding the proposed common entry for DCPs and dentists, as well as a sort of apology from PCSE regarding the continuing problems with Capita, which apparently are all sorted out now!! We heard a vision of a digitally connected future, where we had access to the NHS spine, nhs.net accounts that work, e-prescribing...

At a regional level I have met with NHSE AT every quarter, apart from December when Ari represented us. The LDC chairs can raise questions or flag up local issues to the AT, as well as hearing updates of commissioning policies etc. Currently their major focus is on the implementation of the electronic referral management system which has been commissioned and is due to go live for oral surgery/ medicine and ortho referrals in April. Vantage have already got systems running in the south of England and north midlands but

we have the ability to adapt it to suit local needs. I'm part of a group looking at the orthodontic referrals, and there is a parallel group for oral surgery.

Another round of peer review/ collaborative audit is taking place across the region, and I am again facilitating the Dudley group, which has 10 members this time.

Locally we had a well attended educational evening in November about how and why dentists and their teams can help to increase the rate of diagnosis of dementia within Dudley. The initial idea came from Dudley CCG, and it was really good for our role in care of the whole patient to be recognised. There were speakers from Dudley CCG, Dudley MBC and Dudley Alzheimers society as well as a consultant in special care dentistry. We have a letter which can be accessed from our website which can be sent to the GP of a patient who reports symptoms of memory loss.

In October we invited representatives from Dudley Healthwatch to our meeting. They explained how Healthwatch works as a consumer champion both locally and nationally, and also informed us about the 'All together better' commissioning of services which will alter the commissioning of primary and secondary care services in the borough, although not dentistry.

Looking to the future, there is still plenty of uncertainty and stress for our profession. Contract reform continues to be delayed, the last I heard was that a phased roll out may happen in 2020. Rising costs with very low uplifts in fees cause decrease in profits and incomes, greater

clawbacks as it becomes harder to achieve UDA targets, and increasing expectations from patients are other issues, as well as CQC inspections and GDC investigations. Could/should the LDC exist as a support mechanism as well as an information channel?

Birmingham LDC are looking at setting up a PASS scheme to facilitate this. It was on the agenda at their last meeting in December, but due to the snow at the time, I was unable to attend. It may be something we wish to have available for dentists in this area.

Personally, 2018 will be my final year as chair of this LDC as I will not be standing for re-election in 12 months. I shall continue to represent you this year and report back to the best of my ability while trying not to get too depressed as we continue to deliver UDAs and wait to see if our new or rather reformed contract ever comes to fruition.