

## **Message to members**

### **Uplift to contract values in England for 2011-12**

Government has suspended the Doctors' and Dentists' Review Body (DDRB) for this year and next and so discussions about contract value uplifts for general dental practitioners in England have taken place direct between the BDA's General Dental Practice Committee (GDPC) and the Department of Health. Discussions were in the context of the Government's intention that there were to be no increases to net pay for public service workers earning in excess of £21,000 and that doctors and dentists were expected to bear efficiency and productivity gains of four per cent, in line with the requirement on the rest of the NHS, and on top of the efficiency savings imposed last year.

The Secretary of State has announced that the increase to general dental practitioners' contract values in England will be 0.5 per cent. It will be backdated to 1 April. The four per cent efficiency gain is to be achieved through the universal application of the guidelines for best practice in preventive dentistry for children, as set out in the Delivering Better Oral Health Toolkit (DBOH) available at [http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH\\_102331](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_102331)

Following DBOH guidance entails setting appropriate recall intervals to reflect the risk of disease, offering and, where accepted, applying fluoride varnish at these visits. Set recall visits attract a UDA. Where the varnish is provided in between recall visits, it is provided as part of the original course of treatment and so no additional UDAs will apply. The FP17 will contain a tick box indicating that preventive care has been offered as part of a Band 1 course.

The uplift does not begin to address the very considerable increase in expenses which dentists have been suffering over the past few years. GDPC has made clear to the Department that it is simply not enough and is in effect a pay cut and argued that there was no room for practices to achieve further efficiency savings this year. In order to redress the erosion in practice profitability, the BDA's submissions had stressed that an uplift of 3.32 per cent was required just to apply the DDRB's expenses formula plus an allowance for staff pay increases. On top of that, because of sustained expenses increases over time, practices would have to find 8.93 per cent efficiency savings just to stand still.

Discussions will begin soon on a review for 2012-13. The pay freeze is also to apply next year and the Department of Health has indicated that it will be looking for further efficiency gains.

This uplift applies to England only; discussions have yet to begin in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

**28 April 2011**