SCOTTISH DENTAL PRACTICE COMMITTEE
20 MAY 2020
REPORT

1. The Scottish Dental Practice Committee (SDPC) met by videoconference on
Wednesday 20 May 2020, to discuss the latest Covid-19 developments. This report
provides a contemporary record of that meeting, but as this is a fast-moving situation,
its content is likely to become rapidly out of date. The BDA is providing live updates
at https://www.bda.org/coronavirus

2. A Minute’s Silence for Graham McKirdy
A minute’s silence was held to remember Graham McKirdy who had died on 3 April
2020. Graham was a former long-standing member of SDPC, past Chair of Scottish
Council and had been honoured with a Fellowship of the BDA.

3. BDA Triennial Election Process
The BDA’s Principal Executive Committee had met earlier in May and had decided to
delay the triennial elections which were due to take place later this year. This was to
allow the current Chairs and Committee leads to focus on the ongoing pandemic
work. It would also give the BDA a further year to determine what approach the four
UK governments wish to take towards dentistry over the longer term and which
strategies we may wish to pursue. This means that the term of the current SDPC
would now continue until the end of 2021.

A brief history of the work BDA Scotland had been carrying out during the pandemic
was provided in the SDPC May 2020 progress report.
The Chair referred to the report of the teleconference meeting held on 7 May 2020
which he had attended with the Vice Chair, BDA Scotland staff and the Chief Dental
Officer (CDO) and his team to discuss how GDPs would return to practice. The main
discussions included appropriate risk assessment for practitioners and their staff,
PPE and its availability, aerosol generating procedures (AGPs) and non-AGPs and
as well as cross infection and decontamination procedures. The Chair had
emphasised to the CDO that dentistry could not continue under the current
Statement of Dental Remuneration (SDR).

The CDO had subsequently sought comments from BDA Scotland on a New Zealand
oral health service guidance document. The CDO explained that he was working on
a phased return to dentistry, and was preparing high-level proposals for a roadmap
for Ministerial approval and comments on the New Zealand document would inform
his thinking. A draft letter from the CDO had subsequently been shared with
members and this formed the basis of SDPC’s discussions.
Refer Item 6.

5. Redeployment
The Chair raised concerns the CDO’s letter about redeployment had given an instruction that the dental team should register through a NHS Education for Scotland (NES) Turas portal. He said that his team had already registered with their Board and since then staff had been contacted by social care. He said that staff wished to be deployed in health not social care. The matter had been raised with the CDO advised NES but had not been resolved. Other SDPC members confirmed they had received similar emails from social care.

6. Phased Return to Work
Also partly discussed under Item 4.

Much of the discussion focused on the CDO’s draft phased return to work proposals. Members were clear that how practices re-opened and operated safely for patients and dental teams would be dependent on the awaited new SDCEP / Health Protection Scotland guidance. It was also noted that dentists were in a key position to carry out testing for the Coronavirus and the need for the availability of suitable PPE in order to work safely. It was agreed by all members that it was essential that an appropriate financial package would have to be in place and that the SDR would not fit the style of dentistry going forward.

The four phases listed in the draft proposals from the CDO were discussed detail:
- Phase 1: Increase capacity of Urgent Dental Care Centres (UDCCs).
- Phase 2a: All dental practices to open for face-to-face consultation for patients in need of urgent care that can be provided using non-AGPs
- Phase 2b: Face-to-face consultation to be expanded for patients that can be seen for routine care, including examination and treatment that can also be provided using non-AGPs
- Phase 3: Introduce AGPs to dental practices.

Members recognised that full details were still to be developed. It was noted that BDA Scotland had been disappointed with the level of engagement and information to date from SG.

Post Minute Note: The CDO had written to NHS Boards setting out the first steps for the re-opening of NHS dental services in Scotland during the meeting. The letter included the above high-level plans for a phased return to dental practice. The CDO’s office had also offered to meet with BDA Scotland and SDPC representatives fortnightly.

Concerns were noted that some private dental practices were planning to open imminently, and there was a discussion about whether private practices fell under the jurisdiction of the CDO. P Grigor stated he had been corresponded with R Pearson, Chief Executive, Healthcare Improvement Scotland who had indicated that there were no plans for private practices to open and that as with NHS and mixed practices, all private practices operated in line with national policy and directives from CDO.

The Chair referred to the meetings earlier in May with Practitioner Services Division (PSD) and the Scottish Government at which concerns had been raised over the way some Associates had been paid during the pandemic. It was noted that the BDA’s Coronavirus Financial Impact webpages included advice on Associates’ pay, and that following the meeting with PSD they had updated their Covid-19 FAQs.
The Chair reported that PSD had been working under difficult circumstances to make the financial sustainability measures to independent practitioners during the pandemic. He also noted that in the last 12 months there had been over 800 list number changes which included dentists who had started and resigned. PSD was dealing with queries from individual practitioners who had queries over how their payments had been made.

7. DDRB
BDA Scotland had contributed to the UK-wide BDA evidence which was submitted to the Review Body in January 2020.

The Chair reported that he had represented BDA Scotland at the oral evidence session in London on 24 February 2020. He had highlighted at the session that it was disappointing that Scottish Government had not submitted its DDRB evidence until after the BDA’s evidence session.

BDA Scotland had agreed with Scottish Government that this year’s dental expenses exercise be put on hold during the Covid-19 outbreak.

8. Scottish Orthodontic Specialist Group
R Irvine, the nominated observer from SOSG gave an update of how Covid-19 was affecting orthodontists. He referred to guidelines produced by the British Orthodontics Society on AGPs and non-AGPs and the appropriate levels of PPE for orthodontists. He noted that the BOS was not a regulated body. He highlighted that orthodontists formed part of the General Dental Services and that SOSG would like to work in tandem with independent general dental practitioners. He said there were concerns about funding for orthodontists going forward and would like to have SOSG representation at future meetings.

9. Arrangements for the Next Meeting
The next meeting will take place on Wednesday 9 September 2020, venue to be confirmed.

David McColl
Chair SDPC

May 2020