February was a very busy month for GDPUK and its members. Discussion of how the credit crunch will affect UK dentistry was lengthy and wide ranging, leading to comments on life and career coaches who work in UK dentistry helping dentists see things from a business perspective. Scores of messages followed in support of and against business coaches, specifically and in general. This was a full-blown discussion, with some in favour, some against, and both sides putting point after point forward. The coaches themselves showed they were aware of opinions in their blogs. One such topic had more than 100 replies, and the thread was read over 3,000 times.

The ongoing Professor Steele enquiry is being followed. As he is now publishing a weekly blog himself, his points will be publicly aired well before the report sees the light of day.

Mercury in all its forms were analysed, and there was much made of the new environmental impact of the energy saving light bulbs, which have to be disposed of very carefully as they contain mercury vapour. These could be the next source of mercury getting into the human systems in the UK.

Unfortunately, a dental colleague in Northern Ireland has been charged with murder and this was discussed with sadness. Calls were made for this not to be raised, but the news was, and is, in the public domain, and GDPUK reported only that.

Colleagues were also unhappy to read a rumour that the Review Body might only offer a 1.5 per cent rise in fees/contract values for NHS dentistry. It was however, a rumour, and the actual result of this review has not been published at the time of writing.

Amid all the chaos, humour still abounds on GDPUK, and a recent posting of a classic Swedish video of TM joint dissection was listed as concerning the ‘yoint’. This was mocked by another colleague who posted a video of the Swedish chef from The Muppets we all remember from a few years ago. You have to see it to have a laugh.

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About the author

Dr Anthony V Jacobs started the GDPUK emailing list in 1997, and the group membership is now just under 2,000. The list is read in all corners of the UK dental profession as well as by laboratories, and the trade and dental industry. Qualifying in London in 1979, Dr Jacobs is now in partnership with Dr Stephen Lazarus, practicing at 406 Dental in Manchester. He enjoys his profession, and takes pride in providing both simple and complex gentle dentistry, as well as caring for families in a relaxed atmosphere.

Dr Jacobs has a long-term commitment to continuing professional development, both for himself, and for the profession in general through his mailing list. He has been a member of the British Dental Association (BDA) since 1975, and is presently chairman of the Bury and Rochdale Oral Health Advisory Group, as well as vice chair of the Bury and Rochdale Local Dental Committee (LDC). Dr Jacobs also sits on the committee and helps to organise the annual conference of Local Dental Committees.