The GDPUK online community has been dominated by political topics says Tony Jacobs

The General Election, the formation of a new government and all the speeches and appointments that followed this has lately kept the GDPUK forum bubbling away. Col-leagues discussed the prospects of the contesting parties, they argued over who they would vote for and why, and when the prospect of a hung Parliament loomed, they talked about who should join to form a government and the effect of the new policies on dentistry.

Early after the election, two major speeches could be extrapolated to make dentists and dentistry feel more positive about the future. Nick Clegg announced new ideas to tear up many of the laws brought in by Labour, and asked for people to tell him which ones should go. The new Home Secre-tary, Theresa May, spoke to the Police Federation and said that her predecessors had tied the Police up in red tape and undermined their professional responsibility. Now things would be different.

Feelings continue to run very high regarding the imposition of HTM 0105 and people co-operate to protest about it. Groups coalesce to write letters to their MPs, to the new health ministers, to Norman Lamb (formerly Lab-Dem shadow Health Secretary, well briefed and sympathetic to-wards dentistry, and now chief political adviser to Nick Clegg). If the politicians are to be taken at their word, and the words they use are to be believed (am I naïve?), then there could be a better future for UK dentistry, with less inter-ference from Government-based edicts and agencies.

I would also ask though, does dentistry need a further layer of costly regulation in the form of the Care Quality Commission?

I urge those reading this to write to their MP and Nick Clegg, plus Norman Lamb, and encourage their practice col-leagues to do so, as well as LDCs and BDA sections, to mobilise the UK dentistry to remind the new Government what we need them to change - HTM 0105 and the CQC.

As well as political topics, GDPUK forum writers and readers have been discussing aspects of practice management, ideas from the US of having a large, multi-surgery practice with one dentist “running” from room to room and treating many patients with less downtime. The plight of snooker star Alex Higgins, who lost his teeth following radiotherapy for throat cancer and had friends helping to raise funds for him to have implant based dental resto-rations was also debated.

One colleague raised the is-sue of a patient with addiction to Lucozade! What would you do? Another had a patient (who had been previously interested in tooth whitening) appearing with grey teeth. This was not from tetracycline. One writer sug-gested that she might have had treatment in a beauty salon us-ing chlorine dioxide, which can apparently have this side effect. Treatment options to help this lady were not discussed. Visit www.gdpuk.com.

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About the author
Tony Jacobs, 52 is a GDP in the suburbs of Manchester, in prac-tice with partner Steve Lazarus at 406Dental (www.406dental.com). He has had roles in his LDC, in-cluded BDA, and with the annual conference of LDCs, and is a local dental adviser for Dental Protection. Nowadays, he con-centrates on GDPUK, the web group for UK dentists to discuss their profes-sion online, www.gdpuk.com.