**LDCs call for revolution freedom**

**Eddie Crouch** received rousing cheers at the Conference of local dental committees (LDCs) following his speech on the state of NHS dentistry.

Speaking to delegates at the pre-Conference dinner, he said: ‘The whole new contracting arrangement was about securing state control over NHS dentistry - control of where and how NHS dentists are delivered and how much public money is spent on it. But he added: ‘The level of control that was introduced affects all of us who still work within the NHS.’

Chairman of this year’s Conference of LDCs, Dr Crouch had harsh words for the Department of Health (DOH), its ministers, and the chief dental officer. But he added: ‘The DOH continues to pursue its own agenda’. He said: ‘We need change - not a knee-jerk, panic-stricken, untried and tested change. We need evolution, not revolution.’ (See page two for more on this speech).

Meanwhile, the conference agenda committee is to take over and manage all future conference events. This includes the responsibility that ‘conference resolutions will be considered expeditiously by the GDPC or other appropriate bodies.’

The unprecedented move, means the committee can now liaise directly with the DoH and its ministers, instead of relying on the GDPC.

Conference elected Jerry Asquith to chair the conference in 2009, and Richard Emmis the following year.

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**News in brief**

**Piercing damage**

Every fourth person with a piercing in the tongue or lips revealed symptoms such as gum bleeding claims a new study. The 400 patients surveyed aged 20 years on average showed that 15.9 per cent of them had broken teeth or other dental complications. Dental professionals are warned of the increasing number of patients with oral piercing, and to provide appropriate guidance to patients regarding the health risks.

**Poor parenting**

Parents are failing to help their young children look after their teeth according to the National Dental Survey 2008. It found that more than 20 per cent of under-five year olds are being left to brush unsupervised. A quarter of parents believe that children do not need to brush twice a day, 25 per cent think there is no need for them to avoid fizzy drinks, while 67 per cent believe that brushing for just one minute is recommended.

**Child neglect**

Dentists and dental care professionals are well placed to identify possible abuse or neglect of children or vulnerable adults - and have a responsibility to raise their concerns if they do, said the General Dental Council (GDC). All registrants should know who to contact for advice if they have concerns about potential abuse or neglect, says the GDC in a new statement on child protection.

**Perio link**

Rheumatoid arthritis is the latest condition where there appears to be a link with periodontal disease says new research. But the findings reveal that poor oral hygiene alone did not account for the association between the two conditions, suggesting that other factors may also be involved. For example, if patients, the arthritis may affect manual dexterity, which can make daily routines difficult.

**Long wait**

Young people in Norfolk are waiting up to four years for orthodontic appointments, despite more than 40 million being plugged into the region’s NHS dental services. But only a fifth of it will be spent on tackling the shortage of orthodontists. This figure was slammed by the Liberal Democrat shadow health secretary and North Norfolk MP Norman Lamb, who described the waiting times as ‘unsustainable’.

**Instant therapy**

Are you making the most of your dental therapist? There are so many reasons why you have to have one in your practice - don’t miss out.

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**Essential registration**

Make sure all your DCPs are registered with the GDC before July 50. Just turn up at any of the drop-in registration days to sort it all out for good.

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**Practice Management**

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**Practice Management**

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**News and Opinions**

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**Events**

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