Framework established for Steele recommendations

The framework for implementing the recommendations of the Steele review into NHS dentistry has been established by the Department of Health (DoH)

According to the implementation structure, there will be five work streams that the Programme Board will be looking into:

- Pathway, Quality & Workforce Development
- Commissioning Development & Business Support
- Contract Pilots and Evaluation
- Communications, Patient Empowerment & Information
- Finance

Stakeholders from across the profession have been invited to participate across the streams, including SHAs/PCTs, Clinicians (including Dentists and DCPs), Deanseries, NHS Choices/Direct, DoI, Patient Groups etc.

One group who has extended their support across the board is the British Dental Association (BDA). The BDA has committed membership of its GDPC (General Dental Practitioners’ Committee) to be involved in each of the work streams.

Constructive engagement

Commenting on the news, GDPC chair John Milne said: “When I was first elected I believed the best chance we had of improving the situation for NHS dentists was by more constructive engagement with the Department of Health. With this in mind we have worked hard over the last few months to achieve this.

“I was personally delighted at the recent GDPC meeting where we agreed to endorse the committee's engagement in taking forward the Steele recommendations.”

Dr Milne added: “There is a huge amount of work to be done. We need to rebuild some trust between the groups involved in NHS dentistry and have the courage to grasp the opportunities the Steele review has presented us with to improve dental services.

“There are five main work streams and there will be an executive Committee member on each of them. We have also committed to bringing another GDPC member to each of the work streams and will provide deputes as well if needed.”

Lead author of the review, Prof Jimmy Steele, said: “Clearly, I am delighted to see that, even in difficult financial times, there seems to be a commitment to maintain the momentum of the review, and the Health Select Committee report which preceded it.”

The diagram sets out the implementation structure for the Steele review.