help rebuild Haiti
The earthquakes which devastated Haiti destroyed a third of the countries dental practic es. Chantal Noel, National Liaison Officer of the Association Dentaire Haitienne plans to help Haiti recover from the earthquake and its aftermath. Without help, most Haitian dentists will not be able to rebuild their practices. Chantal plans to enlist the support of NDA members about the equipment that is needed by Haitian dentists. Already engaged, the American Dental Association is raising funds for Haiti through a campaign called “Adopt-a-Practice; Rebuilding Dental Offices in Haiti” which aims to raise $500,000 by the end of 2010.

BDA Bookclub
BDA members will have access to a new scheme offering discounts up to half off of a wide range of key dentistry titles following the launch of BDA Bookclub at Showcase (14 October). This new benefit arises from an exclusive deal the BDA has negotiated with leading publishers, such as Elsevier, Oxford University Press, Informa and Wiley-Blackwell. A core range of 50 titles is available to BDA members, and the Bookclub also offers a facility for members to buy any other dentistry title from the participating publishers at a discount. Further information about BDA Bookclub, as well as secure online ordering, can be accessed at www.bda.org/bookclub, or email enquiries to bdashop@bda.org. The service is only available to BDA.

Truro Practice wins Award
The Truro Practice in Truro, Cornwall, has won the British Dental Association Good Practice Scheme “Practice of the Year 2010”. Every year the British Dental Association (BDA) hosts an annual Honours and Awards Dinner where awards are given in recognition of outstanding and distinguished services to the association and to the dental profession. The Good Practice Scheme Practice of the Year is awarded to celebrate a practice that champions the Scheme recognising the efforts of a whole dental team. “The BDA Good Practice Scheme has helped us develop a truly exceptional service that strives to provide the best in patient care”. For more information on the Good Practice Scheme visit www.bdasmile.org

DCP Research award
Colgate awards research by dental care professionals

Mavericks in Morocco
Michael Oliver’s diary of charity care in Morocco

Pension dreams
Thomas Dickson discusses linking your pension with property

Telescope and crowns
A look at precision dental prosthetics

Another Brown(e) causes potential money woes
Proposed university fee increase in independent review could have serious implications for dental students

L ord Browne of Madingley in his Review of Higher Education Funding and Student Finance has recommended an increase in university tuition fees. If the proposed plans go ahead there could be serious implications for students all over the country.

It is currently unclear whether the government will consider going ahead with Lord Browne’s review; however, whatever decision the government decides to make is likely to involve increasing university fees. Along with the proposed changes to the system with regards to budget cuts, universities across Britain will lose a proportion of state funding in an effort to try and reduce the country’s ever-increasing deficit.

The problem that arises with the proposed changes will have far greater implications for dental and medical students, as their courses tend to be significantly longer than the usual three years. Recently, figures of £7,000 per year are being discussed; however there is also talk of an unlimited annual fee to be determined by individual universities. If these changes are brought into action then students are going to potentially leave university with a staggering debt of £400,000.

As it stands, many students are struggling to find a job after graduation due to the economic climate, resulting in interest piling on top of their student loans at an uncontrollable rate; this undoubtedly will put off future students.

The implications that this could have on society has a recipe for disaster. A decrease in the number of future dental and medical university students could result in a sudden shortage of trained professionals in the future and could ultimately affect economic growth. As Lord Browne stated in his review: “Analysis submitted to the Review suggests that, in the UK between 2000 and 2007, the increase in employed university graduates accounted for six per cent of growth in the private sector (measured by the extra wages they earned as a result of being graduates) or £4.2bn of extra output”.

According to the Independent Review of Higher Education Funding and Student Finance the current system puts a “limit on the level of investment for higher education” and it has been suggested that the country’s education standard is at risk of “falling behind rival countries.” The proposals will introduce a greater investment: students are going to be persuaded that by paying more in they will get more out.

Reported cuts throughout the economic sector have further made the proposed fee increase an ever more pressing subject; university budgets will be cut by £1bn, affecting research funds and student support, and it is feared that worse may follow. Reports in the media suggest that the coalition government aim to cut £62m from university budgets next year and that the number of student places available is to be halved.

It is believed that if the proposed changes are adhered to, selected universities, where students compete to get a place, would end up charging higher fees for the privilege.

However, through all the speculation, those who are closest to the students have generally said that “dental and medical students are guaranteed a job that is well paid and because of this they leave university in a better position to pay back their fees.”

Dental Tribune contacted various dental schools who were reluctant to comment before the announcement of the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR).