GDPUK round-up

This week the media whips up the profession in protest on alleged stories of NHS manipulation, but there was also time to talk clinical and to reminisce on the past.

This autumn, the media has been full of stories about dentistry, and these always encourage GDPUK members to rise to the bait and give their opinions. The Sun, The Daily Mail and Sky News have all had words over alleged manipulation of NHS arrangements, but the conspiracy theorists among us believe the stories were orchestrated by the Department of Health (DH), and that it always has a plan ready to scupper any goodwill the dental profession cultivates.

In addition, the media storm that followed the great global financial crisis made colleagues aware of the ultimate ownership of Associated Dental Practices, ADF, and there was much speculation on what had happened, and what the outcome will be for those practitioners and patients when the dust settles from the Icelandic implosion. Usually the GDPUK readers consider themselves well informed by the knowledge of their colleagues, but in this case, there was only speculation and almost everyone remains in the dark on this topic.

Moving on, a number of clinical cases were discussed, and it continues to amaze what infinite variety of problems and comic incidents occur in our practices. One colleague was discussing whether he should consider attempting root treatment on a non-vital, but long-term symptom-free tooth for his wife, a tooth, which definitely needs a crown. The pitfalls were fully expounded.

The type of tooth preparation needed to provide porcelain veneers in a severe-wear case patient also created debate on a clinical line, and there were marked differences of opinion.

Another severe-wear case was of interest, and the member seeking advice posted images to aid the discussion. Yet another innovation at the GDPUK forum is the ability to embed video clips within the forum posts, but no one has yet used these to illustrate a clinical case. I might use this myself to announce the GDPUK 2008 awards for best post, top member and so on.

Some other topics outlined more simply included:

• Can a patient drive after having relative analgesia?
• Is seniority pay still around?
• Relative analgesia?
• How young can a tooth be bleached?

Nostalgia for the good old days encouraged me to look back at old record cards in my own practice. I commenced practice in 1980, but older cards told me an NHS exam fee was around seven shillings (5½p) in the mid 1960s, and by 1980, this had risen to eight shillings. A scaling was 12/6d, and fillings just over £1 each. Medical history was blissfully unrecorded on those days, and one correspondent talked about leaving dental school before all registrars had found their way there. He went on to reminisce about other interesting concepts bristling on the web. If you’re feeling inspired, log on to the forum to read more at www.gdpuk.com – you’ll be welcome.