Editorial comment

Making a stand

Chief executive for the BDA Peter Ward spells it out loud and clear that ending the contract without any notice is no more than a ticking time bomb for the profession. It is a statement which sums it all up. As we sit here and wait for the outcome of this farcical appeal, like Dr Eddie Crouch to take on the big boys, but thank god there’s someone big and brave enough to do it. He signed the contract in dispute because how else could he continue NHS care without it? But instead of shutting up and getting on with it he’s making the right noises and making a stand. The BDA is there now lending support at a crucial time – a professional body showing its true colours not just to Dr Crouch but to the whole profession at last. But a ‘success’ for the Department of Health would ripple destruction in the profession and nursing news for patients.

‘It takes guts for someone to take on the big boys, but thank god there’s someone out there brave enough to do it’

some of you out there are functioning on a low simmer. For the implications of the over rule could be catastrophic. Living on the edge is no fun for dentists or patients – the anxiety would seem through. And what’s the point of family dental practices making any future plans with the burden of a looming contract termination at any second? It takes guts for someone

Adequate rewards?

The NHS Information Centre highlights some pretty damning evidence. With 1.2m fewer people seeing an NHS dentist in the two years up to June this year things are certainly not looking up. But with an increase on treatments per patient what does this mean? Are dentists carrying out more treatments because they have to, and so are they getting rewarded adequately? Last month one dentist told Dental Tribune he gets paid the same amount of money for doing either one filling or ten fillings. The report makes sense then doesn’t it, but that doesn’t mean that the profession is happy, especially when some of you have to pay back cash! The repercussions are obvious, NHS practices will fail, and more NHS dentists will leave in their droves.

As more dentists shun the NHS, more patients will be forced into private dentistry, but the lucky few who bag themselves an NHS dentist are getting their fillings in while they still can. At least there are some happy NHS patients in England.