Information: to share or not to share?
Amanda Atkin on what you should know about the Information Governance Review

A recent news item (Vol. 6, No. 15) listed the panel members for the Independent Information Governance Review being chaired by Dame Fiona Caldicott. The aim of the Review is to advise on how to achieve a better balance between protecting and sharing confidential information. With echoes of protecting and sharing confidentiality to improve patient care.

The mandate for the Review arose from a recommendation by the NHS Future Forum (a body bearing on what goes on in dental practices). The dates and themes (eg Patient and Public Participation area is crowded with patients.

The Information Governance Review Panel has identified a number of themes it wishes to investigate, with dentistry not mentioned specifically. There is also no dentistry representative on the panel. With this in mind, it would seem important that those in the dentistry profession contribute to the evidence gathering process of the Review. This can be done by post or email – see http://faldoct2.dh.gov.uk/contact-us. The panel is also holding a number of ‘Evidence Sessions’ – each with a particular theme. Again, none are exclusive to dentistry but some themes (eg Patient and Public rights in law including new EU Regulations) will clearly have a bearing on what goes on in dental practices. The dates and themes can be downloaded at https://www.wp.dh.gov.uk/caldicott2/dh.gov.uk/contact-us. The panel is also holding a number of ‘Evidence Sessions’ – each with a particular theme. Again, none are exclusive to dentistry but some themes (eg Patient and Public rights in law including new EU Regulations) will clearly have a bearing on what goes on in dental practices. The dates and themes can be downloaded at https://www.wp.dh.gov.uk/caldicott2/dh.gov.uk/contact-us.

As dental practices already have to be compliant with CQC requirements, which also cover elements of information governance such as privacy, dignity, equality and confidentiality, the Review covers those need from a higher, more robust level. Already dental practices are required to undergo the IG Toolkit (Information Governance Toolkit) to embed and ensure staff have a clear understanding of what information governance means for the practice, staff and, most importantly, patients.

Have your say
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Amanda Atkin runs Atkinspire Ltd and offers practice support, training and consultancy on information governance, CQC compliance, National Minimum Standards and HTM 01-05.

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