Regulations, regulations
Tony Jacobs discusses the hot topics of the dental profession

Feelings have been riding high regarding the methods and conduct of the regulators of the dental profession, something that was just not the case a few years ago. To me it is not the fact the levels of respect to institutions have changed, it is that so many methods and operations of our regulators have become illogical these days, against the morals and values of so many of the profession.

I feel the GDC have done some things to address dentists’ feelings, the ARF has risen, but there seem to be steps being taken to prevent the New Year’s administrative removal from the register if bank account or cheque payment goes astray. On a much more important level, an august and respected body such as Dental Protection has gone on record to criticise the methods of the Professional Conduct Committee of the GDC. This article, in a DPL publication, was read widely, discussed and dissected and colleagues on GDPUK definitely made their feelings known about the GDC’s conduct Committees and the way cases are taken forward and tried.

Talking of regulators, this part of my GDPUK column does not even start to capture the professions feelings of dismay and fear of the lack of both credibility and trust in the CQC. In the week the CQC sent out 4,000 emails to the wrong people, it became more and more clear that no-one can believe a single word communicated by the CQC, either by email, on paper or on the telephone. Their goalposts and not just moving, they are on a perpetual roundabout! The words “not fit for purpose” must be the most common phrase when CQC is mentioned.

At least GDPUK has a role in allowing colleagues to share news as it develops, to reassure one another the nightmare may soon be over, and to share the responses framed by the various representative organisations. Those organisations themselves may base some of their response on the outcry on GDPUK, but they will never tell us that. It must be reassuring for the leaders of those organisations to review the vox pop as shown on the site, and to develop policy which echoes this.

There has been so much else to follow this month; here is a small sample.

A variety of surgery key-boards have been discussed, some are more clinical appearance, and there is a wide variety of prices, for a few pounds [almost disposable] to the higher quality shiny white ones. One was recommended which is not just washable, it’s dishwasher proof.

A puzzling topic, which did not get a full answer, but it seems a worldwide regulation that pilots cannot fly for 24 hours after having an LA. Have you heard of this? No-one seems to know why.

We have discussed the change in the pattern of the genders of students admitted to dental schools. We wonder how this will affect the profession in the coming years, and this lead a number of colleagues to reminisce about their days as students. One GDPUK colleague was awarded a chair as Associate Professor, and a friend of his from student days remembered an answer given by the now professor as to treatment of a snail track ulcer in the palate – “cut it out with an air rotor” said the star pupil!