

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Orthodontic reprourement

Sir, I write as a retired Consultant in Dental Public Health, as well as a current member of the BDA and Chair of Healthwatch Leeds. In *BDJ In Practice's* August 2022 issue, Catherine McCanny writes about some of the unfortunate consequences of the way in which NHSE/I Yorkshire and the Humber have carried out the recent procurement process for orthodontic contracts.¹

I would go even further in my criticism of the way in which this has been carried out which has completely ignored the

effects on patients undergoing NHS orthodontic treatment. Most orthodontic patients need regular review appointments every month or so. None of the orthodontic practices in Leeds previously contracted to provide NHS treatment were awarded new contracts. I am not aware whether they tendered for new contracts or not, but I do know that none have accepted wind-down contracts to complete already commenced courses of treatment.

The new contracts were due to commence in April but neither local dental practitioners nor existing patients were notified of the new orthodontic contract holders by this time and it seems that the new orthodontic practices were not ready to commence providing orthodontic treatment until well after the date at which their contract was due to start. In fact, a number of patients were still contacting Healthwatch Leeds for advice in September as they had still not been

informed about where their treatment would be continued. Patients who needed urgent attention, for example because of fractured wires which were causing trauma to the soft tissues, were told to contact 111 – what were the staff at 111 supposed to do? The only advice they could give was to cut off the broken wires – not the best way to facilitate their treatment, especially as they were still waiting to be told where and when their treatment would be continued.

From where did NHSE/I obtain their orthodontic advice, from where did they get an input from patients' representatives to ensure that they were aware of the steps needed in a timely way to ensure smooth continuity of care for the patients and the mental trauma caused by not knowing where to turn for ensuring that their treatment continued in an orderly way? The whole process has been a disgrace and those at NHSE/I should be ashamed of such cavalier treatment of children receiving NHS care.

John F Beal, Leeds.

Reference

1. Westgarth D. Pandemic procurement: Friend or foe? *BDJ In Pract* 2022; **35**: 10-11.



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FDI launches toolkit on how to make dentistry more sustainable

The FDI World Dental Federation (FDI) has launched a Toolkit for Sustainable Dentistry to help dental practices understand what actions they can take to ensure their work is environmentally sustainable.

By providing dentists and dental teams with the tools and strategies to implement greener practices, as well as track progress, FDI hopes to contribute to reducing the environmental impact of the profession in a tangible way.

The toolkit was developed further to the release of a Consensus Statement on Environmentally Sustainable Oral Healthcare earlier this year, which outlines the challenges and solutions to improving sustainability in dentistry. It also recognises that the oral healthcare sector has a responsibility to provide environmentally

sustainable care without compromising patient welfare.

Dental practices can use the tools as a guide to make their work more environmentally sustainable and by tracking progress they can achieve recognition awards for their efforts. The toolkit was developed as part of FDI's Sustainability in Dentistry project and consists of an interactive platform that guides users to drive their activities towards more sustainable practices by providing them with practical solutions.

Dentists and their teams can undertake different sets of challenges and subsequently earn bronze, silver, or gold recognition awards for their practice. The interactive challenges will give dental teams the tools to raise awareness, implement

changes and become more environmentally sustainable. Dental organisations and practices, all around the world, are encouraged to register and make eco-friendly choices as a team to showcase their commitment to our planet.

Professor Ihsane Ben Yahya, FDI President, said: 'Dentists and dental teams can play an active role in reducing the environmental impact of dentistry, while safeguarding optimal patient care. This online Toolkit for Sustainable Dentistry is a step towards helping dental practices adopt measures to reduce their carbon footprint.'

'I hope that our work today will have a positive impact on our future generations so that they can enjoy a healthy life and planet.'

The toolkit is available at: www.sustainability-platform.fdiworlddental.org/.