

## Charlotte Waite appointed Director of BDA Scotland

On 10 August, the British Dental Association (BDA) announced that dentist and experienced campaigner Charlotte Waite has been appointed Director of BDA Scotland, and will take up the role in October.

Dr Waite will support members in negotiations with the Scottish Government and oversee outreach to the Scottish Parliament, officials, the press and wider stakeholders.

Prior to the pandemic, Dr Waite exposed the scandal of Westminster's aggressive NHS fines regime, which saw millions of often vulnerable patients face £100 fines for attempting to claim free dental care or prescriptions.

Working with the media and speaking up for patients in the UK Parliament, Dr Waite lifted the lid on a system that saw 1.7 million fines – worth £188 million – withdrawn because the 'fraudsters' targeted were actually fully entitled to claim support towards NHS dental or prescription charges. Off the back of her powerful evidence to the Westminster Public Accounts Committee, the UK Department of Health and Social Care abandoned a 'fines first' policy, based on the presumption of guilt.

While redeployed on the front line during COVID, Dr Waite revealed chronic PPE shortages that left hundreds of Urgent Dental Care centres struggling to deliver care to patients in agony, when most practices were closed for routine care.

Working with partners including Mencap, she has continued to press the UK Government for action on backlogs for patients facing yearlong waiting times for dental treatment under general



anaesthetic as a result of pandemic disruption. She has also led efforts to encourage the use of Makaton – a unique language programme that uses symbols and signs, alongside speech – within dental settings, to break down barriers to communication with dental patients with learning disabilities. She has also spoken out in the press and lobbied the UK Government for better investment and provision of dental services for people experiencing homelessness and for residents in care homes.

News of Dr Waite's appointment came in the week the BBC revealed 82% of NHS practices in Scotland were not accepting new adult patients, with one in five stating they

had waiting times of a year or longer. Researchers were unable to find any practices taking on new patients in nine of Scotland's 32 local authorities.

Dr Waite will be pursuing BDA Scotland's call for development of a new, sustainable long-term model for NHS dentistry, support for dentists in all fields of practice, and effective action to tackle Scotland's deep oral health inequalities, which are now set to widen as a result of the pandemic.

Glasgow-born Dr Waite qualified in Dundee, before completing general professional training in the East of Scotland, locuming in Australia and then working in the Community Dental Service (CDS). She will be leaving her longstanding role in the CDS where she has provided dental care for some of the most vulnerable in society.

Dr Waite said: 'I'm downing my drill to fight for the future of dentistry in Scotland'.

## Andrea Johnson appointed Cohort Director

Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (DBTH) Orthodontic & Maxillofacial Laboratory Manager Andrea Johnson has been appointed Cohort Director and Dental Network Co-Lead for the Healthcare Leadership Academy (HLA).

The Healthcare Leadership Academy (HLA) was formed in 2016 in response to demand from young clinicians and medical students



to learn about leadership. The aim of the programme is to inspire the next generation of healthcare professionals and develop their understanding of leadership. The HLA scholarship recognises healthcare students and professionals with proven leadership ability and gives them the opportunity to take their leadership skills to the next level.

As a Cohort Director, Andrea's role is to inspire, mentor and support these healthcare students and professionals within her cohort to change the world of healthcare through leadership, one small step at a time.

As Co-Lead of the HLA's Dental Network, Andrea will also directly support the HLA's aspiring dental healthcare leaders. She and her fellow lead will provide dental-specific support, guidance and opportunities to those within this network.

For more information visit <https://www.thehealthcareleadership.academy/>.

Andrea is also Chair and co-founder of the registered charity Den-Tech (pictured in 2019).