

« nations – whose systems have become less reliant on charge income over the last decade. The BDA is now sending information posters to over 8,000 NHS dentists across England to help canvas feedback from patients on the future of the charge.

The BDA's General Dental Practice chair, Henrik Overgaard-Nielsen, said: 'Ministers insist the NHS will remain free at the point of use, but keep ramping up England's dental charges. Increasingly they look like a tax on health, a substitute for adequate government investment which drives down demand from the patients who need us most. These increases aren't putting an extra penny into the service, they are just a winning formula for cuts by stealth.

'We're told our patients should make a "contribution" toward the cost of NHS dentistry. Well unless ministers change course, our patients will end up paying more into the service than the state within a generation. The term "NHS dentistry" ceases to have much meaning if patients are expected to pay the lion's share of their treatment costs at the point of delivery.'

UCLH staff get tough and muddy for charity

A group of 11 staff from Eastman Dental Hospital and the Royal National Throat, Nose and Ear Hospital (both UCLH) have raised over £3,000 to improve patient care for hypodontia and ectodermal dysplasia (ED) patients.

The team battled through 11 gruelling miles of mud and obstacles in the 'Tough Mudder' event to raise the funds. It was also used as a team building experience with staff from a wide variety of specialities and grades/roles participating.

Approximately 3-6% of the population will be affected by hypodontia with one in 1,400 affected by ED. The treatment requires a multidisciplinary approach often requiring orthodontic, paediatric dentistry, oral surgery, restorative and periodontology input to reach satisfactory outcomes.

The funds, which are still coming in, should improve the facilities for this specific patient group.



Miss Carolyn Whyte of the Eastman said: 'Completing the Tough Mudder as a UCLH team pushed everyone out of their comfort zones and fostered inter-hospital and inter-departmental team spirit. The event was a huge success with all team members completing the challenge with smiles to the very end. Many aches, scrapes and pains were endured but the team already have plans for another fundraising event early next year!'