

see the proportion of complaints from each sector.

The GDC should be far more transparent about who people should complain to; many complaints can be managed in-house by the NHS for example, negating the need for the GDC to be involved and therefore saving costs.

#### Robert Manual, Haywards Heath:

The hot potato which is the GDC's current plan to raise their annual ARF to £945 will undoubtedly raise masses of comment in the coming months. But here's a fact to remember and add to the debate. Our medical doctor colleagues only have to pay £390 for their annual subscription to the GMC. What is the GDC's take on that fact?

#### Sarah Ellison, by email:

Currently there are 39,447 registered dentists contributing over £30 million to the total operating income of the GDC. The announced increase will raise this figure by £18 million to a

total of £48 million. So where does this money go?

According to the GDC's Annual Report 2012, their audited accounts show the vast majority is spent on staff costs (>£11 million) and legal and professional fees (>£10 million). So in reality, dentists are paying the salaries of the GDC members in order that they can help the public pursue claims against themselves.

Given the ever-increasing trend in litigation, it is unsurprising that claims against dentists rose by 31% in 2011-12 and by 100% in the past five years. Comparing this to our medical colleagues, who also have seen a 100% complaints rise in the same time period, how is it that the General Medical Council (GMC) has managed to keep their AFR at £390, with those earning less than a £31,000 threshold receiving a 50% reduction in their ARF? The GMC have even been able to freeze or reduce fees by finding more efficient ways to deliver their service including the cost saving eBilling.

Surely it would be fairest if the GDC took a leaf out of the book of the indemnity companies who base their fees on the number of days a dentist works, in which discipline and modify these when a dentist is on maternity or long-term sick leave. This proportions the cost of indemnity directly to the risk of complaints and subsequent financial loss to the indemnity company.

## DENTIST HONOURED WITH HISTORY OF MEDICINE PRESIDENCY



Professor Stanley Gelbier, the British Dental Association's (BDA's) Honorary Museum Curator since 1988, has been elected President of the Royal Society of Medicine's History of Medicine Society.

Roger Farbey, Head of Library & Knowledge Services at the BDA, reports:

'The Section of the History of Medicine started on 11 October 1912. Sir William Osler, its first President, wanted to encourage research and scholarship and bring together people who felt the study of medical history had a value in education. Many eminent medical and non-medical historians followed as President, including Charles Singer, Sir Zachary Cope and Sir Humphrey Rolleston. This is only the second occasion in the section's history that a dentist has been honoured with the role of President. The first dentist incumbent to this role was Lilian Lindsay in 1950. Dr Lindsay was formerly the first lady President of the BDA in 1946 and the first British woman dentist, qualifying in 1895. The Section embraces the breadth and depth of medical history with members and contributions from every branch of medicine. For the twenty-first century, the section has been re-named as the RSM History of Medicine Society.'

## DEATH NOTICE

It is with great sadness that we report the death of Colin Hall-Dexter on 6 July 2014.

## #ARFHike



Stevie Potter  
@SteviePotty

@Jeremy\_Hunt it's time to remind the GDC that we have a job to do and we shouldn't be penalised for doing it. #ARFhike

9:00pm - 7 Jul 2014



BDA  
@TheBDA

We are requesting @Jeremy\_Hunt to initiate an urgent investigation into the competence of the @GDC\_UK over #ARFhike

7:15am - 9 Jul 2014



Andrew Iredale  
@infrequentuser

@Jeremy\_Hunt Given the amount it costs to train a dentist, are you ok with the increase in GDC retention fees and cut in VT salary? #ARFhike

6:58pm - 10 Jul 2014



Sadia  
@SadiaBashir

@Jeremy\_Hunt Appalled at how the GDC is governing dentistry in the UK. Failing to meet requirements yet targeting dentists #ARFhike

9:29pm - 7 Jul 2014



## COMPANIES ADDRESS GDC

### Denplan:

Denplan has complained to the Chair of the GDC following the publication of the full-page advertisement in the *Daily Telegraph* inviting dental patients to complain to the GDC if they are unsatisfied with care.

Denplan says that the GDC requires all dentists, whether NHS or private, to have an effective and responsive in-practice complaints mechanism. By inciting patients to complain to it directly, Denplan says that the GDC is effectively bypassing a swift and highly efficacious method of resolving any complaints.

### Dental Protection:

Although sharing the concerns of those alarmed by the proposed ARF increase, Dental Protection is warning dental professionals to tread carefully when making public their reaction and also to think about considering withholding their ARF as both actions would threaten their registration and ability to practise lawfully.