



09 June 2015

Denplan research finds dentists dissatisfied with the current NHS contract and lacking knowledge around the pilots and prototypes

Denplan has released its latest research (commissioned through Facts International), based on a survey asking NHS dentists* for their views on a variety of issues related to NHS dentistry. The survey examined their opinions about the current contract as well as their knowledge of the pilots and prototypes. Other key issues the NHS dentists were asked about included their confidence around NHS funding commitments filtering through to primary care dentistry, motivation levels for making changes to their practice situation and the impact of the Friends and Family Test.

The key findings are summarised below:

Current NHS contract and prototypes

- Nearly half the dentists (49%) are dissatisfied with working under the current NHS contract, with only 3% very satisfied and 29% saying they are fairly satisfied
- Two thirds (65%) of dentists don't feel very knowledgeable about the current situation regarding NHS dentistry pilots and prototypes, rating their knowledge as fair or poor
- Three quarters (76%) agree that they are frustrated that more than four years after piloting began we are still no nearer to a final model
- 57% of these frustrated dentists have decided on making changes to their practice in the next 12 months
- Only 54% are aware that the pilots will soon terminate and that a number of practices will act as prototypes for the reformed NHS contracts in England. 66% of these think that it is unlikely the prototype model will free them from the UDA system

NHS funding for primary care dentistry

- 95% of dentists are not confident that political assurances for NHS funding commitments will filter down to primary care dentistry
- 56% think that the 2006 contract's cap on the dental budget will not be reversed



- 86% of dentists overwhelmingly agree they would like NHS England to state clearly what is and what is not available in NHS dentistry – just 2% disagreed

Impact of Friends and Family Test

- 72% have commenced using the Friends and Family Test (FFT) that was introduced in April but the majority of respondents (73%) didn't think the FFT would be useful for either their practice or their patients

Roger Matthews, Chief Dental Officer at Denplan commented: “It is apparent from these survey results that many NHS dentists continue to feel disillusioned and frustrated with the lack of clear direction around the NHS contract changes. There also appears to be a general lack of understanding in relation to the pilots and prototype models. With the realisation that the NHS funding situation for primary care dentistry does not look likely to improve, it is unsurprising that many NHS dentists may be feeling uncertain as to the future viability of their practice if they stay with the NHS. The result is that a significant proportion of NHS dentists are considering a change to the way they manage and fund their practice in the foreseeable future.

“Dentists appear to also be concerned about the hours it will take their practice to compile the statistics from the now mandatory Friends and Family Test, with half saying it will take their practice between 1-4 hours a month to process the results. This could add up to the equivalent of at least 6 days a year spent away from delivering patient care.”

Matthews added: “Managing the transition from NHS to private dentistry can be a daunting prospect for many dentists, but at Denplan we have a long heritage in supporting NHS dentists in making this transition, helping to ensure they retain their practice income and continue to run a successful practice in the future. Denplan ‘Principal only Transitions’ give dentists the option to retain NHS patients whilst benefitting from all the support and experience necessary to choose the right payment plan for them, their practice and their patients.”

Denplan is running a series of seminars throughout June, entitled “Your practice, Your Choices” which will examine the upcoming changes to NHS contracts for dentists, how dentists might be



affected and help them understand what actions they need to be considering now. For further information and to book a place practices can visit: www.denplan.co.uk/events-and-training/your-practice-your-choices or call 0800 169 5697.

*100 dentists responded to an online survey in April and May 2015, with all respondents holding an NHS contract in England, treating over 70% of their patient base as NHS patients. They were not part of a corporate body or a member of a payment plan provider.

-ends-

Notes to Editors:

About Denplan

Denplan Limited is the UK's leading dental payment plan specialist owned by Simplyhealth; with more than 6,500 member dentists nationwide caring for approximately 1.7 million Denplan registered patients. Established in 1986 by two dentists who pioneered the concept of dental payment plans, Denplan has been at the heart of dental care for over 25 years. Today, Denplan has a wide range of dental plans for adults and children, enabling patients to spread the cost of their private dental care through a fixed monthly fee. Denplan supports regular attendance and preventive care, reducing the need for clinical intervention and helping patients to maintain healthy teeth and gums for life. Patient enquiries telephone: 0800 401 402 Dentist enquiries telephone: 0800 328 3223

www.denplan.co.uk

- Denplan Care: all routine and restorative care + worldwide dental injury and dental emergency cover
- Denplan Essentials: routine care only + worldwide dental injury and dental emergency cover
- Plans for Children: routine and other agreed care + worldwide dental injury and dental emergency cover
- Membership Plan: registered with the dentist + worldwide dental injury and dental emergency cover
- Denplan Emergency: worldwide dental injury and dental emergency cover only
- Company Dental Plans: company funded, voluntary and flexible benefit schemes

Denplan also provides a range of professional services for its member dentists and their practice teams, including the Denplan Quality Programme, Denplan Excel Accreditation Programme and Denplan Training. Plus regulatory advice, business and marketing consultancy services and networking opportunities.

For more information about Denplan:

Rebecca Hutton

Denplan Press Office

Tel: 01962 829 179

Pressoffice@denplan.co.uk

About Simplyhealth

- Simplyhealth became its own brand in 2009 after bringing together HSA, BCWA, LHF, HealthSure, Totally Active, its family of health companies
- Simplyhealth has been providing healthcare solutions for 140 years, and is dedicated to serving its customers and patients through a variety of cash plans, dental plans, private medical insurance, self funded health plans and mobility and living aids
- Simplyhealth is a trading name of Simplyhealth Access, which is authorised by the Prudential Regulation Authority and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and the Prudential Regulation Authority
- Simplyhealth has nearly three million customers supporting 3.5 million people with their healthcare needs. They also help over 20,000 companies with their employees' health
- Simplyhealth is committed to making a positive impact on its communities. Each year, it donates over £1 million to health related charities and causes

For further information: newsroom.simplyhealth.co.uk