



Newsletter: May 2009

This month Professor Jimmy Steele is due to publish his main findings and recommendations to the Secretary of State for Health, Alan Johnson, on NHS Dentistry. I have been fortunate to have had considerable input into his enquiry and I am very impressed at the way he has sought views from all interested parties, particularly patients.

I attended a meeting last month where he set out some of the areas he thought were of importance and I am pleased to say he does regard complex dentistry as one of the areas poorly served by the present contract. I believe his suggestions in this area is to have 'Special Contracts' that would be offered by PCT's. Practices would bid for one of these contracts to supply complex work. He wants also to introduce quality thresholds, so measures would be put in place to ensure the money was well spent on quality restorations. I know the squeeze on dental laboratories is really hurting because of the significant decline in NHS laboratory work and the difficult economic impact on patients not being able to afford private dentistry.

Now with my next ironic breath, I am pleased to announce the new laboratory building work is near completion and the benching should be fitted at the beginning of June. This is a case of going too far forwards when times were better, to turn back when the economics turned nasty; so we have found ourselves trying to manage the last part of this project as carefully as possible. I suppose the advantage now is, when you can convince banks to make you a loan, the interest rate is very favourable. With the principle that you invest when times are hard to enable you to take advantage when the 'green shoots' eventually appear, then I hope it is a sound investment.

We hope to celebrate the opening of the new laboratory in the near future, and I am putting some plans together to hold a 'Smile Design' event from somebody I really respect and I believe has made the best presentation I have seen, both identifying what smile design is and how to reproduce it – consistently. More on this next month.

Thank you for your continued support.



Kind regards,

David Smith



REGISTERED MEMBER