

30 August 2016

## Sara Hurley visits Denplan Head Office

On Monday 22 August, Denplan welcomed Chief Dental Officer for England, Sara Hurley, and Andrew Taylor, her Dental Programme Manager, to the company's head office in Winchester. The aim of the meeting was to explore areas of mutual interest between the private and public sectors. There was acknowledgment that engagement between the two sectors centres on common patient-centred goals – not least that of offering more patient choice, and improving the long term oral health of patients in the UK.

Henry Clover, Denplan's Chief Dental Officer said: "We were delighted to welcome Sara and Andrew to our offices, where we were able to explain Denplan's business model and the range of support services we offer to 6,500 member dentists nationwide. We see this as the start of a conversation on potential areas of collaboration and information sharing."

One area of discussion was the Denplan Excel certification programme, developed over 15 years ago for dentists to help support clinical governance, professional regulation and excellence in patient care and communication. The Denplan Excel programme was also UKAS accredited in January this year. Denplan explained that they would be open to future discussions with the GDC regarding continuing assurance plans, and with the CQC, to discuss the potential value of clinical service accreditation and peer review schemes. These could be useful information sources to support their inspection programmes and to help continue driving up standards in dentistry.

Henry also shared some data recently published in the British Dental Journal which demonstrated that worsening oral health correlates with worsening general health. This was derived from over 37,000 patients who had received a Denplan PreViser Patient Assessment (DEPPA)<sup>1</sup>. The research provided further evidence for the association between high-risk lifestyle factors such as smoking and heavy drinking and poor oral health outcomes in an area of common interest in all sectors of primary care.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.nature.com/bdj/journal/v221/n2/full/sj.bdj.2016.525.html> British Dental Journal **221**, 65 - 69  
(2016) Published online: 22 July 2016 | doi:10.1038/sj.bdj.2016.525

# Press Release



There were also discussions around the array of tailor-made practice training sessions that Denplan runs for practices and their dental teams – over 450 sessions per year. Denplan Academy training covers areas such as complaint handling, legal and ethical issues and GDC standards, preparing for CQC inspections, and caring for patients with dementia to name a few.

Henry said: "It was generally agreed that any initiatives and training that improves practice efficiency and in turn improves oral health outcomes, would serve the profession well to be explored on a wider scale."

Sara also outlined the case for a national programme to improve dental health through better co-ordinated care and empowering communities to implement their own sustainable oral health initiatives. She will be launching the concept of "Smile 4 Life" at the Health and Care Innovation Expo next month; national support for existing community based projects, a hub for sharing best practices across Local Government Authority areas and ensuring that local oral health initiatives are complemented by innovative commissioning approaches within local NHS England Commissioning Teams and supported by the profession.

The initial focus is "Early Years/under 5's" with the aim to provide opportunities for families and children to establish good oral health habits as a daily norm, be it nursery school or at home. With encouragement and ease of access to dental care professionals, first check-up by age 1 and opportunity to continue to visit the dental team regularly for age-appropriate preventive advice, together with help to ensure problems are identified early, the prospect of a generation of children free from decay becomes increasingly real.

Keen to expand the concept of Smile 4 Life beyond childhood, Sara also touched on an ambition for a wide-ranging programme for oral health reform –with a focus on improvements for the oral health of the over 65's, the 16-24 age group, the homeless, the ageing well (typically aged 35-55) and those aged 85 plus – a population expected to double between 2010 and 2030. She also expressed her determination that the dental profession work together to lead and achieve the required changes.

Henry commented: "Denplan will continue to support such prevention strategies that recognise that good dental health in childhood is vital, not only for lifelong oral wellbeing, but for good overall long term general health. This is ever more so important now, given the lack of an oral health focus in the government's recently published obesity strategy."



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## Notes to editors

### About Henry Clover

Henry Clover joined the Professional Services team of Denplan in 1998, having worked as a dentist for 17 years looking after patients' oral health in his own practice. He now holds the position of Director of Dental Policy at Simplyhealth and is also Chief Dental Officer at Denplan. Henry playing a vital role in Simplyhealth's Leadership Team and is at the forefront of private dentistry liaising with more than 6,500 member dentists.

### About Denplan

Denplan is the UK's leading dental payment plan specialist, with more than 6,500 member dentists nationwide caring for approximately 1.7 million 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 nearly 30 years and today the company is owned by Simplyhealth. Denplan has a wide range of dental plans for adults and children, enabling patients to budget for their private dental care by spreading the cost through a fixed monthly fee. We support regular attendance and preventive care, reducing the need for clinical intervention and helping patients to maintain healthy teeth and gums for life.

For further information visit [www.denplan.co.uk](http://www.denplan.co.uk). For oral health tips and advice visit [www.myteeth.co.uk](http://www.myteeth.co.uk).  
Patient enquiries telephone: 0800 401 402 Dentist enquiries telephone: 0800 328 3223

- 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:

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### About Simplyhealth

Since 1872 – long before the existence of the NHS – we've been helping people to make the most of life, by managing their everyday health needs. We ensure 3.5 million people in the UK have access to health products, services and support they need, when they need them and at a price they can afford.

We're proud to be the leading provider of health cash plans, dental payment and pet health plans. Whereas once we were known purely for cash plans, we now offer a wide range of products and services to cater for peoples' everyday health needs – now and into the future.

Helping people make the most of life is our sole purpose and giving back is a huge part of that. In 2015 we were able to donate £1.6 million to charitable causes, touching the lives of nearly 825,000 people across the UK. Our future success and performance will enable us to deliver our ongoing pledge to donate 10% of our profits to charity each year.

# Press Release



**Denplan**  
At the heart of dental care

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