

12 May 2008

**To: LDC Conference Representatives and Observers
General Dental Practice Committee Members**

Dear Colleagues

I hope like me you are very much looking forward to the **57th Annual Conference of Local Dental Committees**. Now that it is nearly upon us, I am looking forward to welcoming you to the Kensington Town Hall in London on Friday 13th June 2008.

This event should be the annual event when dental politics is widely debated and the feelings of the profession expressed to those who influence the daily care for our patients.

This year, Ann Keen the new Under Secretary of State is unable to address Conference, following in the footsteps of previous Labour Ministers. This is particularly difficult to understand as in a recent interview in the Dental Press she asked for the profession to get to know her and direct our efforts into "improving access and oral health and getting commissioning right" rather than oppose the changes that the new contract brings. It's hard to hear the opinions of the profession when you cannot find the time to attend the largest gathering of representatives of NHS dentists.

CDO Dr Barry Cockcroft will deputise, as he did for the majority of the Health Select Committee oral evidence hearing, when the Minister demonstrated she needed to do more listening.

April 2009 brings the end of guaranteed incomes and the start of local commissioning, and despite the extension of "ring fencing" this will be the last Conference before even more major changes start to happen.

The eve of Conference dinner will be held at the Copthorne Tara Hotel, on Thursday 12th June at 7.00 for 7.30 pm. This is just a short walk from the Conference venue and where overnight bags can be left on the morning of the Conference. Gyles Brandreth will be the after dinner speaker and for those who witnessed his last speech to delegates, I am sure they, like me, will look forward to hearing him once more.

Dress is black tie. If you have not yet booked tickets, please call Katherine Fort on 01243 780615 who will let you know if there are any remaining. Please note that we are not sending out dinner tickets in advance this year as your confirmation letter will have indicated whether or not tickets have been reserved for you.

We are sponsored this year by an impressive array of companies and I thank them all for their support. Special thanks to Denplan who is our major sponsor this year.

If you have not yet made accommodation arrangements, you may wish to contact Virtuoso, the appointed agents, on 01707 373 464.

Finally, as you know we are encouraging all delegates to register their details on the LDC Conference website at www.ldcuk.org in order to download their papers for the Conference as these will not be posted in advance this year. LDC representative expense claim forms are available only on the website so please encourage your colleagues to register as soon as possible. The report of this year's conference will also be available here after the event. Please note that your delegate badge, voting tickets and delegate bag will be handed to you at registration.

Yours sincerely



Eddie Crouch
LDC Conference Chair