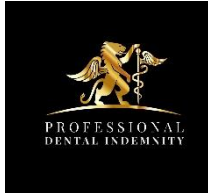


Indemnity Consensus Statement

10th May 2023



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Summary

In March 2022 a working group of indemnity providers was formed to discuss patient safety. This group was a branch of Project Sphere, which is led by Jason Wong (Deputy Chief Dental Officer for England), and run by Jyoti Sumel (Dental Therapist and NHSE - Midlands (WT&E) Clinical Leadership Fellow) with the support from a group of key stakeholders including the regulators. The aim of this group is to initiate steps to move away from the current blame culture into a positive and fair learning culture within dental settings.

With the ever-increasing use of social media and informal sources, the indemnity working group agreed there was a need for a consensus statement encouraging individuals to seek advice from the correct source. As a result, this consensus statement was created with the input and support of various indemnity providers.

Acknowledgments

Jason Wong – Office of the Chief Dental Officer

Bryan Harvey – Dental Defence Union

Gary Monaghan – Professional Dental Indemnity

Len De Cruz – British Dental Association Indemnity

Lesley Harrison – Dental Protection

Stephen Henderson – Medical & Dental Defence Union of Scotland

Tom Hester – Densura

Tom Chaston – All Med Pro

Indemnity Consensus Statement

It is inevitable that, from time-to-time, errors will occur in clinical practice and patients may be avoidably harmed. Unfortunately, a blame culture has developed adding to the stress that dental professionals already feel. The best way to reduce the chances of errors being repeated is to encourage a culture where, instead of blaming the dental professional or team, a non-judgmental learning culture is developed. We support the move from a blame culture to a learning from events culture in clinical dental practice and we encourage the local and national regulators to take the same approach. Currently, some dental clinicians appear confused as to the best place to seek advice, whilst feeling that they are isolated and worried about the consequences of seeking advice. We are concerned that there appears to be too much reliance on social media forums as the first source of advice where dental professionals seek advice from well-intentioned colleagues, rather than contacting their own professional indemnity provider. The advice should come from an experienced adviser, who is knowledgeable of the dentolegal environment and competent to give appropriate advice. When an incident has occurred or advice is needed, it is recommended that the indemnity provider be contacted as soon as practicable. This is to ensure advice about the immediate management and the management of any subsequent claim or complaint can be obtained. With policies, a failure or delay in reporting incidents may impact upon the ability of the provider to assist, so we encourage dental professionals to check the terms of their policy. We, as individuals and representing the following organisations, confirm that there is no limit to the number of times you can call for advice, and the frequency of calls does not impact individual indemnity fees.