

British Dental Association Benevolent Fund

Advisory Council Meeting

10.30am, Saturday 24 April 2020

Meeting conducted via electronic means



NOTES OF THE ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

Present:

Ros Keeton (Chairman) (RK)	Molly Deykin (MD)
Laura Hannon (General Manager) (LH)	Allan Franklin (ARF)
Austin Banner (Vice-Chairman) (AJB)	Alexander Gormley (AG)
Chris Hayward (Treasurer) (CH)	Philip Henderson (PH)
William Creedon (WC)	Julie Kirkby (JK)
Peter Crooks (PC)	Stuart Robson (SR)
Susan Dare (Administrator) (SD)	

In attendance: 52 people were in attendance, including the staff and Trustees detailed above.

No Item

1. Welcome from the Chairman

RK gave a warm welcome to everyone attending the second Advisory Council meeting. She informed people of the protocol for virtual meetings, specifically that the meeting would be recorded with the exclusion of the breakout room discussions. She noted that the meeting has been scheduled to last for one hour with a 30 minute informal discussion at the end should people want to stay online.

RK informed the participants that the Advisory Council was set up to help the Trustees engage with a wider network of people from the dental industry. It was to provide an opportunity where individuals and organisations could contribute and be involved with the Charity. RK explained the format of the meeting and informed people that each breakout room had a Trustee who would be heading the meeting and taking notes. The meeting was specifically focused on how best to market to dental students.

2. Notes/ minutes from the last meeting

The notes were agreed with no comments or amendments.

3. Report from the General Manager

LH reported that she was aware there were those who were familiar to the Charity and some people that were new. Therefore, she gave an overview about who the organisation assists and went through the application process.

She gave a summary update on the typical types of grant support given out as follows:

- Housing i.e. rent/ mortgage (up to 3 months)
- Food/ essential bills/ general living costs
- Equipment (e.g. white goods, laptops, urgent home repairs)
- Returning to/ remaining in dentistry (e.g. indemnity, CPD, ARF)
- Relocation costs (e.g. deposit, rent in advance, van hire)
- Travel costs, school uniforms

She went on to inform the meeting about the additional help [other than financial aid] the Charity offers.

Health Assured

Since January 2020, the BDA Benevolent Fund has offered extra help towards the health and wellbeing of all dental students and dentists including counselling, legal information and bereavement support. This Assistance Programme in partnership with Health Assured is offered via a 24/7 telephone line service, online resources and an app. Further details are on the Charity's website.

'Wellbeing Support for the Dental Team'

LH and RK had collaborated with other dental charities and professionals put together a resource called 'Wellbeing support for the dental team' which was launched on 18 January 2021. It was created for all dental team members, including students and non-clinical roles. It outlines how to assess your own mental health and wellbeing and provides resources for self-care, including a range of organisations available for support. LH confirmed that 4,000 people had visited the site during the first month of January and encouraged everyone to take a look and share and promote amongst their colleagues.

Support given out in 2021 and key themes

LH highlighted that normally, 20% of the Charity's applications are made by students, but this had increased to just over 50% in 2021 to date. The universities of Belfast, Dundee and Aberdeen made up the highest number of applications but they came from all across the UK. This was also reflected in the main reason for seeking support from the Charity which was selected as 'hardship at university'. This is thought to be for a few reasons; a knock-on effect of the pandemic is that some families had a reduced income and also the hospitality industries being closed and so students were unable to work part-time. Some university's had extended their courses by a few months or a year; and although some students were getting a top-up grant this still didn't cover all their living costs particularly for international students.

LH outlined some new projects the Charity was working on:

Research proposal – dental student welfare

The feedback from the first Advisory Council, together with a draft proposal from LH,

recommended that the Charity looked into more evidence based giving and so it was suggested that a research study could be developed to look into the welfare needs of dental students as this was not information already available.

The Charity has commissioned a research company called Ecorys, to look at the welfare needs of students. This will be achieved by way of an online survey and will be launched in September/October. A report will be published and the findings will be sent out towards the end of the year.

The aims of the research project are:

- To learn more about the welfare needs of dental students.
- To make students aware of the Charity.

She asked the meeting to help the Charity by organising, promoting and sharing the survey through the universities, student bodies and associations, groups and committees and on social media to ensure it's as successful as it can be.

Lectures/ webinars for dental students

The Charity would like to offer the dental students in years 1-3 and then 4-5 in each university access to an online lectures/ webinars (1st instance) and in person lectures focusing on money management and financial literacy.

The aims were:

- To educate and promote good financial planning and money management skills
- To make students aware of the charity for the future

She asked the meeting to help the Charity by organising, promoting and sharing the webinars through the universities, student bodies and associations to ensure it's as successful as it can be.

Questions were taken on the presentation including whether applications coming from specific universities was due to awareness of the Charity or need. It was thought that this was likely to be a combination of the two. It was noted the GDC were currently carrying out target inspections on universities and said they were understanding of the students' difficulties.

4. Discussion

RK explained the next part of the agenda. People were divided up into 8 breakout groups with approx. 5 people in each group. The break out group had 20 minutes to discuss one topic - 'How can we best promote the charity to dental students?'

A Trustee was assigned to each group and was responsible for chairing the discussion and taking notes.

5. **Feedback and Q&A**

The Trustee from each group was not asked to feedback information in case of sensitive information, but they would produce a report to LH.

6. **Any other business**

RK said she hoped attendees would help the Charity by promoting and sharing the work of the organisation, specifically the survey to ensure its success.

RK thanked everyone for taking part and said that all comments would be considered and put into a report and taken to the Board of Trustees.

7. **Time and date of next meeting**

The date and time of the next Advisory Council meeting is tbc.

The meeting finished at 11.30am.