

Ed's letter



Our scheduled focus on DCP research planned for this September has begun early. I interviewed DCP Abigail Turner on her involvement in research for this month's issue of *BDJ Team*, and decided to make Abigail this month's cover star.

Abigail is a dental therapist and also Hygiene & Therapy Research Manager at the Dental Translational Clinical Research Unit, University of Leeds. In 2020 she won an award to support her research into oral health inequalities in underserved communities.

I asked Abigail whether she would encourage other DCPs to get involved with research and she said: 'I think it's fair to say that allied health professionals have been historically shut out of research, but this is changing rapidly. More and more there are incredible opportunities for DCPs, so I expect over the coming years our career options will massively expand. It can be intimidating to find these opportunities but I would encourage you to get in touch and network with people that interest you.'

Natalie Ofkants has been a dental nurse since the mid-80s, but has never stopped adding new 'strings to her bow'. In 2020 she was joint-top scorer in the BDA Radiography online course. It was very interesting to hear about Natalie's varied career to date.

If higher education is your goal but you don't have a clutch of suitable A-levels, you should definitely read *Year zero to clinical dental professional*. The University of Liverpool offers a unique, intensive access programme in conjunction with a further education college. This foundation year offers a different route to becoming a dentist or dental therapist. The insights of students who have been part of this career pathway are included in the article.

This month's CPD article evaluates sepsis in dentistry, and we also look at safe sharps management, social influencers in dentistry, considerations in the management of trans patients, and ask 'what is public health?'

BDJ Team will be taking a break in August - if you would like to contribute for the autumn issues I'd love to hear from you.

Kate

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