

The BDJ News section accepts items that include general news, latest research and diary events that interest our readers. Press releases or articles may be edited, and should include a colour photograph if possible.

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## GDC CALL FOR IDEAS ON DIRECT ACCESS

The General Dental Council (GDC) is considering allowing 'direct access' for patients to members of the dental team other than dentists and wants to hear views on the subject.

At the moment, both the *Standards* guidance and *Scope of practice* make it clear that every member of the dental team must work on the prescription of a dentist. The only exception to this is with clinical dental technicians, who are able to provide full dentures to patients who have no teeth without the need for a prescription.

The GDC is now considering whether to remove this requirement and to allow 'direct access' for all patients. This would mean that patients could see other members of the dental team without seeing a dentist first, for example a dental hygienist or therapist.

A Task and Finish Group will ensure that any decision made is based on robust evidence. The Group wants to hear from as many stakeholders as possible and a short 'call for ideas' questionnaire has been published on the GDC's website [www.gdc-uk.org](http://www.gdc-uk.org).

The Group has invited a number of key stakeholders to give evidence and has commissioned a literature review.

The results from the call for ideas will be analysed and considered by the Group at a meeting on 2 July 2012.

## DECIDUOUS TEETH USED TO BUILD PALACE

A two metre high crystal resin structure encrusted with human deciduous teeth is on display at the Science Museum in London until 28 June 2012.

'Palaces' is a unique art and science project created by Liverpool-based artist Gina Czarnecki in collaboration with stem cell scientist Sara Rankin. The milk teeth were donated by members of the public.

The possible uses for the stem cells found in deciduous teeth inspired Czarnecki to create the 'palace'.

'Teeth are very significant because they're the only thing that falls off your body when you're alive that's a sign of progress, not decay,' she said.



## DELEGATES FOCUS ON DENTO-LEGAL MATTERS

One hundred and fifty dentists and lawyers attended the first every Dento-legal Study Day organised by Dental Protection on 30 March 2012.

The Study Day was held at the Mermaid Theatre Conference Centre in Puddle Dock, the City of London.

In addition to cases of clinical negligence, the revelation that the General Dental Council (GDC) has allocated 1,200 hearing days in multiple venues for 2012 confirmed that the delegates' interest was well-founded. Members of the 50-strong team of dento-legal advisers already supporting Dental Protection were on hand to share their experiences.

The Dento-legal Study Day included presentations from experienced dentists and lawyers including Raj Rattan, who discussed the ethical dimension of dento-legal cases and how professional conduct can complicate the management of complaints and

claims; Anne Green, a barrister from Radcliffes Le Brasseur who described the crucial and central role of the GDC's Investigating Committee; and Melanie Rowles, Head of Claims Management for MPS, who described the law of negligence and explained how a 'breach of duty' is described.

Kevin Lewis, Director of Dental Protection, said: 'With the unprecedented case load currently being experienced in all three DPL offices, it is reassuring to see such a high-level interest from dental colleagues in this challenging area of dentistry.'