

PHOTO STORY



The 'King's Crown', a dental crown worn by Elvis Presley, is touring dental practices in the UK to raise awareness of mouth cancer. The crown was made for Elvis by his former dentist, Henry J. Weiss, and will be accompanied around 11 UK dental clinics by Elvis impersonators from April-June this year. Dentists at participating clinics will be providing free mouth cancer screenings, according to www.teethwise.co.uk.

SUPPORT THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST DFT SALARY CUT

Dental professionals are being urged to sign a petition opposing proposals to reduce the salary paid to dental foundation trainees (DFTs) by more than £2,000.

The petition, which warns of the practical implications for young dentists qualifying with increasing debts and calls for the proposal to be abandoned, has already attracted more than 6,000 signatures. It has been founded by British Dental Association (BDA) Students Committee Chair, Paul Blaylock, as part of a campaign that is also encouraging dental students to contact their Member of Parliament to make their concerns known.

Paul said: 'Students already face an increasingly challenging future, with escalating debts and a foreboding professional environment awaiting them upon graduation. Reducing the salary paid to DFTs will only make the situation more difficult. This proposal will, I'm sure, be viewed not just as an attack on those it will directly affect, but also on the wider, already-under-pressure dental community. It is important that we send a very clear signal that we will not stand for this cut. I encourage everyone in the profession to add their names to the petition.'

The salary cut proposal was first ventured as one of a number of efficiency savings being sought by NHS England at the start of April 2014. The BDA has condemned the move, saying that it is 'absolutely unacceptable'. Despite this, the Department of Health plans to go ahead with the cut and has set a deadline of the end of May for comments to be submitted.

The proposal means a salary cut of nearly 8% for those beginning dental foundation training in September this year. Ten thousand signatures are needed on the petition to elicit a formal response.

For more information visit www.bda.org/DFTPay. Sign the petition at <http://epetitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/64208>.

FEATURE

WHAT IS YOUR PLAN B?

Laura Pacey asked four eminent members of the dental profession what their career 'Plan B' would have been had they not gone into dentistry ... or if they had to leave tomorrow.

Damien Walmsley,
Professor of Restorative Dentistry at University of Birmingham Dental School and Scientific Advisor to the BDA



Plan B and my dream job would be a travel guide writer and photographer for Rough Guides or Lonely Planet. I always collect guidebooks of places I visit and keep a diary of my experiences. Additionally there is a constant stream of photographs that catalogue my travels wherever I am around the world. Recently, I learnt about someone who sold photographs he had taken during his travels and these funded his living expenses in each country he visited. Now that is a dream job to pursue!

John Milne,
Chair of the BDA General Dental Practice Committee



I still wonder what I'll do when I grow up! Dentistry was suggested to me after my A-levels and seemed like a good idea at the time. I've relished all the challenges both clinically and latterly politically and still love the job.

As a keen musician I harboured an illusion that I might make a living with my voice and

guitar – and still enjoy playing and singing today. I also very nearly decided to study law with the aim to become a barrister ... something about loving an argument ... in fact I could probably start an argument in an empty room.

So what would my Plan B have been? Law leading to politics I guess as I've always wanted to make a difference and come from a family with a strong tradition of public service. And if Plan B was needed now? Assuming world domination or prime minister were unavailable to me I'd think of some sort of advocacy role and if not, there's always busking!

Liz Kay,
Foundation Dean and Professor at Peninsula Dental School and Academic Director of Dental Public Health for NHS Devon, Plymouth and Torbay



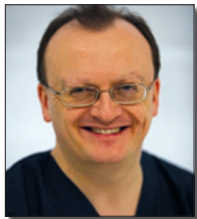
Well, my preferred Plan B would have been 'rock star' – but given that I can't sing, play an instrument (except classical piano) or dance, this plan was not really an option! The serious Plan B was law. Not only did I rather fancy the idea of myself in the pigtail wig and sweeping gown, but I think my love of sifting evidence, arguing my case and clear decision-making might have made me rather happy in that profession.

Had Plan B worked and had I been successful in it, I could have

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perhaps ended up as a judge, which I can't help thinking would be a fantastically interesting gallop out for one's analytical skills, moral attitudes and sense of fairness. But actually, all these attributes are needed in dentistry and I wouldn't change what I do for the world.

Chris Orr, Course Director for Advanced Dental Seminars and cosmetic dentist



This is actually a difficult question for me to answer, because there wasn't a 'Plan B' when I applied to university. When it came to choosing careers at school, I realised that I didn't want a career in medicine and that my poor mathematical skills ruled out engineering. With the school's standard recommendations ruled out, it was a difficult choice. I settled on dentistry with a thought that if I didn't like it, I'd find something different to do. Fortunately for me I loved it, so the need to find a Plan B never arose.

I enjoyed the intercalated year I spent learning about research and the science that underpins our profession. If dentistry had not worked out, I probably would have taken refuge in a lab somewhere and would now be tinkering away contentedly.

And now? If I left dentistry tomorrow, there are probably few things I could realistically do. Being an enthusiastic customer in pubs and restaurants does not qualify me to start running one of my own. I'd be tempted to try to make it as a professional photographer, as that is something I really enjoy when I have some spare time. However, when your hobby becomes your job, it somehow becomes a lot less fun.

Today I am lucky to have two jobs that I enjoy equally: my clinical practice and my work as an educator. Maybe teaching was my Plan B all along?

What is your plan B? What career would you have chosen if you hadn't chosen dentistry? Email the News Editor, Kate Quinlan, on k.quinlan@nature.com with details of what you are doing now and your plan B!

HIGH RISK KIDS SHOULD BRUSH WITH MORE FLUORIDE

The Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network (SIGN) has recommended that children who are at increased risk of developing dental caries should use toothpaste with higher concentrations of fluoride.

SIGN, part of Healthcare Improvement Scotland, recommends that young people up to the age of 18 years should be advised to use toothpastes in the range 1,000-1,500 parts per million fluoride (ppmF). Children who are at increased risk of developing caries, such as those from disadvantaged backgrounds, should be advised to use toothpaste with 1,500 ppmF up to the age of ten, and those from age 10 to 16, toothpaste with 2,800 ppmF.

Over-the-counter toothpaste is currently available in concentrations ranging from around 700 ppmF to 1,500 ppmF, while 2,800 ppmF and 5,000 ppmF toothpastes are available on prescription.

Derek Richards, Consultant in Dental Public Health and chair of the SIGN guideline group, said: 'While it is important that dental healthcare professionals use these guidelines to best meet the needs of specific patients, in simple terms, parents need to be reminded that twice daily brushing of their children's teeth with fluoride toothpaste plays a vital job in the fight against decay.'

To read SIGN's full guideline, visit www.sign.ac.uk/guidelines/fulltext/138/index.html.

WILLIAM DAVID STALLEY

William David Stalley (Bill), BDS Birmingham 1974, sadly passed away peacefully on 24 April 2014 with his wife, children and son-in-law by his side. He was an inspiration to all and will be sorely missed. Bill was a much loved husband to Jane, dad to Carla, Nicky and Rachael, grandfather to Keira, Sophie, Ellie and Rupert and brother to Pam. A service of thanksgiving was held at St Paul's Church, Warwick on 9 May, followed by cremation at Oakley Wood and then celebration of life at Hatton Park Village Hall.

Donations for ESH (Experience, Strength & Hope, Leamington Spa) can be sent care of J Deeley & Son, Funeral Directors, 322-4 Kenilworth Road, Balsall Common, CV7 7ER (tel: 01676 534237).