VICTORY FOR FOUNDATION DENTISTS

The Department of Health (DH) has abandoned their proposed plan to reduce the salaries of foundation dentists (FDs) by £2,000.

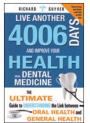
The news is a victory for the British Dental Association (BDA) and comes as a result of sustained campaigning and lobbying.

The DH confirmed its intention to back down in a letter to the BDA, after the BDA informed the DH of its intentions to pursue judicial review proceedings.

Mick Armstrong, Chair of the BDA Principal Executive Committee, said: 'We will continue to oppose attacks on pay and conditions whenever they are threatened. This decision means £2,000 in the pocket of every foundation dentist. That's £2 million saved for FDs whether they are BDA members or not. And it is testimony to what we can achieve, when we act together.'

The success follows the announcement that this year, every eligible UK graduate has secured a dental foundation training place, another issue on which the BDA has campaigned vigorously.

BOOK REVIEW



LIVE ANOTHER 4006 DAYS AND IMPROVE YOUR HEALTH WITH DENTAL MEDICINE

R. Guyver Advantage Media Group price £10.25; pp 194 ISBN 9781599324043

This book by Richard Guyver is really excellent. I know Richard to be an excellent and very caring general dental practitioner, but I had no idea that he had embarked on this huge project to produce such an interesting and thought provoking book.

I would urge both dentists and patients to read this book, as the whole concept of 'dental medicine' is of such fundamental and practical significance to all of us, as Richard so adeptly points out. Each chapter deals with a different disease system that can manifest in the mouth and how oral care can help to decrease their likelihood and indeed perhaps extend our lives. Hence the title '4,006 days', which is roughly equivalent to 11 years! You will need to read chapter 26 to find out how he arrives at this figure. This might be a little fanciful, but the fundamental issue is a sound one.

Richard starts by giving his thoughts on what the term 'dental medicine' really means and then talks about the mouth being a window to the body. This is obviously not a new concept, but it is a fundamental issue that we should be aware of when we are examining a patient. Richard then goes on chapter by chapter talking about well-established disease processes that might manifest in the mouth and

also how dental diseases such as periodontal disease can be a significant marker for other systemic diseases. The fact that the oral tissues can reflect specific systemic problems has been well known for many years but I think it is not something that we, as dentists, really pick up on.

One of the most impressive things about this book is the way it is referenced, there are numerous accurately annotated references from well established 'main stream' journals, both dental and medical; and cleverly these are marked on the relevant page. This alone really underpins the genuine academic significance of this book.

With a cynical hat on the reader might think that some of Richard's ideas are a little naive and sometimes he does rather stray into condemnation of dentists who might not agree with his concepts. However, I think it would be very difficult not to have great sympathy with his passion and I would encourage all dentists, particularly younger dentists, to read this book and make their own judgement.

C. EMERY

COMMUNICATION TOOL IMPROVES COOPERATION IN CHILDREN WITH AUTISM

A new communication tool has been created for dental professionals who work with children and young people with autism spectrum disorders or learning difficulties.

Sheffield Salaried Primary Dental Care Service worked with children, parents and software company Widgit to develop a four-page tool which uses graphic symbols alongside text to aid communication and understanding.

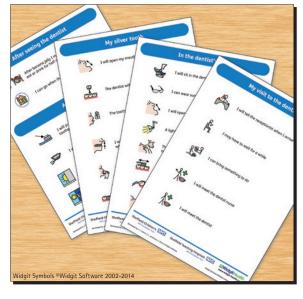
An evaluation of the communication tool in association with the University of Sheffield, published in the *Journal of Disability and Oral Health*, showed that children's cooperation with treatment improved.¹ Some children coped with treatment that they had previously found impossible; others started to communicate verbally with the dental team when they had never spoken in the dental surgery before. Use of the tool also improved the clinicians' confidence and job satisfaction.

The leaflets can be used to prepare a child in advance of the dental appointment, laminated to use in the surgery or given out to encourage oral care at home. Procedures supported include fluoride varnish application and placement of preformed metal crowns using the Hall Technique.

The idea for the project arose at Sheffield Children's Hospital where a symbol leaflet is available for use with children prior to general anaesthesia. Recognising the potential for use in community dentistry, paediatric dentist Jenny Harris and anaesthetist Judith

Short agreed to work together.

To download and print the leaflets, which are free of charge, visit http://www.widgit-health.com/ downloads/dental-procedures.htm. It is also possible to create your



own customised materials.

 Harris J C, Marshman Z, Short J A. Development and qualitative evaluation of a communication tool for children with autism spectrum disorders and other communication difficulties. J Disabil Oral Health 2014; 15: 33–39.