

Some of the changes to the BDJ in 2006 will be dramatic and, I hope, pertinent to the communication's climate as well as the demands of dentistry in the modern world.

Taking care ... again

This time last year I wrote an editorial at a time of great strife and tearing of hair in relation to the *BDJ*, which I entitled, *Taking care*.

The BDA's then financial difficulties (now happily in much better shape) had prompted a move to a greater partnership between the Association and this journal's publisher, Nature Publishing Group (NPG). This primarily involved the latter taking on more of the production of the journal than hitherto but was widely misinterpreted as the BDA having 'sold off' the *BDJ* as in the family silver. Clearly this was not the case and one of the purposes of my editorial was to offer such reassurance.

I also took the opportunity to reassure readers on a raft of other concerns. That the scientific rigour would not be diminished or lost; that the robust nature of the scientific papers would be upheld; the quality and value of the *BDJ* would be enhanced for all readers, authors, advertisers and members, and the synergy with the BDA's other regular publications strengthened. Additionally I promised you that I would be listening to your views, working with you and, most of all taking care of our prized publication.

In the spirit of a sort-of 12 monthly review, I would like to report back to you that I have earnestly tried to do all of these things this year. I have taken note of criticisms, made various changes, been thankful for kind and positive feedback and not shirked from stating my point of view when challenged. I believe that these moves have strengthened the journal and I take as one measure of this, among others, the number of letters that you are now writing. The first issue in January will have more letters pages than for many years previously and I believe this to be (with no evidence base!) a sign of greater reader engagement with matters raised, discussed and debated.

Despite the underlying uncertainties of the dental market, I am delighted to report that we have continued to increase our advertising this year, especially in *BDA*

News (and a huge thank you to Graeme Jackson and those who support him, for this), welcoming not only our warmly appreciated regulars but also new companies and organisations who have not previously advertised with us. I am similarly pleased to report that they have been variously amazed and delighted with the responses they have received from readers.

Not one scrap of this should be interpreted as self-congratulatory or complacency. Nor as having been my work alone. There is a brilliant team engaged on the *BDJ* and the other BDA publications (*BDA News*, *Vital*, *Launchpad* and *Evidence Based Dentistry*) both at NPG and at the BDA itself. We have some very exciting developments planned for 2006, not least of which will be a brand new cover series starting immediately in January to celebrate the remarkable milestone of the 200th volume of the *BDJ*. So, if some of the changes this year have been subtle and gradual, some in 2006 will be more dramatic and, I hope, pertinent to the communication's climate as well as the demands of dentistry in the modern world. More of these developments as we go along.

Of course, it is also a time of year for crystal ball gazing. I'm not going to be drawn just yet on the detail of the impending new NHS contract for dentistry, partly because much detail has still yet to be made apparent but what is clear is that 2006 will be a year of great uncertainty. I therefore give you a pledge of some certainty in a world of insecurity, that by this time next year, the *BDJ* will still be here because you have not just me but a team of great people who are all, yes, you've guessed it 'taking care'.

I wish each of you a Merry Christmas and Holiday Season as well as a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year. I offer the reassurance that I will be listening to you again in 2006, while continuing to work with you and for you.

Stephen Hancocks OBE, Editor in Chief
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