

Ed's letter

Welcome to the June issue of *BDJ Team*! This is the fourth issue of *BDJ Team*, and so far I've only had one letter! Get scribbling (well, typing) DCPs, as I'd love to hear from you. To kick things off, here is letter number one on a very important topic.

Dear Kate, I have recently become aware of the removal of Occupational Health facilities for dental staff in our area, meaning that we now have to source these facilities privately at a cost to the practice. I feel utterly disgusted at this decision, which I might add has not been implemented across the country. Should we just sit back while yet another unfair system is imposed on us without any information or consultation with those affected? Why are certain areas targeted and others not? In light of this, and not to mention the huge implications this could have for dental staff as far as their health is concerned, I have created a petition on the government website and would really like the dental profession to stand up to this decision and fight it. I would like to remind everybody of a previous letter published in Vital: www.nature.com/vital/journal/v11/n1/full/vital1743.html and also to direct readers to my petition in the hope that we can spread the word: <http://epetitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/65932>.

I think that this action is yet another indication of the increasing lack of understanding of the current state of UK dentistry and the growing problems and pressures faced by dental professionals. Are we really that insignificant that now we're not important enough to be protected while treating patients? With ever rising costs and ever decreasing funds, it's time we stood up to these decisions. As a profession we pay for professional registration, membership to professional organisations, indemnity insurance, CPD and now we will be required to pay privately to receive occupational health services, which are sure to be compromised when people need to be seen urgently. Why aren't UK dental staff entitled to fair treatment and protection just the same as other medical professionals? Time to take action and find our voices? I think so.

Jenny Newbrook, Practice Manager, Crewe

If you have something on your mind to do with dentistry in general or something you have read in *BDJ Team*, drop me an email at bdjteam@nature.com.

Kate

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Have Occupational Health facilities for dental staff been removed in your area?

CPD:
ONE HOUR

The name's bond, good bond. p 9

The five P's of medical emergencies p 13

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