



## President's column

### **Jane Dalgarno BSc, BADN President**

Life as BADN President continues to be busy but enjoyable. I have enjoyed meeting many of you at various events, over recent months, and look forward to welcoming a number of you to the National Dental Nursing Conference in Blackpool, on 28-29 October 2016. Registration for conference is now open and promises to be an interesting and thought-provoking programme. Further information on conference and how to register can be found at: [www.badn.org.uk](http://www.badn.org.uk).

It gave me great pleasure to have presented Pam Daley with the Outstanding Contribution to Dental Nursing Award at this year's BDA Honours and Awards Dinner. Again, many congratulations Pam.

I was delighted that the Association was invited to support the British Society of Periodontology in their Gum Awareness campaign in May and show how dental nurses can work actively with patients to reduce the risks associated with periodontal diseases on both oral and general health.

It was with interest I attended the British Society of Paediatric Dentistry (BSPD) Stakeholders Day to learn more about the society's campaign to ensure all communities in the UK have timely

access to a paediatric dental specialist, including the availability of urgent dental care services. It was evident that the Society, along with the dental profession, is key in securing an equitable dental service for one of the most vulnerable groups in society.

I appreciated the opportunity in June to have met with Sara Hurley, Chief Dental Officer, to discuss how the Association can support what is happening nationally in dental nursing. I am delighted that NHS England have a number of opportunities for dental nurses in the form of clinical fellows for those individuals wishing to expand their portfolios and have a direct influence into the dental profession.

Likewise, I attended a meeting with the GDC to discuss the proposed changes to healthcare regulation and its possible impact on the dental nursing profession. It was evident that the GDC needs to continue to work collaboratively with other regulatory bodies to ensure an efficient and effective reform system.

Finally, I was delighted to have met a number of dental nurses working within the armed forces at their recent conference. It was great meeting you and I look forward to working with you in the future.

## Do you have appropriate indemnity?

As the deadline for dental care professionals (DCPs) to renew their registration with the General Dental Council (GDC) approached at the end of July, the Dental Defence Union (DDU) reminded DCPs that it is their responsibility to ensure they have access to indemnity in their own right or that appropriate arrangements are in place via their employer.

Following a legal change, the GDC changed its rules in November 2015, meaning all dental professionals applying to register or renew their registration will need to tell the GDC they have indemnity arrangements in place for their scope of practice, or will have by the time they start practising.

John Makin, Head of the DDU, said: 'We have received a number of queries, particularly from dental nurses, about whether the indemnity they have in place meets the GDC's new requirements. Our advice is to check with your employer if you are not sure about what indemnity arrangements you have in place in the first instance.'

The GDC has published some Frequently Asked Questions about indemnity at <http://www.gdc-uk.org/dentalprofessionals/standards/pages/indemnity.aspx>.

## End of NHS bursary undermines the dental team

The British Dental Association (BDA) has criticised government plans to strip dental hygiene and dental therapy students of the NHS bursary.

Many student dental therapists, hygienists, nurses, midwives and other Allied Health Professionals are funded through the scheme, which includes support towards living costs and students' tuition fees. Full time students also qualify for a £1,000 non means tested maintenance grant. This funding system is set to be replaced by full student loans from September 2017.

The BDA has said the move would significantly increase debt levels, and deter students from less privileged backgrounds or those undertaking second degrees. It has also cautioned that the reforms could put many dental hygiene and therapy course

providers under threat of closure, and would not allow for sufficient workforce planning - threatening the delivery of the *NHS Five Year Forward View*.

The changes proposed by the Government for 2017-18 would leave the average student with a maintenance loan of £7,263 and a tuition fee loan of £9,000 - with the BDA estimating a likely increase of over £11,000 in average costs to each student per academic year. Research has estimated that any savings generated by axing the bursary would be more than wiped out by an increase in spending on agency staff and overseas recruitment costs.

The BDA recently joined with leaders from 19 other health care trade unions, charities and professional colleges to call on the Government to halt the plans to reform student funding. At present over 2,500 dental

therapists and over 6,500 hygienists are registered with the General Dental Council. It is widely anticipated these reforms will be extended to student medics and dentists.

Paul Blaylock, Chair of the BDA's Students Committee, said: 'Dental hygienists and therapists are instrumental in delivering treatment, prevention and healthcare education to patients. The Government says prevention and public health require a "radical upgrade", yet this cut is an entirely retrograde step, that would deliver no savings and simply serve to undermine dental teams.'

