We shall overcome!

Inspiring speakers at The National Dental Nursing Conference (NDNC) in 2018 made the annual event a memorable 36 hours. **Pam Swain**, the British Association of Dental Nurses Chief Executive, shares their stories.

Alcohol addiction, sepsis and oral cancer are concerns that can arise in any dental practice and dental teams need to be prepared to advise and signpost patients. Delegates to the NDNC heard inspiring stories on all these topics over the course of the 36 hour conference in Blackpool.

The 2018 NDNC was opened by Deputy Chief Dental Officer Eric Rooney, who updated delegates on the activities and future plans of the Office of the Chief Dental Officer. Eric was followed by Edmund Proffitt, Chief Exec of the British Dental Industry Association, who briefly outlined the role of the British Dental Industry Association and explained the regulatory framework governing the manufacture and supply of dental equipment. He then looked at the dangers arising from the purchase and use

of non-compliant dental devices and ways to avoid these, as well as explaining the dental industry's award-winning campaign raising awareness of counterfeit dental devices.

From Cancer to the Palace in Six Years

The next item on the programme was Chris Curtis, of The Swallows head and neck cancer charity, who recounted his personal journey from the day he found out he had oral cancer, to being recognised for his campaigning work on behalf of cancer patients. Friday's lecture

programme finished with Julia Csikar's presentation

Far left: Edmund Proffitt. Above: Julia Csikar. Left: Chris Curtis.

diagnosis, and treatment of sepsis amongst health care professionals and has since joined the UK Sepsis Trust, implementing projects nationwide to raise the profile of sepsis. Melissa's very personal and moving presentation was extremely emotional, moving several delegates to tears.

Pride in Practice

Andrew Gilliver is part of LGBT Foundation's Pride in Practice team which offers primary care practices access to training around LGBT inclusion, support around gender identity, trans status and sexual orientation monitoring and a suite of accessible resources.

Pride in Practice is supported by The British Dental Association and funded by Greater Manchester Public Health & Development Service and NHS England.

Dental Nursing History

By appreciating the historical context of dentistry, dental nurses are able to develop a clearer picture of why they are, as a profession, where they are today. This presentation, by Debbie Reed of the University of Kent, demonstrated that establishing a historical context is an important part of dental nursing professional evolution. Debbie used characters and memories from the past to create a

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supporting alcohol reduction conversations - asking patients about their alcohol consumption does not need to be cumbersome or embarrassing for the dental team or patients, she said. Her presentation aimed to give delegates the skills and confidence to have a structured brief interaction on alcohol consumption, using the AUDIT-C identification tool - an easy and effective way to assess a patient's alcohol consumption, offer a course of action where appropriate: brief advice and/or onward signposting.

Together We Can Beat Sepsis

In December 2014, Melissa Mead lost her one year old son William to sepsis - a condition she hadn't, at that point, ever heard of. His death was the result of failings in his care but the most significant was the NHS's response and approach to sepsis which was found to be inadequate. Melissa felt compelled to campaign for better recognition,

Top left: Andrew Gilliver.
Above: Debbie Reed.
Left: Melissa Mead.

Andrew explained that LGBT communities include people of different genders, sexual orientations and come from all backgrounds.

Dental care providers may not be aware of the importance of acknowledging that they have patients who are lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT). Patients who identify as LGBT may have complex health needs and a dental care provider who knows that a patient is LGBT is better informed about their patient.

story that links matters of modern-day professional status, leadership, team-working and positioning with historical events from the late 1800s and early 1900s.

Through the analysis of selected historical events, delegates gained a richer understanding of the background and context in which dental nurses currently work, as well as the challenges that have been faced

by dental nurses in the past, many of which remain prevalent today.

John Cullinane, Head of Fitness to Practice Case Progression at the GDC, detailed the drivers for change and the recent reforms to CPD, introduced as Enhanced CPD from 1 August 2018. He also shared details of the end-to-end review of Fitness to Practise and the reasons for change, as well as further details of the Shifting the Balance reforms, particularly how the GDC plans to promote professionalism across UK dentistry.

The conference began with a Welcome Lunch, at which new BADN members and first time conference attendees were invited to sit with President Hazel Coey and culminated with an informal dinner.

Emergency dental care in Blackpool

Blackpool provided the venue for the National Dental Nurse Conference.

The town has the worst statistics in the country for deprivation, drug addiction and alcoholism and dental care is often at the bottom of the list for vulnerable people. The conference was an opportunity to update delegates on the annual oral health day led by Horizon, a local charity.

Horizon's Carole Houston told delegates about their work. Karl Gippert and Adrian Oddy are shining examples of recovery from substance abuse. Both Karl and Adrian have a long history of heroin addiction and the lifestyle that goes with the territory, but they have turned their lives around as a result of engaging with services and working towards a life worth living. Karl and Adi spoke openly about how addiction affected their teeth and the detrimental effect this had on their lives.

In the week after the conference, staff from the British Association of Dental Nurses (BADN), joined up with Horizon, Dentaaid, and the Oral Health Foundation (OHF) to bring emergency dental care to Blackpool's most needy. The visit of the mobile dental surgery was funded by Horizon and Blackpool Council and staffed by Dentaaid volunteer dental team, volunteer BADN dental nurses and Horizon volunteers with admin support from Janet Goodwin, Past President of the Oral Health Foundation, and Pam Swain, Chief Exec of BADN.

Over the course of the day, the team treated over 30 patients and performed 45 emergency treatments on people who

would have otherwise continued to live in daily pain. Every person who came along on the day received a bag containing information leaflets, toothbrush, alcohol-free mouth wash and a variety of toothpastes courtesy of the Oral Health Foundation who aim to raise awareness of dental self-care.

'We are delighted to support this much needed initiative' said Pam Swain 'and I am so pleased that a number of BADN members offered their services. It is an

excellent way for dental nurses to build up their knowledge of extreme dental cases.'

Commented Janet Goodwin, 'I was especially pleased to have been able to offer oral health education to many of the patients, and to distribute self-care information to everybody who came along. Dental care won't be at the top of the list for people who are street homeless or dealing with addiction issues, but many took the first step today.'

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Carole Houston, PR Lead for Horizon, with volunteers Karl Gippert and Adrian Oddy

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