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NEW YEAR, NEW BEGINNINGS

On behalf of everyone at *BDJ Student* and the British Dental Association, welcome to 2022! We wish you all a happy and prosperous New Year.

The last two years have been ever-so-tumultuous for the dental profession. For many, the very fabric of their livelihoods has changed – some irreparably – and like a stone dropping in the water, the ripple effect spreads far.

For you, our members, we know you've been affected too. Uncertainty, disruption, concerns – we've heard them all, we've listened and fought your corner. Speaking from personal experience, there's nothing worse than uncertainty, and having spoken to students, I know there's plenty of it about. And yet, like the prevailing winds of the nation as I write today, there's cautious optimism abound. Omicron may have appeared like it could have been the straw that broke the camel's back, but once again we saw the entire profession show its resilience in the face of adversity.

For some of you, you've known nothing but lectures over *Zoom*, social distancing measures, significant levels of PPE and fallow time. This isn't dentistry as I know it, but it's oddly assuring to remember things are only going to improve; for you, the trajectory is up.

For many of you, it's a been a long-haul flight full of turbulence and little smooth sailing. If anything, it's reminiscent of the ultra-long haul 'Project Sunrise' initiative, launched by



behind us. It's not a universally-acknowledged feeling – there are periods of turbulence ahead, but maybe these aren't going to mirror those at the beginning of the journey you've been on. The New Year has offered

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Qantas pre-pandemic, where flights would take off from the east coast of Australia and fly to London direct. Besides the 21 hours of flying time, there was concern that passengers would witness two sunrises – hence the name – and affect their body clock significantly. Perhaps there are parallels with what we've all been through. The darkness of two lockdowns gave way to two sunrises, which certainly affected the profession.

And maybe, just maybe, the worst is

some hope of a brighter future, and it is one that will bring a new beginning for each of you, be it moving through the year groups, developing your clinical, professional and inter-personal skills, or whether it's graduating, and putting those aforementioned skills to the test.

To help and aid that development, you'll find a regular flow of content from *BDJ Student*, with this issue focusing on clinical skills in our 'how to' guides. That's the beauty of being online-only – we can provide that support during 12 months of the year, not the three months we used to meet. Be sure to visit www.nature.com/bdjstudent on a monthly basis to access your usual blend of content designed to aid your professional development, give you better knowledge of career paths available and clinical insight.

Until next time!

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