

## EDITORIAL

## PASSING THE BATON



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My position of student editor began during the COVID-19 pandemic as *BDJ Student* transitioned to an electronic resource. This allowed continuation in dental development as it widened access for students, despite the restrictions on the country. It has been a pleasure to witness the growth of the journal over the last two years, and the contribution towards dental students' educational development.

A recent study about the impact of the 2020 pandemic concluded that the 'abrupt changes in teaching modalities had significant impact on final year dental students' self-confidence'.<sup>1</sup> *BDJ Student* came to the rescue with clinical articles about aetiology and management of conditions from a general dental practitioner's (GDP) perspective. This helped ensure that students understand the basic knowledge and roles of a GDP. In turn, this will improve recent graduates' confidence and benefit patient care.

Another consequence of the COVID-19 is the excessive strain on the NHS. The increase in demand and reduced funding has led to a crisis in NHS dentistry. The British Dental Association (BDA) reported that 45% of dentists have reduced their NHS commitment since the onset of the pandemic.<sup>2</sup>

With the cost-of-living crisis upon the public, NHS dentistry is needed more than ever. Hopefully, young graduates will be inspired by the 'day in the life of...' career features published by *BDJ Student*. This may increase desire towards NHS dentistry posts, through the insight of the multiple different career pathways. Small steps may lead to big changes!

The BDA Library eBook review series by Peter Folly is a useful learning resource for students. It consists of case-based and diagnostics approach covering a range of specialities which provide exposure beyond the dental school syllabus. This will guide students towards independent learning all available through a mouse click.

The days of waiting for physical copies to be available at university libraries are behind us, with no longer a limitation of the duration to utilise the material. The COVID-19 era has been disadvantageous to many. However, *BDJ Student* digitalising and publishing this resource, has allowed easy access to widening knowledge for students.

Dentistry has adapted and overcome numerous obstacles over the last two years and *BDJ Student* has accompanied it. A survey by NexHealth showed that the dental profession is expected to evolve by 10% in the next decade.<sup>3</sup> This is to be driven by the increased use of technology. Not only to access more patients but also to help improve their treatment choices and

preventative knowledge of dental disease. Additionally, digital dentistry is on the rise, and it is predicted that the innovations for treatment will become widespread in practices. It is exciting to see how the new year will unfold and the changes the dental field will undergo.

I have thoroughly enjoyed working alongside David and will be passing the baton to the next student editor. I look forward to seeing the development of *BDJ Student* and will certainly continue using it as a resource for my own progress.

## References

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