

Civility and team harmony key to mental wellbeing of dental professionals

In a Dental Protection survey of over 1,300 dental professionals in the UK, three in ten (30%) say they have seen or experienced more disrespectful behaviour from colleagues recently than during the pandemic, with over a third (35%) seeing or experiencing this in the last twelve months.

In addition, 65% of those who have seen or experienced disrespectful behaviour from colleagues say it has had a significant or moderate impact on their mental wellbeing.

Dr Raj Rattan, Dental Director at Dental Protection said: 'We know that for any team to succeed, each member must feel valued, respected and supported. Maintaining team harmony in the workplace is the key to organisational success and dentistry is no exception.'

'During challenging times, the need for civility and respect is even greater. A difficult day can feel much worse if



interactions with colleagues are strained, or if you feel you have been treated disrespectfully.

'Almost two thirds of Dental Protection members who have experienced disrespectful or discourteous behaviour from colleagues say

it has impacted on their mental wellbeing, which shows how important it is to maintain a culture of civility.

'When mental wellbeing is poor it is concerning for the individual and can impact adversely on the patient relationship. It can also have a destructive effect on patient care and result in increased absenteeism from work. In some cases, it can drive individuals to contemplate a future outside the dental profession altogether.

'I would encourage dental professionals to look at the 'Civility Saves Lives' campaign. While, as the name suggests, it is more aimed at the medical community, its key principles apply to all working in healthcare – namely that when we are in a team which values and respects us, the benefits impact us and our patients. Importantly, it also reminds us that incivility encompasses a range of behaviours such as rudeness, verbal abuse and bullying. We should also be mindful of cyber-incivility which violates our ethical duty to maintain mutual respect within the team.'