

# Ed's letter



The peculiar year that has been 2020 is drawing to a close and no doubt you are looking forward to and making plans for 2021 and beyond. Hopefully, this time next year we will all be enjoying the freedoms and flexibility that were our 'normal' before the pandemic. Will you also be working towards a new career goal or stepping stone to your next move?

The final issue of *BDJ Team* this year is focused on higher education for dental care professionals (DCPs). We meet individuals just starting a degree, studying to become dental hygienists, dental therapists, or dentists, and dental nurses taking their education to a new level. We also find out how you can improve and add to your skills to become a tutor within dentistry.

Alongside these inspirational stories, we examine how higher education courses have adapted to the restrictions imposed upon us due to COVID-19.

Higher education did not come to a halt this year despite the lockdowns. In Liverpool, the first cohort of students on the new Centennial Curriculum, a fully integrated way of learning for BDS Dental Surgery and BSc Dental Therapy students, switched to online learning when students returned from the Easter break. The conditions meant that a wealth of new resources have been created, used and enjoyed. Read more in my interview with programme directors Dr Laura Gartshore and Jo Bowles.

In an article collaboratively written by students studying to become dental therapists at UCLH NHS Trust, the experiences of learning during the pandemic are very positive: 'Our virtual platform kept us engaged and motivated while we were away from our usual learning environment, and with determination to succeed, we used our new online space to share our knowledge and ideas.'

If you're interested in pursuing a degree or exploring the requirements needed to follow a certain pathway, I have included a list of courses and links to the relevant institutions across the UK, as a starting point.

What are your plans for next year? If you would like to share your story with *BDJ Team* readers in 2021, please do contact me. In the meantime, have a happy and healthy festive season and New Year.

Kate

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