

BADN DISCUSSES DENTAL NURSE RECRUITMENT CRISIS WITH DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE

On 9 February the British Association of Dental Nurses (BADN) met representatives of the Department of Health & Social Care (DHSC) to discuss the recently launched Dental Recovery Plan.¹

BADN's Honorary President, Joan Hatchard, and Chief Exec Pam Swain met with DHSC officials to discuss BADN's concerns that the Plan did not adequately address the current recruitment and retention crisis in dental nursing.

Mrs Hatchard explained fully to the DHSC representatives that increasing the number of clinicians, introducing dental vans and oral health programmes and various other schemes outlined in the Plan, just would not be possible without also increasing the number of dental nurses in the NHS. This involves not only provision for training new dental nurses, but also

measures to keep dental nurses in the profession; the recent survey by Dr Debbie Reed showed that many dental nurses were disillusioned by low pay, lack of career development and lack of support and recognition by employers, and were leaving the profession.²

Mrs Hatchard outlined various initial steps towards remedying this: increasing dental nurse salaries to a realistic level for registered healthcare professionals, tax relief on CPD costs for employees, recognition by the NHS of those dental nurses working in NHS practices giving them access to the benefits enjoyed by NHS staff (salary scales, access to the NHS pension scheme, NHS ID) – leading to a culture change in dentistry whereby dental nurses are recognised as valued members of the dental team and supported by employers.

DHSC officials have agreed to speak at a forthcoming BADN Coffee CatchUp on the Dental Recovery Plan and how it affects dental nurses. More information will be released in due course inviting dental nurses to register for the Coffee CatchUp.

References

1. Department of Health and Social Care, NHS England. Our plan to recover and reform NHS dentistry. 7 February 2024. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/our-plan-to-recover-and-reform-nhs-dentistry> (accessed March 2024).
2. Reed D. Dental nurse retention in the UK. *BDJ Team* 2024; **10**: 45–47. Available at: <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41407-023-1995-y> (accessed March 2024).



BADN ATTEND NORTH OF ENGLAND SHOW

Presidential column by BADN Honorary President **Joan Hatchard** RDN LCGI FBADN FAETC

I've been up north this weekend – to visit the BADN offices in Thornton-Cleveleys, and to attend the North of England Dental Show in Manchester.

I was delighted to present Shirley Lyons, our Membership Administrator and bookkeeper, with a gift from members of the Executive Committee, Panel of Reps, and staff to celebrate Shirley's 25 years with BADN! Before her BADN career, Shirley was a trainer for a well known off licence company, and is a definite oenophile – so we presented her with a crystal ship's decanter and four wine glasses, and a sommelier set with the BADN logo. Having been Finance Officer/Treasurer in the past, I have worked

closely with Shirley and – on behalf of the Exec and members – thank her for all her hard work on behalf of the Association and dental nurses over the last quarter of a century!

I also attended the North of England Show in Manchester on Saturday, where BADN had a stand and several speakers on the Dental Nurse Theatre programme. BADN's Eszter Janusek opened the programme with 'The Spirit of the Dental Nurse – Remain or Evolve, Mindset is Everything'; then Pam Swain, our Chief Exec, spoke about the BADN Menopause Policy and how practices can (and why they should!) support menopausal employees. BADN President-elect Preetee Hylton spoke in the afternoon on 'Dental Nursing and Beyond: Paving your Career Pathway'; and the programme ended with BADN member Shannon Wilkes speaking about her own personal journey and struggle with dystonia.

This was the first time I had visited this particular Show and – apart from (certainly from an exhibitor's perspective) somewhat lackadaisical organisation – I was very impressed! We were certainly very busy at the BADN stand and signed up around a dozen new members and quite a few renewals.



BADN stand

All the new members took away our Refer A Colleague cards, so hopefully they will explain the benefits of joining BADN, the dental nurses' professional association and independent trade union, to their colleagues! Which, of course, means that both get a £5 credit in their BADN account!

BADN will be at Dental Showcase at ExCeL later this month, the Dentistry Show at the NEC in early May, and the Scottish Dental Show at Braehead at the end of May. Come along and say hello!



Shirley with one of her gifts