the article fails to report is that articaine outsold lidocaine in the UK for the first time in 2019.¹ This phenomenon reflects the increasing popularity of articaine buccal infiltration over inferior alveolar nerve block for anaesthesia of mandibular teeth, where evidence demonstrates a similar efficacy for both.² Articaine buccal infiltration may now be the gold standard, although we should not lose the inferior alveolar nerve block from our armamentarium, as combination of techniques still produces the highest success rates for mandibular molars.³

I. Corbett, Newcastle upon Tyne, UK

References

1. Septodont UK. Personal Communication. Maidstone, Kent, 2019.
2. Corbett I P, Kanaa M D, Whitworth J M, Meechan J G. Articaine infiltration for anesthesia of mandibular first molars. *J Endod* 2008; **34**: 514-518.
3. Kanaa M D, Whitworth J M, Corbett I P, Meechan J G. Articaine buccal infiltration enhances the effectiveness of lidocaine inferior alveolar nerve block. *Int Endod J* 2009; **42**: 238-246.
<https://doi.org/10.1038/s41415-021-3201-y>

NHS dentistry

Going private

Sir, the results of the BDA's recent survey about the profession's COVID-influenced morale made for dismal reading.¹ Far too many of those working under the NHS are fed up with trying to provide a professional service while having hand-cuffs applied to their practices. This has caused about 35% to consider 'going private' and producing a rash of emails from companies offering 'NHS conversion' to their capitation schemes. Substituting one third party, the NHS, for another one, a capitation scheme, does not turn one into a private dentist. Solicitors

and cleaners charge an hourly rate for their services and one is only truly a private dentist when one does the same, with no third parties being involved.

Having taken that leap of faith, when the 1990 NHS contract was imposed on us, I can assure you that the subsequent path was not always easy but it has been both fulfilling and rewarding. I urge my colleagues who are considering 'going private' to have faith in their professional acumen and to stand on their own feet.

C. Marks, Southampton, UK

Reference

1. British Dental Association. Dentists warn of exodus from service, as access crisis deepens with 30m appointments missed. 25 May 2021. Available at: <https://www.bda.org/news-centre/press-releases/Pages/Dentists-warn-of-exodus-from-service-as-access-crisis-deepens-with-30m-appointments-missed.aspx> (accessed 13 June 2021).
<https://doi.org/10.1038/s41415-021-3202-x>