

A dentist's diary: February

By Sarveen Mann, Principal at The Fulham Dentist



This year for me started with a shower of shenanigans – patient cancellations, sick staff, delayed deliveries, equipment hiccups and a valued member handing their notice in. And that was just the first day back at work.

Out of all that, it was the resignation that was the most difficult to deal with. Especially as it was a much-loved member of the team.

Now, some principals have a thick skin, some get upset, some get angry, some take it personally.

I've learnt to take it in my stride. My staff's mental and physical health are far more important than the practice monthly rota and income. It's just work. They have a life outside of it. So do I apparently, but less of one as I chose to be a principal.

I have had some amazing people come and go: nurses, receptionists, clinicians, but when I hear those dreaded words, 'Can I have a word in private please?' my heart sinks and I know what's coming. It's usually due to personal circumstances and not something I have any control over so I smile,

wish them well and accept their resignation gracefully.

Inside I might be on the floor clinging to their dental scrub bottoms and ugly crying, but they don't need to see that for real. No one does. In return for my understanding and exterior calm, I am rewarded with staff that keep in touch no matter where they go. Always liking my social media posts, even the boring ones, writing lovely messages, sending pictures of themselves and their loved ones, involving me in their lives and asking about mine.

Each member of staff has brought something new to the practice. I have learnt something from literally every single person who has ever worked with me, professionally and personally, good and bad. I feel like I've created a little work family and although many have flown the nest they always check back 'home'. Yes I'm a sentimental fool and I don't care who knows it.

So it saddens me when I hear about staff being treated badly by unscrupulous principals. Something I put on my Twitter feed recently was a young overseas dentist's harrowing

account of being bullied and humiliated by a certain corporate CEO. Cheap labour to increase profits must be the most stressful way to run a practice. Unhappy staff leads to a practice that does not run smoothly which leads to patient dissatisfaction which can result in more complaints which means higher stress levels for the principal. (There's a formula in there somewhere!)

Why would anyone think this is a good way to run or grow a business?

I just want to go home at the end of the day knowing that my staff are happy and that work is not causing unnecessary stress in their lives. We probably spend more time with our staff than we do with our own family during the course of a week. We share stories, discover each other's strong points and vulnerabilities, help each other through the sad times and celebrate the good times.

Happy staff – happy practice – happy patients – equals a very happy principal. Another formula right there.

CONFERENCE REPORT

Inaugural European Society of Endodontology meeting to develop S3-Level Clinical Practice Guidelines for the treatment of pulpal and apical diseases

By B. F. A. Quinn,¹ B. S. Chong² and H. F. Duncan³

The European Society of Endodontology (ESE), a non-profit organisation, supports 36 national endodontic societies in 33 countries. ESE is committed to developing new S3-Level Clinical Practice Guidelines for the treatment of pulpal and apical diseases, which will benefit clinicians, patients and other relevant stakeholders.

Following two years of preparatory work, the inaugural ESE S3-Level Clinical Guidelines summit took place in Olisippo Oriente Hotel, Lisbon, Portugal, from 29 January to 1 February 2023.

A total of 53 delegates consisting of guideline leads, working group leads, senior academics and endodontists plus external stakeholders, including student and



patient representatives, attended the summit. Over three intensive days, delegates worked diligently to finalise and achieve consensus on the evidence-based recommendations, which will be incorporated into the final guidelines

document, expected to be published later this year. This is an exciting and impactful project which will be used globally to develop both undergraduate and postgraduate curricula and training guidelines.

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