

VULNERABLE STUDENTS PREYED UPON

The British Dental Association (BDA) has condemned a Department of Health (DH) announcement that the salary of dental foundation trainees is to be reduced in the future.

The intention to reduce the salary for those undertaking dental foundation training has been announced as one of a number of areas in which the Department is intending to seek efficiency savings this year.

Dr Mick Armstrong, Chair of the BDA's Principal Executive Committee, said: 'The stated proposal to reduce the salary paid to dental foundation trainees will sound alarm bells across the profession. Targeting those at the start of their careers, many of whom will have graduated with significant levels of debt, will appear to many as an attempt to prey on the most vulnerable members of the profession. We will oppose such an attack vigorously.'

The announcement also signals the DH's intention to explore amendments to maternity, paternity and sickness leave pay and to pursue further computerisation of dental practices. The BDA will be seeking full details of the proposals.

FROM THE ARCHIVE

The following item was published in the *British Dental Journal* on 16 February 1914.

BLACKSMITHS AND DENTISTRY

Commenting on the death of a Warwickshire blacksmith who used to extract teeth, the *Warwick Advertiser* says:

"Years ago the blacksmith's forge was the recognized dentistry, and even now one often meets aged folk in out-of-the-way places who can recall having teeth extracted in the village smithy. The idea may seem very quaint to-day, although many people daily submit themselves to tooth-pullers who have even fewer qualifications than the blacksmith had. The result is that many people who have failed in other directions feel they have a bent for dental surgery. Thus there is a case on record of a gentleman who had not thriven remarkably well as a bookmaker's clerk starting business as an unqualified dentist and doing well. Then again, recently, a man living in a country district visiting a 'dental parlour' in a neighbouring town, was surprised to find that the 'dentist' was a former insurance agent who had canvassed him a few weeks before. So that people of half a century ago who had to rely upon the blacksmith's skill with the forceps were not in much more evil case than many of us to-day."

IN THIS ISSUE



In this issue Dr Fahad Jamil outlines the use of anterior gold basket crowns among Amazonian communities and

the biological implications that unconventional restorations can have on healthy teeth.

On a recent dental relief trip to the remote Amazonian communities Fahad witnessed these bold restorations for the first time and on questioning and treating patients it became clear these gold basket crowns are placed only for cosmetic purposes, as a signifier of wealth and status: 'I find it fascinating that the functional and aesthetic role of the dentition is regarded so differently amongst varying communities across the world.' However, unfortunate biological implications can result from such restorations, with poor construction and marginal adaptation coupled with poor oral hygiene and diet leading to caries and periodontal disease. Ultimately these teeth then require extraction.

Whilst most Western communities in the modern world opt for tooth-like restorations, modern trends for unwarranted prostheses such as 'grills' are a cause for concern, despite being removable, as aesthetic function is given prime importance without consideration to the hard and soft tissues of the oral cavity: 'Legislation and monitoring needs to be in place to ensure only trained dentists with appropriate restorative knowledge and skills are providing prostheses.'

Fahad chose to study dentistry due to its unique combination of medicine, technology and art. He is currently finishing a literature review on the biological benefits of the *miswaak* – a twig used as a toothbrush across the Middle East: 'It is important to have an understanding of the different cultural views on teeth as we live in a significantly multicultural society.'

Did you know? Outside of dentistry, Fahad is a keen amateur photographer. An example of his work can be seen below and can be found at www.fahadjamilphotography.com.



SCIENTIFIC ADVISOR ELECTED TO PRESIDENCY

Professor Damien Walmsley, of the School of Dentistry, University of Birmingham and Scientific Advisor to the British Dental Association (BDA), has been elected to Presidency of ADEE (Association for Dental Education in Europe) from 2014 to 2016. Damien is the fifth UK dentist to be President

over 40 years of ADEE. His duties involve representing UG and PG dental education in Europe and increasing beneficial interactions with dental organisations worldwide.

