LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Send your letters to the Editor, British Dental Journal, 64 Wimpole Street, London, W1G 8YS
Email bdj@bda.org. Priority will be given to letters less than 500 words long. Authors must sign the letter, which may be edited for reasons of space. Readers may now comment on letters via the *BDJ* website (www.bdj.co.uk). A 'Readers' Comments' section appears at the end of the full text of each letter online.

TRIGEMINAL NEURALGIA

Rapidly successful treatment

Sir, I refer to my letter published in April 2012 (*PA and fish oil*; *BDJ* 2014; 212: 356–357) and write to advise that the treatment method mentioned in it has proven rapidly successful in several more otherwise intractable cases.

This inexpensive treatment with a powerful antioxidant should be worthy of further investigation by a clinician within the NHS if possible. It would provide significant savings as well as relief for patients currently suffering long-term pain.

I would be pleased to cooperate with any interested clinical researchers or clinicians with patients in need.

A. Carmichael, by email
DOI: 10.1038/sj.bdj.2014.914

GREEN DENTISTRY

Motivating change

Sir, I read with interest *Greening up the bottom line* in the 11 July issue (*BDJ* 2014; 217: 10–11), where Caroline Holland talks to Bob Bhamra of Jivadental who has 'probably done more than any other UK dentist to operate a carbon neutral practice'.

Could the dental opinion-formers who believe that evidence-based dentistry makes a sustainable approach to business impossible, please make yourself known. A debate is welcome.

I disagree that 'making that first step towards an eco business is costly'. As Holland's piece suggests, training in effective waste segregation can save the practice money, as can efficient heating.

Dentistry is not behind in its drive towards sustainability, nor without leadership. Within NHS Fife, Scotland, working with the NHS Fife Public Dental Service, we believe we were the first to measure the carbon footprint of the dental service.¹ We demonstrated that 36% of the carbon footprint was attributable to procurement, or what we purchase; 18% is attributed to building energy with nearly half of the carbon emissions relating to patient and staff travel. Our pilot developed into work with academic colleagues to analyse how we could reduce our carbon

PROMOTING EXCELLENCE

Sir, ADAPT (Aesthetic Dentistry and Professional Testing) was formed in 1993 as a society dedicated to researching and promoting excellence in aesthetic dentistry. Our group has an ongoing role of clinically evaluating newer and better materials.

At regular study meetings, held in West London, members share experiences as a study club, use dental products and report on our findings.

Since 1993 ADAPT initiatives have been welcomed by the dental industry and also general dentists whom we hope

have benefitted from our impartial role.

Qualified dentists are invited to apply to join ADAPT and anybody interested should provide a CV and send it to: Dr Howard Stean, Chairman ADAPT, 103 Mortlake Road, Kew, TW9 4AA, or send an email to either: adapt@adapt.demon.co.uk or howardstean@ukteeth.com.

There is no charge for membership, but members should expect to attend regular meetings and be willing to participate in the ongoing evaluation programme.

H. Stean, Chairman ADAPT
DOI: 10.1038/sj.bdj.2014.917

footprint by placing services close to patient need (not yet published).

There are challenges in motivating professional behavioural change. I would agree with Bob Bhamra's comment that 'the dental consumables trade still appears to be distinctly ungreen'. In 2012 on behalf of Health Scotland, I attempted to engage the British Dental Trade Association by sending a questionnaire to 117 of its members – approximately seven replies were received, and there were few respondents within that year who wanted to engage. Such engagement is important as without manufacturers and suppliers actively seeking to reduce their carbon emissions it makes significant reduction problematic.

It's quite possible within the next few years that practices will be required to report on sustainability within dentistry. The UK is obligated to reduce its carbon footprint by 80% by the year 2050. The Sustainable Development Unit recently published a draft metric paper, which considers possible ways that dental practices could measure and monitor sustainable practice. I believe it is not out of the question for NHS Commissioners to consider such metrics when commissioning dental services. I would urge all interested colleagues to view the consultation: www.sduhealth.org.uk/areas-of-focus/metrics.aspx.

It is possible that an online tool may be developed to enable dentists to measure and monitor their carbon emissions as part

of their approach to sustainability. Views on this would be welcome. Please contact me directly at brettduane@nhs.net

I would like to congratulate Bob Bhamra on his approach to sustainable dentistry. I urge my colleagues to follow his approach.

B. Duane, Consultant in
Dental Public Health

1. Duane B, Hyland J, Rowan J S, Archibald B. Taking a bite out of Scotland's dental carbon emissions in the transition to a low carbon future. *Public Health* 2012; 126: 770–777.

DOI: 10.1038/sj.bdj.2014.915

GUIDELINES

An alternative viewpoint

Sir, I read with interest the correspondence from Professor Richards and Dr A. C. L. Holden (*BDJ* 2014; 217: 106) about ethical dilemmas arising from published professional guidelines from, for example, the Faculty of General Dental Practice and the British Society of Periodontology. I would like to present here an alternative viewpoint from my position as a specialist in periodontics and a trained dental expert witness with well over 15 years' experience.

The writers seem to be saying that failing to follow established clinical guidelines has no causative effect, and the initiative is stifled by so doing. I must disagree. The guidelines of such bodies as these are based on sound evidence and good practice so a clinician needs a good reason for departing from them. In particular,