

Letters to the editor

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Green dentistry

It's easy being green

Sir, we read your recent articles on the topic of 'green dentistry' with great interest.^{1,2} They clearly demonstrated the need for the entire dental profession to do their bit to make the world a greener, and thereby, a safer place to be. Indeed, these papers inspired me to implement changes in my own practice with the goal of making it the 'Greenest in the UK'.

Changes to our practice can be seen as soon as patients enter the door, pass through the waiting area, and go right through to the dental chair in the surgery. Our first step was to find the right products - green chairs, desks and carpets were easily installed in the waiting area but the surgery and infection control room proved trickier. In some cases, we had to create the products from scratch. This involved a lot of paint. We are pleased with the final result - see Figure 1.

It really is a testament to our UK dental industry that such an array of colours is available for dental equipment. However, some items (including green syringes, glasses and autoclaves) had to be flown in from China.

Once we replaced all the surgery furniture, we held a big fire in the back garden to dispose of the old 'non-green' furniture, scrubs etc.

There has been push back from some members of team as one would expect when implementing such a major change. There appeared to be a lack of understanding of why the 'greening' of the practice was required with some members of staff claiming that we had misunderstood the problem of climate change etc. However, after a short time most came on board with the new practice colour, in particular those with red hair who found the hue particularly flattering.

We encourage further practices in the UK to follow suit and 'go green' with us and I am more than happy to provide advice from our own experience.

B. Greene, Greenwich, London, by email

1. Mulimani P. Green dentistry: the art and science of sustainable practice. *Br Dent J* 2017; **222**: 954-961.
2. Duane B, Berners Lee M, White S, Stancliffe R and Steinbach I. An estimated carbon footprint of NHS primary dental care within England. How can dentistry be more environmentally sustainable? *Br Dent J* 2017; **223**: 589-593.

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Finance

Santa Claws back

Sir, this year has been fraught with challenges, and with the festive period upon us, I fear the biggest is yet to come.

For some time now we have been aware clawback may prematurely bring an end to the festive spirit. It hampers our ability to deliver Christmas to the fullest and puts a significant strain on proceedings for the day.

The current legislation as set out by the Council of Christmas Clawback states: 'Area teams will carry out year-end reconciliations on all of its Yuletide gifts and food offerings. This is to ensure that activity is being delivered against pre-stipulated contracts and also enable the area team to ensure Yuletide activity is being commissioned accurately and in line with local festive needs assessments.'

'If a contract has achieved less than 25.12% of its contracted units of activity at 31 October, the area team needs to carry out a mid-year review meeting with the contract holder. The review may be followed by an action plan to identify how contracted activity will be delivered by Yuletide or face a possible enforced withholding of festivities.'

'Compliance with these policies will be monitored via the Christmas Oversight Procedural Outlet Unity Team (COPOUT).'

For a family of six - the situation I find myself in - this is an enormous challenge. The house will no doubt resemble a scene from *Home Alone* where Kevin McCallister booby-traps his house to keep out the persistent sticky bandits. The key difference is that we will not be home alone.

Home indemnity insurance, as a result, is through the roof, given the significant risk of sliding down the hallway on a set of roller skates left out by my youngest. Opening presents in a prompt and orderly manner is just about achievable, but with such heady



Fig. 1 Our surgery - officially the greenest in the UK