

vital
for the whole dental team

Vital to dentistry



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What does the term PCD mean to you? It may seem a simple question, but the term is not only commonly misunderstood, but surprisingly alienating. When we first decided to publish *Vital*, as Editor I took time out to meet some 'PCDs.' The funny thing is, I didn't find any. I met dental nurses, technicians, hygienists, practice managers, receptionists and therapists. I was introduced to dental teams working in different specialties in different environments. I talked to old and young, and gained an insight into practice, hospital and laboratory life. But I never met anyone who introduced themselves to me as a 'PCD'.

When I phoned a practice to introduce myself, and described our idea of a new magazine for PCDs I received warm but slightly baffled responses. And when I made it into the practice I was often told that unfortunately no PCDs worked there, just the dental team. Of course this was not the case every time, but it happened often enough to set me thinking, what does this term PCD mean?

PCD, or Professionals Complementary to Dentistry, seems to me to be an alienating term that fails to represent the importance of the dental team in the provision of quality dental care. No wonder some of you have concerns about your status (see *Perspectives*, page 13) when you are quite literally defined as complementary to rather than essential to dentistry.

Contrary to what the term suggests, the dental team has become increasingly important in recent years, and with the extension of duties for hygienists and therapists and the upcoming registration of dental nurses and technicians, we felt the time was right for a publication of your own.

Vital is the first publication aimed at the whole dental team, and we hope to help you better understand your colleagues roles while providing valuable information about developing your own. See page 16 for our guide to registration with the GDC, read about the dental nurse NVQ on page 24, follow a typical technician's day on page 48 or if you've had a hard day skip ahead to our regular lifestyle section *On Your Feet*, from page 38.

With *Vital* we hope to answer your questions, update you on the issues and provide valuable information while at the same time producing a magazine that you'll want to pick up.

By choosing *Vital* as our name we hope to encourage recognition within all sectors of dentistry as to the importance of the dental team. Hopefully it will become vital reading for you, professionals vital to dentistry.

Kate Craig, Editor

