

vital

for the whole dental team



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Forward thinking

This year's British Dental Conference and Exhibition was themed 'Forward thinking' and as such very much encompassed the team dentistry ethos.

For the first year, the BDA provided a team booking option to encourage dentists to bring their team members with them, and many did. Associations representing PCDs were offered table top displays and a full fringe meeting programme ran alongside the main sessions. Turn to page 36 for reviews of some of the most relevant sessions.

In the session *UK Dental Technicians - value for money?* Tony Griffin emphasised the need for a 'talk talk' mentality - improving communication between technicians and dentists. The value of such improved communication is discussed further in our article *Profitable partnerships* on page 22.

While in some areas the relationship is working well, in others mutual respect seems a long way off, but if this relationship can be nurtured the result will prove profitable to both practice and laboratory.

Increasing the status of PCDs was another hot topic at the conference. Glenys Bridges presented the results of the DRA's recent *Telling it how it is* survey in the session *Working today for tomorrow*. She described how the 'I'm just a dental receptionist' attitude should soon be forgotten, as the importance of the receptionist's role as face of the practice is recognised.

Increased perception of professionalism is just one reason dental nurses should value the opportunity to register with the GDC, reports Naomi Davis on page 20.

Many nurses have asked 'what's in it for us?' regarding registration, and with training and cost implications followed by the requirement for verifiable CPD the question is unsurprising.

A dentist cannot work without dental nurses and registration is an official way of recognising this. Ensured educational standards, better access to courses and a flexible structure for career progression are just some of the proposed benefits of registration. Nurses will find their responsibilities will be properly recognised too.

This is certainly the view of Hew Mathewson, GDC President, who shares his thoughts on the future for PCDs on page 32. While acknowledging there is a long way to go, Hew says the public and PCDs want registration and it's time to move away from the entrenched positions.

A little forward thinking goes a long way.

Kate Craig

