These pages offer you the chance to open topics for debate, discuss issues, or even offer advice to fellow readers. Send us your views on anything published in *Vital* or anything to do with working in the dental profession. We look forward to hearing from you.

★ Star Letter

Keep your ear out

After being out of dentistry for a while I decided that when I went back to dental nursing I would take the opportunity to further myself professionally and personally.

I came back to nursing a little later than expected due to single parenthood, but made the decision to investigate various courses. To my horror, the majority of them were beyond my financial capability.

Eighteen months on and I have just attended my first lesson in radiography for dental nurses, thanks to my local deanery in London.

I received information through the post informing me that, if your dentist or dental practice holds an NHS contract with your Primary Care Trust, they would pay a lump sum towards the course and examination fee. So I jumped at the chance!

I wanted to let your readers and other nurses know about this scheme and to recommend they contact their deanery to see if they run a similar system. The exam comes from NEBDN so it is all official and recognised.

I would also like to mention the teachers, Dr Richard DeCann and Mr Tim Reynolds. I enjoyed their lessons; they are very knowledgeable in the field and are very motivating: you leave the classroom feeling as if you have really learned something and want to know more. I consider myself lucky to have been given the chance to study with people who obviously enjoy teaching.

I have heard that the deanery might be funding the OHE course next year, so I for one will be keeping my ear out.

Julie Wright
RDN
Tunbridge Wells

Registration long overdue

Vital was first brought to my attention when our Trainee Dental Nurse, Nathan Morrison, was involved and featured on the cover of the autumn 2004 issue.

I regularly read *Vital* and have subscribed from the early days. I am often asked questions by dental nurses (DNs) on evening courses regarding statutory registration. General dental practitioners do not seem to be clued up on this topic and where their unqualified DNs fit in. There has been some really good

information on this topic in *Vital*. Registration is definitely a positive move in the right direction and is long overdue. I remember it being mentioned back in 1974!

Other articles in *Vital* have been interesting and useful as training resources. I am involved in the delivery of the NVQ Level 3 and National Examination for Dental Nurses and am pleased to see that both pathways to qualification are still up and running. Both methods should be advertised and individual

DNs may then be given the opportunity to select the one that appeals to them or at least find out what is available in their area.

Liz Hooper
Senior Dental Nurse Trainer and Appraiser
By email

If you are a dental nurse and need more information on routes to registration and recognised courses, check out Registration revision on page 28.