

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 industry. We look forward to hearing from you.

Convince *the dentists*

I have always read with enthusiasm the debate and discussions regarding dental nurses (DNs) becoming registered with the GDC. I myself, along with fellow colleagues, have waited some time for this to happen and agree with it as DNs will finally be recognised as 'professional people' (hooray!). Not just as figures that are always present in the dental surgery.

However, through my own experiences as a DN, I find it's not so much the general public we need to convince of our knowledge and efficiency, it's actually some of the dentists we work with. A couple of concerns are if those we work with and assist daily have difficulty in accepting that DNs now qualifying or qualified have worked hard to achieve their goals and recognise them as valued and essential members of the dental team and have their wages boosted to a professional level. How long is it going to take for some dentists to advertise for experienced/qualified DNs as opposed to school

leavers where training will be given? Will this lessen once the transitional period has elapsed and statutory registration is compulsory? And finally, CPD courses: will these be in the DNs' own time or during working hours?

I do have my doubts as to where this will all end, except that it could be an upward struggle for many DNs.

Donna Pickersgill, RDN, Bedfordshire



A *unique omission*

I am writing with regard to your feature concerning DCP education (*Vital* autumn 2006). The article did mention that the list was not exhaustive, however, every single school training dental therapists within the UK was described with one notable exception — our school.

The Greater Manchester School is unique in that it is housed within a Primary Care Trust, not a university or dental school. It is also the 'newest school' which opened its doors to students in January 2005.

Our website is www.manpcd.co.uk.

Dr Fiona Ann Blinkhorn
 Director and Head of School
 Greater Manchester School for Professions Complementary to Dentistry

The compiler of the article, Julie Ferry, responds: I am very sorry to hear that the omission of The Greater Manchester School from my DCP course feature in the autumn issue caused so much distress to you and your colleagues. Of course this was not intentional however the article was designed as a starting point for people to begin looking for courses and that is why we included the caveat at the beginning to explain that the list was not meant to be exhaustive. I tried to ensure that all areas

of the country and most large cities were represented and I think I did this successfully. The feature was particularly difficult to research as there isn't a central resource of information for DCP courses and I assure you I spent many hours online and on the phone trying to collate information. The fact that The Greater Manchester School was not included in the article should in no way detract from the excellent work you and your colleagues do there and I hope that this apology goes some way to ensuring that Vital readers know that it is a leader in dental hygiene and therapy education.



Correction

The star letter *Keep your ear out* in the autumn issue of *Vital* acknowledged the London Deanery for providing a course in radiography for dental nurses. This was in fact the Kent, Surrey and Sussex Deanery.

Read more about deaneries on page 14.