

YOUR VIEW

compiled by **Arveen Bajaj & Kate Maynard**

Should **CPD** be **compulsory** for **every** member of the dental team?



Vanessa Medina

I feel that if my nurses and receptionists had a better understanding of the concepts they would better serve my patients.

Therapist

Kate Oakes, Dental Therapist at Worcester House Dental Practice, Brynmawr, and Secretary of the BADT.

'I think CPD should be compulsory for all members of the dental team but I feel that the CPD needs to be relevant. Certain parts of CPD should be compulsory such as CPR training and child protection for those who work clinically. Those who take radiographs already have to update every five years.

I attend the regional meetings and ASM with the British Association of Dental Therapists. These courses are relevant to my work and keep me updated. The last course I attended was a hands-on course covering dental materials which was very worthwhile and this was through the South Wales Regional BADT Group.'

Dentist

Vanessa Medina, Dentist at Eye Dental Care, Peterborough.

'I feel that mandatory CPD for all dental staff would be a good idea. I feel that if my nurses and receptionists had a better understanding of the concepts they would better serve my patients. I personally have found CPD courses to be a refreshing change from my university classes but feel that I have not obtained very much new information. They could become more useful to me in years to come though, in order to keep up to date with current information.'

Dental nurse/receptionist

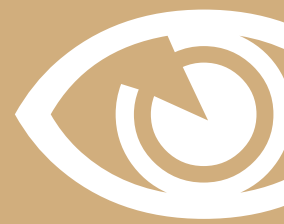
Elizabeth Morris, Dental Nurse/Receptionist at Llanidloes Dental Centre, Llanidloes.

'I think that CPD should be compulsory for all of the dental team. I spent just over a year training towards the National Certificate, which I passed. I feel it would be a waste if I passed the exam and didn't keep up to date with my training/learning. The problem with CPD is that we will be given an annual requirement of x hours. I feel that due to their location, some team members may have to resort to doing courses which are reasonably local rather than courses which are useful, to make up their hours. More effort needs to be made to ensure that nurses everywhere are able to access courses which are useful to them and are given the time by their employers to do so. I'd find it helpful to be provided with a list of compulsory topics for CPD which I could then give to my employer. Without this it's hard to get time to do CPD.'

Practice manager

Pam Bevan, Practice Manager at Webheath Dental Practice, Webheath.

'I think that it is very important for all members of the dental team to take part in CPD. It is crucial to the smooth and efficient running of the practice for everyone to keep up to date. If all team members are actively involved with CPD it helps to keep everyone motivated and results in a well informed team.'



Marina Thompson

‘I believe that compulsory CPD for all of the dental team can only serve to raise the standard of clinical care which we can all aspire to...’

In my experience staff members should all be able to cover each other's duties, as far as is possible. This prevents potential problems when you are short staffed and is far less disruptive to the practice. All new staff members at our practice have to be involved in CPD or they would not be considered for employment.’

Hygienist

Marina Thompson, President-elect of the BDHA.

‘Compulsory registration of the whole dental team has brought with it a new era of accountability to both the public and the profession alike.

Within this sphere of accountability is the notion that all of the dental team will be fully equipped to provide sound clinical care which our patients expect from us.

Clinical care is delivered by each and every member of the team, and not just by the “provider” of the treatment. This is why it is most important that each team member undertakes compulsory CPD so as to learn about the latest developments not only in their own field of expertise, but also in that of their colleagues.

Dental Hygienists and Therapists have undertaken voluntary CPD for many years as they have recognised the importance of keeping abreast with current developments in both the clinical field and the vocational arena. I believe that compulsory CPD for all of the dental team can only serve to raise the standard of clinical care which we can all aspire to in order to deliver the best care to our patients.’

Dental technician

Jim Mackie is Managing Director/Co-owner of PWS Direct Ltd based in Bolton.

‘I think that anyone who is “registered” as a “dental care professional” has taken the decision that they wish to be considered a “professional” and would therefore welcome CPD as part of their “professionalisation”. There is a problem of course with the members of the dental “team” who may not be registered, for example Lab Assistants, some of whom I am sure would welcome the chance to do some CPD and others who wouldn't be so forthcoming! I am still waiting for the GDC to decide if and how these people are to fit into the dental team.

Other issues for technicians are:

- Who is going to pay the technicians whilst they are attending courses?
- Who is going to pay the laboratory for their lost production whilst technicians are on courses?
- Who will fund the courses?

I think I am right in saying that dentists receive their funding from the NHS.’



Please send your comments on this, or any other issues that interest you to: vitaleditorial@nature.com, or write to Perspectives, *Vital*, *BDJ*, Nature Publishing Group, 4-6 Crinan Street, London, N1 9XW.

Competition winner – winter issue

JDOH competition

The correct answer was A: 1.2 million people have a learning disability in the UK. Congratulations to Mrs Saadat Hydari, a Dental Nurse from Wrexham, who wins a year's subscription to the *Journal of Disability and Oral Health* worth £120.