

# V-mail

Send your views to  
vitaeditorial@nature.com

## LETTER

### Champagne or CPD

Just wanted to let you know how impressed I am with the *Vital* publication – interesting articles, excellent photographs and the opportunity to do CPD or win a bottle of champagne! (Er um – decision time there.)

Having qualified as a dental hygienist in 1965 (!!!!) and still enjoying my work, albeit only as a locum now, it says something that I can still appreciate reading a dental publication from cover to cover!

**Jeanette Daly**  
Dental Hygienist

*Jeanette wins Beverly Hills Formula goodies worth £100.*

**Beverly Hills Formula**

### Laundry relief

I've just read Pamela Swain's letter to the editor in the autumn issue of *Vital* (page 6), and came across a part that said a nurse can claim tax relief on the cost of washing their uniforms. Please can you advise me on how to do this? Thank you.

**D. Abu-Gharbieh**  
By email

*BADN Chief Executive Pamela Swain responds: Tax relief is available to dental nurses who launder their own uniforms*

*- it is necessary to contact your tax office.*

*Dental nurses who support their professional association - BADN - have full details on their member's CD-Rom or on the members' only area of the website. www.badn.org.uk.*



### Sharps disposal

I have had a number of enquiries from dental nurses in practice regarding the re-sheathing of dental needles and the disposal of used sharps. Are there any written guidelines that specify the 'right' procedure or is it a local rule for the individual practice? I would be grateful for any advice on this matter.

**Kath Hayes**  
Dental Nurse Tutor South Wales

*Daniel McAlonan, Senior Health & Safety Adviser at the BDA, responds: Below is a link for the HPA guidance on the use of needles and disposal. There are local rules for each practice but we would support the stance that 'if you use - you dispose of it'. Needles must be re-sheathed by the operator using the re-sheathing device and in line with the training provided. Needles, scalpel blades, LA cartridges, burs, matrix bands etc must be disposed of in the yellow sharps container, which should be near the point of use and not placed on the floor. The container must never be more than two-thirds full.*

*http://www.hpa.org.uk/webw/HPAweb&HPAwebPrinterFriendly/HPAweb\_C/1195733815952?p=1191942146594*



### Hep B

I have just read *Dental nurse costs* in the autumn issue of *Vital* (page 5) in which someone was asking about the cost of Hep B injections. We always used to get them free from the GP surgery; then they started charging. I live in West Sussex and in this area the PCT set up a designated clinic to provide Hep B, with no charge. So I would suggest you contact the PCT in your area and ask them to do the same.

**Lynne Buckwell**  
By email

### Fit and stress free



I have been a dental nurse for many years now and live in the Lancashire area. I have recently read *Vital* for the first time and enjoyed it very much. In the latest issue (autumn 2008) the *Get active* section asked readers to share details of their hobbies and interests outside the practice.

All of my friends think I am crazy, I work two miles away from home, I get up every day at 6.30am and do a three mile run (during this time I see a lot of our practice patients who also think I am crazy!) I then go to work, and after a long day I then go to the gym and do a two hour workout before I go home.

Most people are exhausted just to listen to this but I love to exercise: it keeps me fit and stress free. I exercise Monday to Friday and rest and play at the weekend!

I hope your readers don't feel too tired just reading this!

**Mrs Belinda Otterburn**  
By email

*Belinda wins a copy of The management of medical emergencies.*



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Next issue's star letter writer will win Colgate goodies worth £100.

Letters may be edited for space. Opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the editorial team or publishers.