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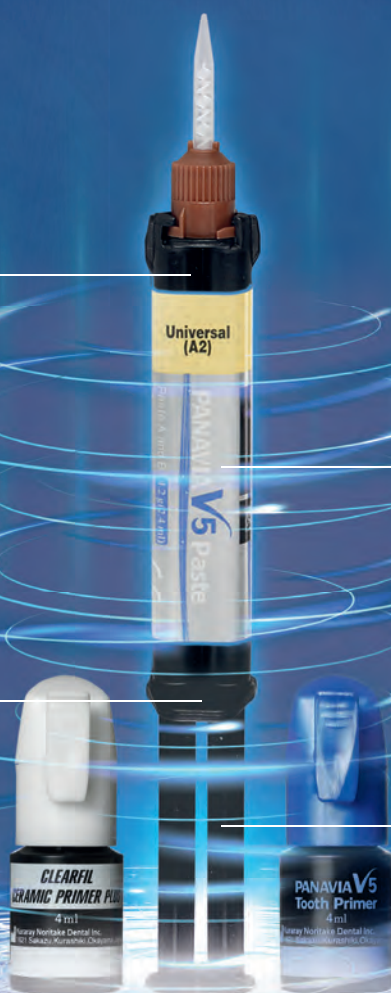
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Time to reflect

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Planning for perfection

Siobhan Hiscott

Group managing editor

It feels like only yesterday that I was writing about making plans for the new year, and yet here we are with the first quarter of 2025 done and dusted!

As we head deeper into the year, how is it going for you? Are you on track to deliver on your targets and achieve the goals you've set yourself?

As I've gotten older I've come to understand the importance of periodically taking some time out of busy schedules to reflect and take stock. Stepping back can feel counterintuitive but doing it routinely can actually help you stay better focused in the long run: if you find you've gotten distracted and taken a slight detour, then you'll be able to quickly divert your attention back to your original plan.

At FMC, the team is riding high on the back of a hugely successful North of England Dentistry Show. Even the sun came out for the event, which saw more than 1,000 pass through the doors.

With more than 70 speakers presenting across nine different theatres, I think it's safe to say it was no small feat to deliver an event of this scale. But deliver it we did, and we're thrilled with how it went!

It seems that we're not alone: based on our feedback, everyone left in high spirits – ready to implement the day's learnings come Monday morning upon return to the practice.

For the first time, we invited dental students to experience everything that the North of England Dentistry Show had to offer, which went down a storm – and not just with the students. Indeed, the Next Gen theatre provided much food for thought for everyone who managed to get a seat.

With thought leaders imparting advice on everything from relationship building to pursuing a route to specialisation, it felt like a really valuable theatre for those at the start of their careers – as well as those more established!

All in all, the insight and wisdom shared throughout the day made for an unmissable event.

FMC has never been one to rest on its laurels, so rest assured that we're already looking at ways to make next year's show even bigger and better when it returns to Manchester on 7 March 2026.

To stay focused on this year, however, we're making exciting plans with James Goolnik, the new chair of the Private Dentistry Awards judging panel.

With registration now open, it is the perfect time to start considering your entries.

Turn to page 71 to check out the categories for 2025, and visit dentistry.co.uk/awards to download the entry guide and see the full details including criteria and requirements.

Make sure you've marked 21 November in your diary – because you're not going to want to miss this year's Private Dentistry Awards!



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MISSION STATEMENT

Private Dentistry is an essential reference for dental practice development in the 21st century, focused on helping practices evolve sustainably, operate innovatively, and thrive.

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BDS, runs a multidisciplinary practice at Neel Dentistry. He founded PDI-Professional Dental Indemnity Ltd. He is a judge on the Private Dentistry Awards. He founded the British Academy of Microscope Dentistry and is a founder of the BAPD.



SAM JETHWA

BDS, is the founder of Bespoke Smile Clinic & Academy, which trains dentists on occlusion, porcelain veneers, and rehabilitations. Sam is on the board of directors at the BACD, and has been a judge for the Private Dentistry Awards.



ANGELA LY

BDS, is an award-winning dentist who has featured on *BBC Breakfast*, ITV's *Save Money Good Health* and Channel 5's *Gadget Show*.



HANNA MIRAFATAB

BDS, is owner of Kiln Lane Dental practice and an actress in *Real Housewives of Cheshire*. She has completed a master's degree in prosthodontics and has qualifications in non-surgical treatments such as anti-ageing injectables.



ASHISH B PARMAR

BDS, is a cosmetic dentist offering smile design, comprehensive dental care, laser dentistry and implants. He is a national and international lecturer.



KISH PATEL

BDS MSc, is a director at Smile Clinic Group and director of Smile Dental Academy. Having successfully completed training in Invisalign in 2011, he offers a range of clear and cosmetic orthodontic treatments.



KREENA PATEL

BDS, is a specialist in endodontics. She taught on the specialist endodontics programme at Guy's. She works at Brigstock Dental Practice and Oaktree Dental Practice. Kreena runs an online endo course, The Endo Course.



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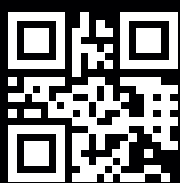
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Innovative, lively and dynamic: North of England Dentistry Show hailed great success

This year's North of England Dentistry Show took Manchester by storm last month with hundreds of dental professionals passing through the doors of Manchester Central Convention Complex.

Taking place on Saturday 8 March, the event brought enlightening lectures, engaging discussion and dynamic product demos to all in attendance.

The venue was abuzz with more than 1,000 attendees positively thrilled to experience everything on offer in the sun-filled hall.

From lively panel discussions and interactive polls to immersive hands-on sessions and educational lectures, the North of England Dentistry Show had something to offer every visitor.

Across the nine lecture theatres, more than 70 speakers took to the stage to present fresh insights on the biggest opportunities, developments and issues facing dentistry today.

MAKING AN IMPACT

The North of England Dentistry Show 2025 was a success for delegates and exhibitors alike.

On the stands, attendees kept company reps busy throughout the day with lively discussion and product demos, allowing them to discover the cutting-edge products transforming dental practice. Exhibitors enjoyed in-depth conversations with engaged dental professionals who came armed with questions about the latest innovations.

With so much on offer for the whole dental team, this year's North of England Dentistry Show was buzzing with energy and innovation.

Dental professionals, students and experts were able to connect, network and explore the latest offerings all under one roof.

The North of England Dentistry Show 2025 proved to be the go-to event for anyone in dentistry looking to make an impact.

Missed out on this year's vibrant atmosphere, energy and innovation? Fret not, the unmissable North of England Dentistry Show will return on 7 March 2026.

Save the date and keep your eyes peeled for more details!

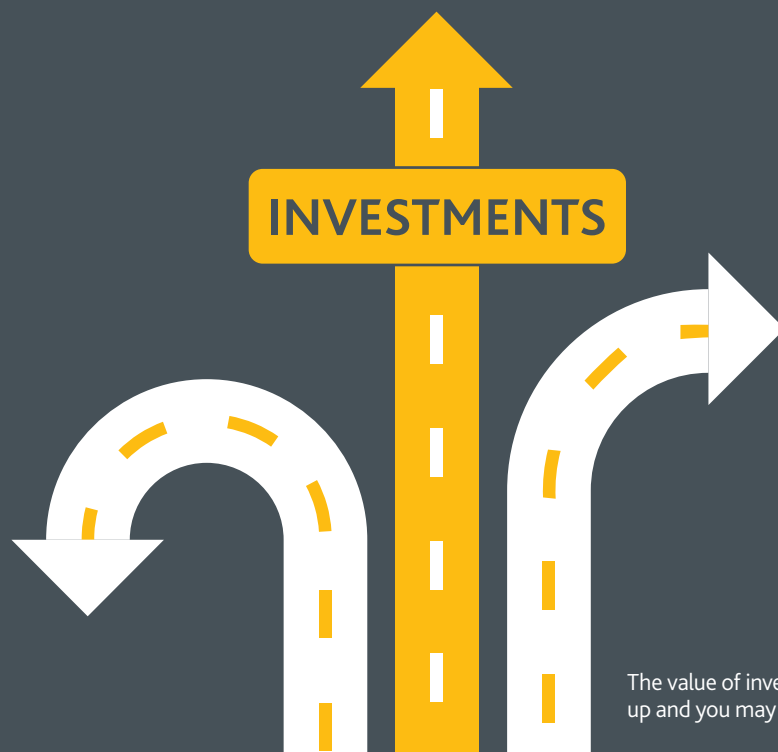


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Free wellbeing resource for dental professionals launches

A new resource for the health of the entire dental team has been launched in a bid to reduce stress, prevent burnout and enhance overall performance.

'Breathe' is a dedicated, free wellbeing platform for the entire oral health community, offering practical, evidence-based tools, expert guidance, support and resources.

Designed by professionals who understand the pressures of dentistry, the Breathe platform is a collaboration between the OCDO England, Meddent Leadership and Wellbeing Academy and Cooper Transformation.

Commenting on the launch of the Breathe platform, CDO England Jason Wong said: 'General wellbeing of the whole oral health team is so important and this will prove to be a valuable resource for team members to access and will have benefits right across the spectrum of the valuable work that we are all doing.'

Co-founder Rana Al-Falaki added: 'I'm particularly proud that the Breathe website covers every dimension of wellbeing – emotional, mental, physical, relationship, organisational, and financial health. And it then provides actionable strategies for personal growth, leadership, and team dynamics. A stressed and unhappy team is not an effective team, and this has a real effect on the bottom line. Whatever your role, please take the time to navigate the site – I would welcome your feedback.'

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Supervised toothbrushing launched in UK schools

A national supervised toothbrushing programme will be rolled out for UK children aged three to five from April, the government has announced.

The scheme will be launched in early years settings such as primary schools and nurseries in the most deprived areas of the country. The government is investing £11 million in local authorities to deliver the programme to institutions that sign up, with funding available from April 2025.

The Department of Health and Social Care said this would reach up to 600,000 children annually and provide families with support to maintain good oral hygiene practices at home. The project is supported by Colgate-Palmolive, which will provide 23 million toothbrushes and toothpastes to be used in the scheme over the next five years.

The government described the supervised toothbrushing scheme as a 'proven, evidence-based health intervention'.

It also said the programme was 'expected to deliver measurable improvements to children's oral health and reductions in oral health inequalities' within two to three years.



General Dental Council announces new interim executive director of legal and governance

Katie Spears has been appointed as the new interim executive director of legal and governance at the General Dental Council (GDC).

Katie has collective responsibility for leading the delivery of the strategic aims set by the GDC. In addition, she will lead the delivery of the regulator's legal and governance services, ensuring adherence to the legal framework that governs the council's work and decision making.

Prior to this appointment, Katie served as the GDC's interim senior counsel and associate director of legal, overseeing the in-house legal advisory service. She has led both legal and governance functions in the GDC for more than 10 years. She was its board secretary for five years, delivering several board recruitment campaigns, a board development programme and the implementation of a suite of governance improvements.

Katie started her practice as a self-employed barrister before moving into financial and healthcare regulation. She is also the co-executive sponsor of the GDC's Women's Network.



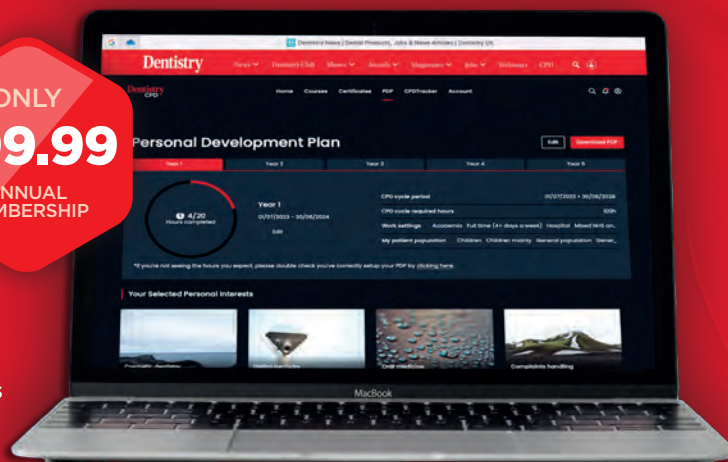
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How are you?

Chris Barrow reframes his response to be reassuring and inspiring



CHRIS
BARROW

I had to relearn an old lesson the other day, which revolves around the way we answer the question: 'how are you?' I don't know about you, but my professional life seems to have become busier since the last General Election and as we move into a new economic landscape in 2025, I have to say that the sheer volume of work that is coming from my existing client base seems to be increasing every single week.

While this means there's never a dull moment, and I'm lucky that my workload is ever growing, as the months have rolled by and the workflow has increased, I find myself answering the 'how are you?' question along these lines: 'I'm overwhelmed, drowning in work, struggling to manage my priorities and time, exhausted, feeling very sorry for myself and wondering when it will all end.'

Reading this, I suspect that you might be jumping to the conclusion that I've taken too much on – consequently, perhaps not such a good idea as your next business coach!

A MOMENT OF APPRECIATION

I'd like you to imagine you've been asked: 'How are you?' – how do you reply?

Are you telling your team members, self-employed clinicians, your suppliers, your patients and your family that you are 'overwhelmed, drowning in work, trying to find a balance between clinical and business, or a balance between professional and personal'?

After all, we all like a bit of a pity party at the end of a long day, don't we? Stepping into the 'the drama triangle' is human nature. We are looking for some pity, gratitude, a hug and a moment of appreciation for all the hard work that we are doing.

However, when you are in a leadership or management position, the reality is that you

must be careful when answering the 'how are you?' question.

I don't mean that you should tell lies, fake it until you make it, or not be vulnerable and transparent when the occasion justifies it. But, often, the people asking you that question don't simply want to know about you – they want you to be their beacon of light. They want you to reassure them that, to coin a phrase: 'We are OK, and things can only get better.'

I don't think Sir Winston Churchill would have had quite the impact if he had jumped on the radio to tell the population that he was exhausted, overwhelmed and wondering how the hell we were going to survive a war.

REFRAMED RESPONSE

I became so annoyed listening to myself whingeing that I decided to sit down and work out how to reframe my answer to the 'how are you?' question. I wanted the answer to be honest, but also inspirational to those who depend on me to make them feel better.

I thought about it carefully, I scripted it, I printed it and I'm carrying it around with me to refer to before I go into conversations or meetings.

When someone asks: 'How are you, CB?', this is now my response: 'I'm in demand, I'm making things happen, I'm keeping the wheels turning, I'm moving in the right direction and I'm leading from the front.'

I've surprised myself at the reaction I get to this answer. Maybe some are wondering what is wrong me, but most of the time, people smile, congratulate me and then ask for my help. Result!

You might not want to use my exact words, but I'd encourage you to embrace my approach.

There isn't very much effective leadership out there in the world and some of us are called to serve in both leadership and management. It can be a heavy responsibility, but we also know that it's one of the ways in which we define ourselves.

So, a reminder to me, and perhaps to you, that the next time somebody asks how you are, your job is to reassure and inspire them.

The answer to 'how are you?' isn't about you – it's about the person asking.

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Calm Dental

Agata Kijowska shares how she brought her vision of a dental practice where patients would feel safe and secure while receiving the highest standard of care to life

Dr Agata Kijowska always had a clear ambition: to create a dental practice that combined cutting-edge technology with an atmosphere of calm and trust. Growing up in Poland, she was deeply inspired by her mother, a successful dentist, who had run her practice with compassion and precision for decades.

'From an early age, I admired how my mother not only cared for her patients but also created a warm, welcoming environment,' Agata says. 'Her dedication left a lasting impression, and I knew that one day I wanted to establish a practice with the same ethos.'

After graduating from Jagiellonian University Collegium Medicum in Cracow, Agata moved to London with her partner to explore new opportunities in dentistry. While working as an associate dentist, she became increasingly motivated to create her own practice that reflected her values and addressed the challenges she had observed in traditional clinics.

THE JOURNEY BEGINS

Despite her passion, the journey to opening Calm Dental was not without its challenges. 'Starting a practice in a foreign country can be daunting,' she

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admits. 'However, my partner's deep understanding of the UK business market and great financial skills made this journey far more manageable.'

Together, they began searching for the perfect location. Bermondsey, situated near the heart of London, captured their attention immediately.

The area, with its new builds and clean streets, felt calm and welcoming, making it an ideal location for the dental practice. The surrounding new offices and residential buildings also promised a thriving community.

The journey from idea to reality was not a straightforward one. Securing the property required careful financial planning, including taking out a loan to cover the purchase and fitting out of the clinic. Furthermore, the transition from being an associate dentist, where equipment and resources are readily provided, to owning a practice brought a steep learning curve.

One significant delay occurred while waiting for the certification confirming the property's Class E status. 'It was a challenging time, but having the right support from experienced professionals kept us on track,' says Agata.

Once the certifications were in place, the design and building processes moved forward quickly. Agata enlisted the expertise of KTM Design to bring

The ethos

The Calm Dental mission is to provide exceptional dental care in a tranquil and welcoming environment. The practice believes that a calm atmosphere is essential for creating a positive patient experience, helping to alleviate anxiety and ensure comfort throughout every visit. By blending advanced technology with a patient-first approach, the practice delivers personalised care that enhances oral health and overall wellbeing.

Calm Dental's commitment to holistic care extends to its collaboration with experts in dermatology and aesthetic medicine, offering patients a comprehensive range of services to enhance their confidence and overall appearance. With a focus on excellence, integrity and compassion, the practice strives to create a space where every patient feels cared for, valued and empowered.



her vision to life: 'I wanted the space to embody calmness and care, ensuring every patient felt at ease from the moment they walked in'.

EQUIPPING THE PRACTICE

Choosing the right dental equipment was a top priority for Agata. Patient experience goes beyond the care provided by a dedicated professional, it's also shaped by the equipment used during treatment. From the ease of getting in and out of a dental chair with an adjustable armrest to the seamless motion as it adjusts to the dentist's needs, every detail matters for a patient.

A-dec chairs stood out for their precision hydraulic motion, ensuring quiet and gentle stops and starts during patient positioning. The innovative virtual pivot system synchronises the chair's movement with the patient's natural motion, eliminating the need for constant readjustment as the chair reclines or returns. This attention to detail enhances both comfort and efficiency, making a significant difference in the overall experience.

For Agata, the choice of equipment was also personal. 'Back in time, my mother's practice relied on A-dec chairs, and they always impressed me with their quality and comfort,' she says.

Agata conducted thorough research to ensure her decision was well-informed. She attended a dental show, which allowed her to explore a wide range of equipment and offered the opportunity to test and compare options. Recognising the value of hands-on experience, she also visited A-dec's showroom for a one-on-one appointment.

'At the showroom, Justin Hind, A-dec's territory manager for London and south east England, walked me through the features and focused on ergonomics and workflow optimisation,' she says. This in-depth consultation provided valuable insights and solidified her decision. Their support, from selection to installation, was invaluable.'

Ultimately, Calm Dental was equipped with A-dec 500 chairs, perfectly aligning with the practice's mission to deliver excellence and prioritise patient comfort. This thoughtful choice reflects Agata's dedication to creating a superior dental experience for every patient.

Agata emphasises the importance of collaboration in achieving success. From the builders at Aspects Building Contractors to the financial team at Snowbird Finance, every contributor played a vital role in bringing Calm Dental to life.

'The support we received from experts and partners was incredible,' she says. 'It reinforced the idea that success is a collective effort.'

Technology plays a pivotal role at Calm Dental. From advanced imaging systems to patient management software, every aspect of the clinic is designed for efficiency and precision. The A-dec equipment, combined with state-of-the-art tools, ensures that patients receive the highest standard of care.

'Our goal is to blend technology with a human touch,' Agata explains. 'It's about making treatments more effective while maintaining a personal connection with each patient.'

DESIGNING A CALM ENVIRONMENT

Creating a calm atmosphere was central to the practice's ethos. 'Dental visits can be stressful for many people,' Agata notes. 'I wanted to design a space that immediately put patients at ease.'

The clinic features soothing colours, natural lighting and carefully chosen furnishings that emphasise tranquility. Every design element, from the layout to the décor, was selected to promote a calming experience for patients and staff alike.

KTM Design translated the brand ethos into reality: muted tones, natural wood accents, and soundproofed treatment rooms create a serene, stress-free environment.



A small olive tree graces the reception area, complemented by calming music, cleanliness and minimalism, ensuring every patient feels relaxed and focused on their wellbeing.

When it came to digital marketing, Calm Dental worked with Webronika (for its web design) and Katarina Gray (for its logo design). 'Both were instrumental in establishing our online and social media presence with cohesive visuals and a strong brand identity,' says Agata.

Building a patient base requires a strategic approach to marketing. Calm Dental utilises social media platforms like Instagram and Facebook to share behind-the-scenes videos and patient testimonials, combined with Google My Business to attract London's discerning patients.

'We also send personalised letters to patients, which helps foster a sense of connection and inclusion,' she says. Since opening, Calm Dental has seen a healthy number of bookings, though marketing efforts remain ongoing to further establish its presence in the community.

REFLECTING ON THE JOURNEY

Since opening its doors, Calm Dental has quickly become a trusted name in the Bermondsey community. Patients appreciate the clinic's patient-first approach, advanced treatments, and serene environment.

Reflecting on her journey, Agata says: 'Transitioning from an associate to a practice owner was a significant shift, but it's been the most rewarding experience of my career.'

'Every challenge taught me something valuable, and seeing the positive impact we've had on patients makes it all worthwhile.'



For those considering starting a practice, Agata offers heartfelt advice: 'Take the leap. Trust your instincts and seek guidance from experienced professionals. Starting a practice is a commitment, but the rewards – both personal and professional – are unparalleled.'

Seek guidance from experienced professionals, collaborate with supportive companies, and remember that you're not alone in this journey. Starting a practice is a significant commitment, but success is achievable with determination and the right support.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Calm Dental has ambitious plans for the future, including expanding its services, especially in the aesthetic area and adding more surgeries.

Agata remains committed to her vision of providing exceptional care in a calm, welcoming environment.

'Our mission is to make every patient feel cared for, valued and empowered,' she concludes. 'With determination and the right team, anything is possible.'

Who was involved?

Dental chairs
A-dec

Dental equipment dealer
Hague Dental Supplies

Logo design
Katarina Gray

Builders
Aspects Building Contractors

Finance
Snowbird Finance

Practice management software
Dentally

Practice design
KTM Design

Website developer
Webronika

kuraray



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- 13.30 - 14.30 **Zohaib Ali** The Flowable Injection Technique
- 14.45 - 15.45 **Mathias Fernandez Y Lombardi** CERABIEN™ MiLai
- 16.15 - 17.15 **Patrick Van Looy** Composite core build-up and post cementation

SATURDAY 17TH OF MAY

- 10.30 - 11.30 **Kostia Vyshamirski** Greenstate carving of zirconia
- 12.00 - 13.00 **Junaid Malik & Shah Sachin** Flowable Injection Technique
- 13.30 - 14.30 **Patrick Van Looy** Composite core build-up and post cementation
- 15.00 - 16.00 **Kostia Vyshamirski** Micro-layering with CERABIEN™ MiLai

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Helder Dos Santos Manager of DSO Education and Partnership Strategy, +44 (0)7350 416 455, helder.dossantos@kuraray.com

Get the look

This month we're looking at ways of incorporating a timeless black and white palette into practice décor. Presenting the *Private Dentistry* monochrome must-haves



1 Gear Side Table
Norr11, £470

4 All White No.2005 Modern Eggshell 2.5l
Farrow & Ball, £85

3 Ridotti – Matt Black Raffia Pendant
Lights&lamps, £169

5 Black and White Double Socket
Dowsing and Reynolds, £29

3 Hippo Lounge Chair
Norr11, £2,000

6 Urchin Black Ceramic Spike Table Lamp Base
Ruma, £145



7



8



9



10



11



12

7 Stoneware Vase
H&M, £14.99

8 Miles Charcoal Fluted Mango White Marble Round Coffee Table
Interior Envy, £455

9 Gear Coffee Table
Norrl1, £620

10 Serena Black Bobble Ceramic Large Table Lamp Base
Ruma, £145

11 Elements Striking Soap Dispenser Matt Black
Villeroy Boch, £170

12 Soho Striped Pouffe
Cult Furniture, £99



DDU

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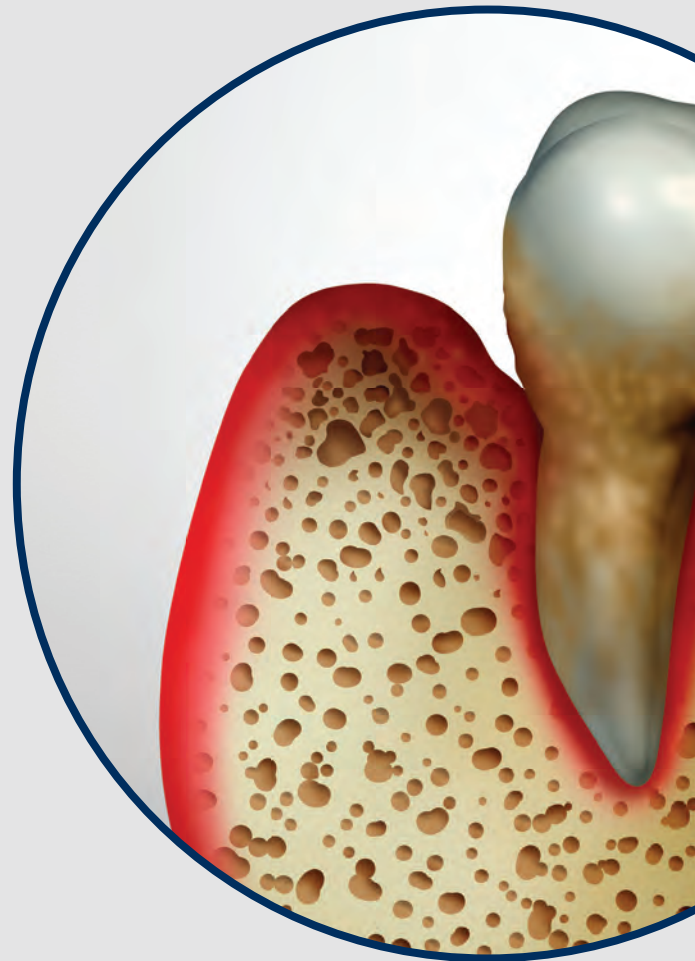
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Impactful simplicity

Mojtaba 'Moj' Dehghanpour opens the door to Yourdental Wellness, winner of New Practice London at the 2024 Private Dentistry Awards

Islington in north London was an area Mojtaba 'Moj' Dehghanpour had only glimpsed while passing through as a dental student at Queen Mary University during the noughties. Years later, after enduring long commutes to Kent via an often congested M25, a friend inspired him to start a new chapter – establishing a squat practice closer to home.

This time, he saw Islington through a different lens. Viewing the neighbourhood with a fresh perspective and a mature business head, he was drawn to Upper Street. This vibrant, populated stretch of the A1 buzzed with youthful energy and had an irresistible pull.

AN HOLISTIC APPROACH

Yourdental Wellness is part of the expanding trend in private dental clinics prioritising a holistic approach to health and wellbeing. In addition to general dentistry, orthodontics, cosmetic dentistry and implants, the clinical team offers skin and wellness treatments such as vitamin infusions, acupuncture and a full complement of facial aesthetic procedures.

The clinic's modern frontage and minimalist branding sit comfortably alongside the boutiques, trendy pubs, bars, diverse restaurants, delis and coffee shops that give the area



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WEBSITE
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its eclectic and vibrant feel. Hugely gentrified over recent decades, kerb appeal matters to the influx of young and affluent professionals, and Moj's 'dentist' eye for aesthetic harmony has served him well.

Previously a Bang & Olufsen retailer, the premises are situated on a corner of a quiet side street, offering a double-fronted view. From either perspective, passers-by can take in Moj's thoughtful simplicity. Its modern architectural aesthetic, clean lines and minimalist tonal colour palette give the modest square meterage an illusion of space. The front desk, with its neat, rounded edges, the subtle floor lighting and the glass balustrade on the staircase leading to surgeries on the newly installed mezzanine, create the all-essential 'wow' factor.

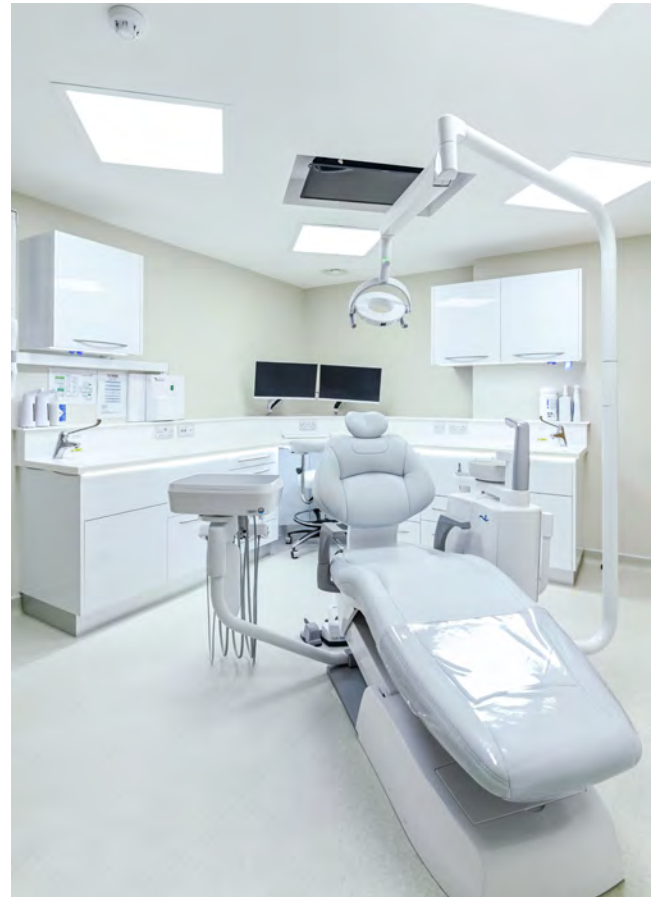
TAKING ROOT

But let's roll back to where the seeds of this ambition took root. After graduating in 2007, Moj got a training post in Norfolk, becoming a partner in the practice and remaining there for seven years before relocating to London. He also practised in Qatar, and both roles gave him a head start.

Practice ownership so early in his career gifted him the clinical freedom to embark on courses to expand his skill set; the Middle East experience an appreciation of contemporary design.

By 2016, Moj was working at Hospital Lane Dental and Implant Clinic in Kent – a multidisciplinary dental practice that, he says, was a 'phenomenal place to practise' and was founded by Tony Auger and Richard Ebanks, who had opened the purpose-built private dental practice in April 2007. However, when the business was sold to Bupa shortly after COVID-19, it served as a catalyst for change.

'I felt it was time to finally do my own thing. I'd been commuting from north west London to Hospital Lane – at times a two-hour journey on the M25 – since September



2016, when I returned to the UK from Qatar. In fact, I only gave up my associate role at Hospital Lane in December 2024. But, I felt there was a demand for a different kind of dentistry in various areas in and around north London.'

Impressively, Moj was very hands-on with his due diligence, taking annual leave over the Easter period in 2022 for some thorough area research. He recalls: 'I thought I could be with my family and explore potential opportunities. However, when my wife and son got COVID-19, it left me more time for my research.

'Over that week, I conducted extensive Google searches and looked into multiple practices in and around the areas I considered commutable. Islington stood out as it mostly met the criteria I had in mind. It is a shorter commute from home, and it suited the type of clinic I wanted to open.'

Inspiration for the design of Yourdental Wellness came from numerous places. 'It was a combination of things,' he says. 'I love the aesthetic of the Apple store in Regent Street, but primarily, I was trying to recreate a video of a spa in Dubai – the look, feel, and colour palette. I also wanted a premium-sounding name.'

The practice aligns perfectly with the boutique-style offerings in the area, which emphasise beauty and wellness and mirror the ethos of nearby businesses such as Pilates studios and skincare boutiques.

GOING UP

Despite being a massively saturated area – ‘there are eight other dental practices within a 15-minute walk’ – footfall has increased monthly.

‘The young professionals we target often prioritise convenience and quality over loyalty, so they tend not to stick to a single dental practice, which may have worked to our advantage,’ Moj says.

January marked a milestone with record-breaking patient numbers. However, he is cautious about discussing growth since opening its doors on 10 July 2023.

‘Yourdental Wellness fits the area and clientele. Maybe if I had created the same brand and launched it elsewhere, it may not have succeeded,’ he laughs. ‘We initially invested in a marketing campaign, but in all honesty, it has been the quality of the team that has elevated this business – from the front of the house to our dental nurses and hygienists to managerial staff and our dentists and specialists. They all play an enormous role in ensuring its success. Dentistry is more than just the aesthetic of a practice, its branding and reputation.’



Meet Moj

Moj is a highly skilled dentist with a special interest in restorative and cosmetic dentistry. He takes referrals for tooth wear and full-mouth rehabilitations. With over 13 years of experience in dental implants and a diploma from the Royal College of Surgeons in Edinburgh, Moj is among the few dentists with credentials from all three UK royal colleges. He holds a master’s in restorative dentistry from the Eastman Dental Institute in London. He has mentored newly qualified dentists and holds a fellowship at the Higher Education Academy.



This was borne out recently when Yourdental Wellness ticked all the boxes for the judges at the 2024 Private Dentistry Awards. Moj’s commitment paid off, as it scooped the New Practice London title and received a highly commended nod for its practice brand and design.

ENHANCING THE PATIENT EXPERIENCE

The three-storey practice has three surgeries, with a fourth planned this year. He has invested hugely in technology and equipment to enhance the patient experience. The treatment centres are all from Belmont and match the clinic’s drive for efficiency, reliability – and comfort.

‘I chose Belmont treatment centres because the models are dependable workhorses. Once the fourth surgery is installed, we will have two Eurus S6s with a folding leg-rest and two Eurus S8s. Based on conversations with colleagues and experience, I know parts are readily available, and servicing is reliable. While I’ve worked with other brands that focus on sleek, high-tech designs, they often overcomplicate things. I prefer simplicity, durability and patient comfort.’

THE ULTIMATE DECISION

Despite an irrepressible enthusiasm for his chosen profession and the vast successes it has brought him, dentistry was not his first love.

‘I originally wanted to study medicine and got some work experience in various London hospitals. Then, one day, a consultant sat me down and talked me through the money and hours to dissuade me from that path. My dad knew a dentist and secured some experience in a practice. After two weeks, the dentist explained that his career choice gave him control over his hours and life, allowing him to enjoy his profession.’

The stark difference in work-life balance between the doctor and the dentist greatly influenced Moj’s career choice. ‘After those two weeks, I quickly rewrote my UCAS application and replaced “I’ve always had an interest in medicine” with “I have always had an interest in dentistry”,’ he laughs.

What started as youthful enthusiasm on paper has developed into tangible success. In February, Moj opened his second squat practice in the equally dynamic postcode of Maida Vale in west London. Yourdental Wellness – and Moj – seem poised for a capital future.



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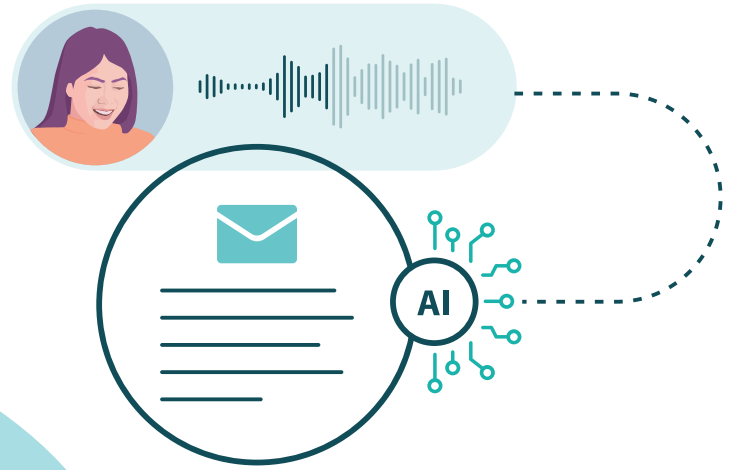
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‘Trust laid bare’ – making marketing personal

Christina Chatfield on how a wake-up call led her to take a fresh approach to her patient education

Eighteen years ago, dental hygienist Christina Chatfield launched one of the UK’s first hygiene-led clinics, Dental Health Spa, in Brighton. Since then, the clinical director has taken a break from surgery to enjoy a healthier work-life balance. However, she has just returned to the forefront of the clinic’s marketing efforts as a case study, chronicling her smile makeover journey to educate patients about the realities of dental treatment. As she puts it, it’s ‘trust laid bare’.

The reason? Her perspective on her marketing strategy, particularly regarding cosmetic dentistry, took a profound turn when a poor Google review – ‘the patient had not fully understood the consequences of opting for a pared-down treatment plan and felt we were overselling’ – got her thinking.

Reflecting on her efforts to educate patients, she felt she had fallen short. Determined to make a difference, she is now sharing her experience as a patient at her clinic with dentist and colleague Mhiran Patel to highlight the benefits of carefully considered treatment here in the UK.



Christina Chatfield

Christina is a dental hygienist and owner of Dental Health Spa in Brighton.

A CREATIVE APPROACH

This isn’t Christina’s first foray into what is a very personal approach. In 2013, she launched her clinic in style with a consumer campaign to showcase a business that was worlds apart from what consumers expected from a dental practice.

With the tagline ‘Have nothing to fear, Chrissie’s Angels are here’, it featured her and some colleagues in wigs and costumes – a playful take on the *Charlie’s Angels* brand – promising a more boutique environment in which to have dental treatment (Figure 1).

This was long before Instagram became the powerhouse it is today, and her creative approach to standing out in a crowded market proved successful, coinciding with the lifting of regulations to allow for direct access.

SPARKING INTEREST

Ultimately, it has always been part of her approach to ‘build trust from the ground up’. ‘Knowledge is powerful,’ Christina says. ‘When combined with trust, accessibility and affordability, it’s key to patient communication and can form the foundations of a strong business model.’

Dentistry requires multiple communication approaches, and Christina is especially mindful of this in the context of neurodiversity.

‘The onus is on us to spark their interest in unique ways – through visual journeys, written and spoken words. We must capture patients via multiple mediums to stop them from making costly, life-changing mistakes. As a profession, we should always ask ourselves if we are effectively communicating the key messages, particularly given the trend of people seeking dental treatments abroad, often at the expense of their long-term oral health. I had to ask myself: at what point did my communication fall short?’

While acknowledging the appeal of more affordable treatments overseas, Christina firmly believes in UK-based dentistry. She also understands that this comes from a position of advantage.

‘After that Google review, I looked at the processes involved, observed a treatment and decided to go for it. Choosing to have my treatment here was a conscious decision based on a professional understanding. I accept this is from an informed perspective, so I felt I needed to work on my messaging so that patients understand the risks of going elsewhere. This can be a real challenge.’

For Christina, this demands high levels of honesty and authenticity, even though sharing her treatment journey contradicts her natural

resistance to being in front of the camera. 'It's a significant thing for me, as I dislike having my photo taken,' she says. 'But we can convey the nuances of treatment choices by talking about topics like buccal corridors and the benefits of breadth in having eight teeth treated with composite veneers rather than four (that would not have given me the smile I wanted).'

'However, we must also acknowledge that this isn't easy to get across without some people thinking we are overselling. We should also make treatment options as affordable as possible with several entry levels, so patients don't feel that need to travel.'

MAKING IT PERSONAL

In her blog on the practice website, she begins by saying: 'As the owner and dental hygienist at Dental Health Spa, you might think I'm slightly biased when discussing dental treatments. That's why I wanted to share my journey, complete with before and after photos, to give you full transparency. From traditional orthodontics to Invisalign and, finally, composite bonding, I've explored multiple avenues to achieve the smile I've always wanted.'

She explains: 'People need the proper knowledge to make informed decisions about their health, so I wanted to share a natural and unfiltered version of myself. To communicate more effectively – both verbally and visually – I'm creating engaging content for social media and our website. For example, explaining biological width to patients in a way that makes sense isn't always easy. That's why we filmed face-to-face blog content with Mhiran and me talking through my case using simple, relatable terms. Education should come first.'

'Guided minimal prep is taking the market, and we aim to ensure treatment is minimally invasive and maximally fit, delivering what patients want – but more importantly, what they clinically need. If we do not offer these services, they will go elsewhere.'

'Sharing personal transformations also makes us more approachable. I always ask potential employees if they have an Instagram account



at interviews. It's a great way to see how they present themselves. I also encourage my team to engage in activities outside their daily job to showcase their human side – it helps people relate to them.

'Highlighting personal stories may encourage patients to share their transformation journeys.'

STANDING OUT

Patients receive personalised feedback forms, and the team actively encourages Google reviews – both of which Christina responds quickly to.

'As an independent practice, we must stand out and compete with those corporate brands with massive budgets. I want people to consider us as a family hygienist-led but collaborative dental practice that

I WANTED TO SHARE A NATURAL AND UNFILTERED VERSION OF MYSELF



offers all sorts of treatments – and personality, trust, and authenticity make us stand out as a brand. We need patients to trust us.

‘The feedback sheets offer immediacy, and I quickly pick up on these. I then sit with the team to discuss areas for improvement, knowing that feedback will always

include some negatives. However, overall, we do perform well.

‘We build rapport and use a treatment coordinator (TCO) who spends time with patients about to start their journey. We also have a book of smiles in the waiting room.

‘People have noticed my teeth, and I explain that this transformation

didn’t happen overnight. Pathways have changed because technology has evolved, completely altering perspectives on dentistry.

‘Digitalisation is revolutionising what we can accomplish with scanners that enable our patients to visualise changes before they occur. By sharing digital images, patients can view their current smiles and potential results from the comfort of their homes. We believe in building strong foundations and never perform a smile makeover on an unstable base.

‘This approach embodies ethical selling – focusing on informed consent and prevention rather than quick fixes.’

Six reasons to showcase your smile transformation

1. Authenticity builds trust. By sharing my journey, I show patients that I share their needs and wants. Utilising my own story makes our social media presence relatable. Showing off your smile transformation also shows confidence in your team’s work. Patients are more likely to trust their expertise when they see that you believe in it yourself. Too many picture-perfect professionals talk on social media, so keep it authentic and unfiltered
2. A personal connection with your community. Brighton is a close-knit town, and I’ve had people stop me in the street to comment on my new smile. Patients love seeing the real people behind the practice, and it’s comforting to know that the person caring for their smile has been through the same journey. It makes the whole process feel more achievable
3. Living proof of your team’s expertise. Your smile is the best testimonial! It is a visible testament to what your team can achieve, reinforcing the practice’s credibility
4. Stronger engagement. Personal stories and transformations always resonate more, especially on social media. Sharing your experience helps spark conversations and connect with more people
5. Standing out from the crowd. Most of us share patient results, but few highlight our own journeys. By doing so, we differentiate ourselves in a competitive field
6. Inspiring confidence in patients. When a dental professional chooses to undergo treatment, it reassures patients that it’s worth it. I’ve had so many people ask about my experience, which has led to great conversations and encourages others to take the next step in their smile journey.

DRIVING GROWTH

The transformation she has undergone is incredible, she says. ‘I can hardly describe how I feel about my smile now – I’m not sure facial recognition would work anymore!

‘People also need to know that I am still very much part of the team – creating our branding and marketing drives me, and I enjoy working with Victoria Clark, our dental marketing and media consultant, on this.

‘I hope my blog serves as another authentic way to grow the business. It is a genuine and heartfelt reflection of my journey, and I feel very privileged to have been involved at every step. Even if I were a patient rather than the practice owner, I would be delighted with the results.’

Fending off the inheritance tax trap

Rebecca Johnson shares smart strategies to help practice owners safeguard their legacy



As a dental practice owner, your primary focus is ensuring the success of your business while delivering high-quality care to your patients. The daily responsibilities of managing staff, maintaining compliance, and growing your practice can be overwhelming. However, one critical financial issue that often goes overlooked is inheritance tax (IHT) liability, which could significantly impact the future of your business and your family's financial security.

With the IHT threshold fixed at £325,000 – or £500,000 when factoring in the residence nil rate band (RNRB) – until at least 2030, an increasing number of estates, including those of dental practice owners, are becoming subject to IHT.

With a steep 40% tax applied to assets exceeding these limits, this could significantly reduce the wealth you pass on, and pose serious challenges to the future continuity of your practice.

Recent data from HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) already shows a notable rise in IHT collections, a trend that is projected to continue.

HOW IHT COULD TAKE A BITE OUT OF YOUR LEGACY

Rising property values, inflation and the unchanged threshold mean more families are finding themselves unexpectedly liable for IHT. The combination means that many dental practice owners may now be at risk.

Owning a successful practice means accumulating high-value business assets, property and savings, all of which could push more of your estate well beyond the tax-free threshold.

Dental business owners may find it harder to qualify for the RNRB due to the high value of their estates. If an estate is worth more than £2 million, the available RNRB is reduced by £1 for every £2 over this threshold. Even though business property relief (BPR) can provide 100% tax relief on qualifying business assets, the business's total value still counts when calculating the overall estate, which can affect RNRB eligibility.

Changes to BPR announced in the autumn budget are expected to take effect from 6 April 2026. Currently, BPR provides 100% tax relief on business

WITHOUT PROPER PLANNING, A LARGE PORTION OF YOUR HARD-EARNED WEALTH COULD BE LOST TO INHERITANCE TAX

assets, but under the proposed new rules, this could only apply to businesses worth up to £1 million. For businesses valued above this, only half of the amount exceeding £1 million will be tax-free, while the remaining half may be taxed at 20% under IHT.

With the average dental practice selling for around £1.32 million in 2023 according to Christie & Co's *Dental Market Report 2024*, these changes could lead to higher tax bills for practice owners.

In addition, a major policy change set for April 2027 could further increase IHT liabilities. Currently, pensions are exempt from IHT, allowing individuals to pass on their pension pots tax-free. However, the government has announced plans to remove this exemption, potentially subjecting practice owners' pension assets to a 40% tax rate.



Rebecca Johnson

Rebecca is a dental specialist financial planner at Wesleyan Financial Services, supporting dentists with the intricacies of financial planning from business succession and retirement exit strategies to commercial investments.

PLAN AHEAD OR PAY THE PRICE

If proper estate planning isn't in place, your dental practice could face serious financial challenges upon your passing. Without a clear strategy, your beneficiaries may need to sell business assets to cover the IHT bill, potentially jeopardising the continuity of the practice.

Moreover, the transition of ownership can be complex, particularly if multiple stakeholders are involved. Whether you plan to pass the business on to a family member, sell it, or establish a partnership succession plan, careful planning is essential to avoid tax pitfalls and unnecessary disruptions.

Given the increasing risk of IHT liability, now might be the time to act.

Reviewing your estate plan, considering tax-efficient

business structures, and ensuring that your will and partnership agreements reflect your wishes can help safeguard your practice and your family's financial future.

That said, when it comes to the proposed changes to BPR and pension liability, exercise caution when receiving financial advice from sources urging immediate, drastic action. These particular proposals have been under consultation, with the review concluding only at the end of January.

Financial advice should be based on current legislation, and until further details are released on how the changes will be implemented, acting prematurely could leave you at risk of making irreversible mistakes if any curve balls come to light.

SECURE YOUR LEGACY

Dental practice owners may benefit from seeking specialist financial advice to protect their assets. A financial planner who specialises in dentistry can help with business relief, trusts and succession planning tailored to your needs.

Without proper planning, a large portion of your hard-earned wealth could be lost to IHT, creating stress for your loved ones. Taking proactive steps now ensures your practice thrives and your wealth is preserved for future generations.

Inheritance tax planning is not regulated by the FCA.

For tailored financial advice specific to dental practice owners, get in touch with a specialist financial planner at Wesleyan Financial Services. Visit bit.ly/4ixZPb8 or call 0808 149 9416.



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From chaos to



Rana Al-Falaki details the five behaviours of high-performing dental teams

Do you find you can't switch off – even when you're on holiday? Your phone pings relentlessly with messages from

staff who still need your guidance. You dread returning to work, knowing you'll face a pile of unresolved issues and a team that leans on you for everything.

Inside the practice, tensions run high. The reception team has so much else to juggle and is struggling to fill the diary, despite a waiting list. Clinicians are frustrated with undertrained dental nurses, bypassing the practice manager and coming straight to you with complaints. Meanwhile, the dental

nurses are at odds with each other, their disagreements spilling over into patient-facing areas.

Some team members are constantly relied upon, while others are avoided because it's easier to do things yourself. The team environment is fractured.

If this sounds familiar then the first thing you need to do is create a high performing team!

A strong team isn't only about reducing stress – it's directly linked to business success. Research shows:

- 50% lower staff turnover in engaged practices (Gallup, 2022)
- 21% higher productivity in high-functioning teams (*Harvard Business Review*, 2021)
- Up to 20% higher profitability in cohesive dental teams (ADA, 2023)
- More five-star patient reviews when team morale is high (*BMC Health Services Research*, 2022).

REAL-LIFE SCENARIO

For Dr NS, this scenario was her reality. Her team was disjointed, frustrated and unmotivated. Even her best and most loyal dental nurse was looking to leave. Dr NS wished she could leave – but given it was her practice, that wasn't an option!

When I first met a rather rattled Dr NS, she was convinced a few more admin days on her part would sort the issue out. 'If I work more hours and stay in the practice even when I'm not seeing patients, my team will get more motivated and we'll bump up the revenue,' she said.

Like many practice owners, Dr NS thought working longer hours and being more available would solve the team's dysfunction. She did just that, taking on even more responsibility. However, instead of resolving problems, things only got worse.

It was clear that working harder



Dr Rana Al-Falaki

Rana is founder of Meddent Leadership & Wellbeing Academy, a multi-award-winning periodontist, coach, author, speaker. She blends more than 25 years' experience with the groundbreaking NAIL-IT system to transform lives. For more details, visit www.meddent.co.uk.

wasn't working. Dr NS needed a new approach.

I introduced her to the five behaviours model of a cohesive team. I explained that a high-performing team is like a perfect circle and that you can't make a circle out of squares.

To make the circle, the parts needed to be reshaped so they fit together perfectly.

She needed to stop micromanaging and start reshaping her team into a cohesive, high-performing unit.

THE FIVE BEHAVIOURS

We began with a 'five behaviours team assessment' to identify strengths, challenges and blind spots. This gave us tangible, science-backed data to build from. We then implemented the five behaviours model, which consisted of:

1. Building trust
2. Mastering conflict
3. Achieving commitment
4. Embracing accountability
5. Focusing on results.

1. Building trust

Trust in teams is about vulnerability – when team members feel safe, they admit mistakes, ask for help and offer support instead of competing. This builds a culture of collaboration rather than blame.

An example: one dental nurse admitted she wasn't confident in certain clinical procedures – something she had been too afraid to say before. By fostering trust, she received extra training, easing pressure on others and increasing overall efficiency.

2. Mastering conflict

Avoiding conflict breeds resentment, while unstructured conflict creates chaos. High-performing teams engage in healthy conflict, which means they debate ideas openly and respectfully without turning them into personal attacks. This leads to better decisions, reduces tensions and fosters innovation.

An example: instead of meetings turning into moaning sessions, the team learned to have structured, solution-focused discussions.

Building a high-performing team

- More hours won't fix it: you can't work your way out of a dysfunctional team
- Your team needs structure combined with effective leadership: mastering these five behaviours creates a clear roadmap for success
- Invest in training, not firefighting: one-off interventions won't create lasting change – ongoing reinforcement is key
- Your practice's success is your team's success: the best investment you can make isn't in new equipment – it's in building a high-performing team

A HIGH-PERFORMING TEAM IS LIKE A PERFECT CIRCLE

This gave everyone a voice while reinforcing personal responsibility.

3. Achieving commitment

Without buy-in, even great ideas fail. When teams commit to decisions – even if they don't fully agree – they follow through because they feel heard and involved.

An example: after refining communication, the team stopped nodding in meetings without action. The reception team reprioritised the diary, reducing gaps and increasing appointment efficiency.

4. Embracing accountability

When accountability is strong, team members hold each other responsible rather than relying on one person (usually the practice owner or manager) to enforce standards. This creates a self-managing team that takes ownership of tasks and no one can hide in the shadows.

An example: instead of Dr NS constantly chasing up incomplete admin work, the team introduced peer accountability check-ins. This resulted in faster task completion and a noticeable drop in last-minute problems landing

on her desk. She could take a day off and genuinely let go of the responsibilities.

5. Focusing on results

A high-performing team is goal-driven, not just task-driven. Instead of working in silos, they focus on what's best for the patients and the practice.

An example: when team members shifted their mindset, they stopped seeing vacant appointments as 'not my problem' and instead proactively filled slots, increasing treatment uptake by 18% in just three months.

FROM DYSFUNCTION TO COHESION: THE TRANSFORMATION

I led the team through an interactive training day, working through the assessment results and taking part in bespoke activities focused on the five behaviours. Together, the team created an action plan, ensuring everyone had ownership of the improvements.

Over the next few months, I continued coaching and reinforcing these behaviours, making them second nature. Three months later, we conducted a follow-up assessment, and the results spoke for themselves:

- No more threats to leave – team retention stabilised
- Stronger collaboration – dental nurses and clinicians worked together seamlessly
- Boosted morale – team members reported a happier, more positive workplace
- Patients noticed the difference – five-star reviews increased by 30%, with comments about the practice's amazing atmosphere
- Higher productivity – fewer gaps, improved efficiency, and better treatment acceptance rates
- Revenue increased by 18% as a direct result of stronger teamwork.

Most importantly, Dr NS was finally able to take a stress-free holiday, knowing that her team could handle the practice without her micromanagement.

If you want a team that runs smoothly without you constantly carrying the load, it's time to reshape the parts and build your circle.

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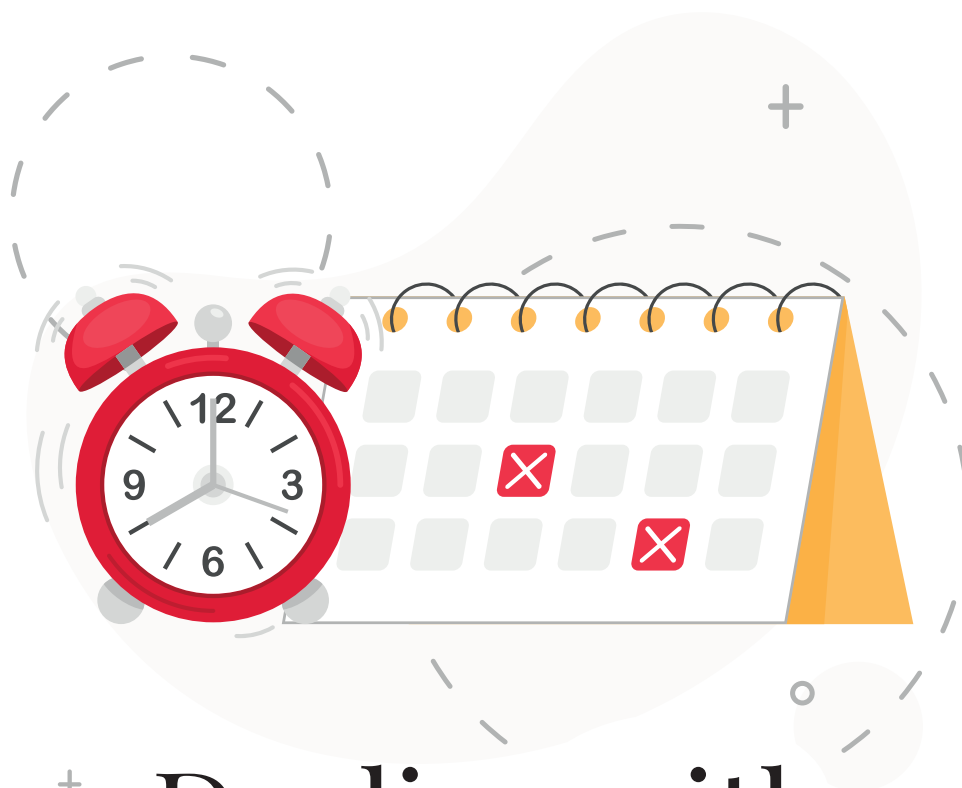
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+ Dealing with cancellations

Donna Hall suggests ways of dealing with 'cancel culture' in practice and looks at the perks of membership plans

Although inflation appears to have come back down to levels around the Bank of England's target of 2%, for many, the cost of living remains an issue. Practices are still seeing patients cancelling appointments and delaying treatment, citing affordability as the reason why. In this article, I'd like to present some ways of dealing with 'cancel culture' in dental practice.

Despite large numbers of patients being aware they will struggle to find NHS dental care and have accepted that private dentistry is their only viable option, many still feel affording this is a challenge.



Donna Hall

Donna has been a regional support manager at Practice Plan for 10 years. Practice Plan is the UK's leading provider of practice-branded patient membership plans, partnering with over 2,000 dental practices and offering a wide range of business support services.

Often, practices tell me patients are cancelling, or not booking, hygiene appointments, and that the same is true for treatments as well.

HELPING PATIENTS TO BUDGET

Being able to offer patients a way to budget for their oral healthcare can often help overcome these types of issues, which is where a membership plan comes in.

By providing your patients with the option of spreading the cost of examinations and hygiene appointments through monthly payments, they can budget for them rather than being hit with a much bigger charge every few months.

We have found that this, as well as being an attractive solution to the affordability issue, also encourages regular attendance. After all, if you've already paid for something, you want to make sure you get the most out of

it! This has the side effect of meaning the oral health of plan patients is often better than those who pay as they go.

By attending regularly, any potential issues can be caught early and nipped in the bud meaning patients can potentially stave off more extensive (and expensive!) treatments.

In these types of circumstances, it's important to make sure you are talking about your plan with every enquiry that you get, even those that are enquiring about NHS availability.

Tell your potential new patients that you offer a great, low-cost private membership from £X, and then let them know the leading price of your plan. If they are struggling to afford the hygiene appointments, then if they were on a plan, they would be able to spread the cost and budget for them.

When broaching the subject of plans, I advise practices to say something along these lines: 'Most of our patients

become a member of the practice, not only because it's the best way we can keep you healthy, but it also gives you the facility to budget for routine appointments. We can build the right number of hygiene appointments into your care through a prescription service on the plan.'

TAILORED PLANS

If yours is a mixed practice, you may have a scenario where there are NHS patients who pay for private hygiene in practice and want to remain on the NHS for their check-ups and their treatments. If you're finding that those patients are starting to delay booking, or are pushing back their hygiene visits, have you considered offering hygiene-only membership for your patients? That is something Practice Plan can help you provide. Allowing them to pay monthly for their hygiene appointments, in many cases, makes things more manageable meaning they can attend regularly.

We've also come across patients who are delaying treatment or are choosing not to book in for treatment at all. This is where patient finance can be a big help. If you can go and buy a sofa on four years' interest-free credit, why wouldn't you spread the cost of dentistry?

If you are already working with a finance company, are you promoting it to every patient over a certain minimum spend?

Do your patients know finance is on offer and are you utilising it to get the most treatment return?

If your practice is not working with a finance provider already, then as part of the Practice Plan group we have patient finance company Medenta.

Offering patient finance can help patients who might struggle to pay the full cost of treatment in one go the chance to say 'yes' by spreading their payments over a number of months. This can make a huge difference to treatment uptake, especially if it's interest free.

RETAINING PLAN PATIENTS

While it's great to get patients signed up to your membership plan, it's important to also ensure you retain them. Reminding them at every opportunity of the benefits

plan membership affords them is essential to retention.

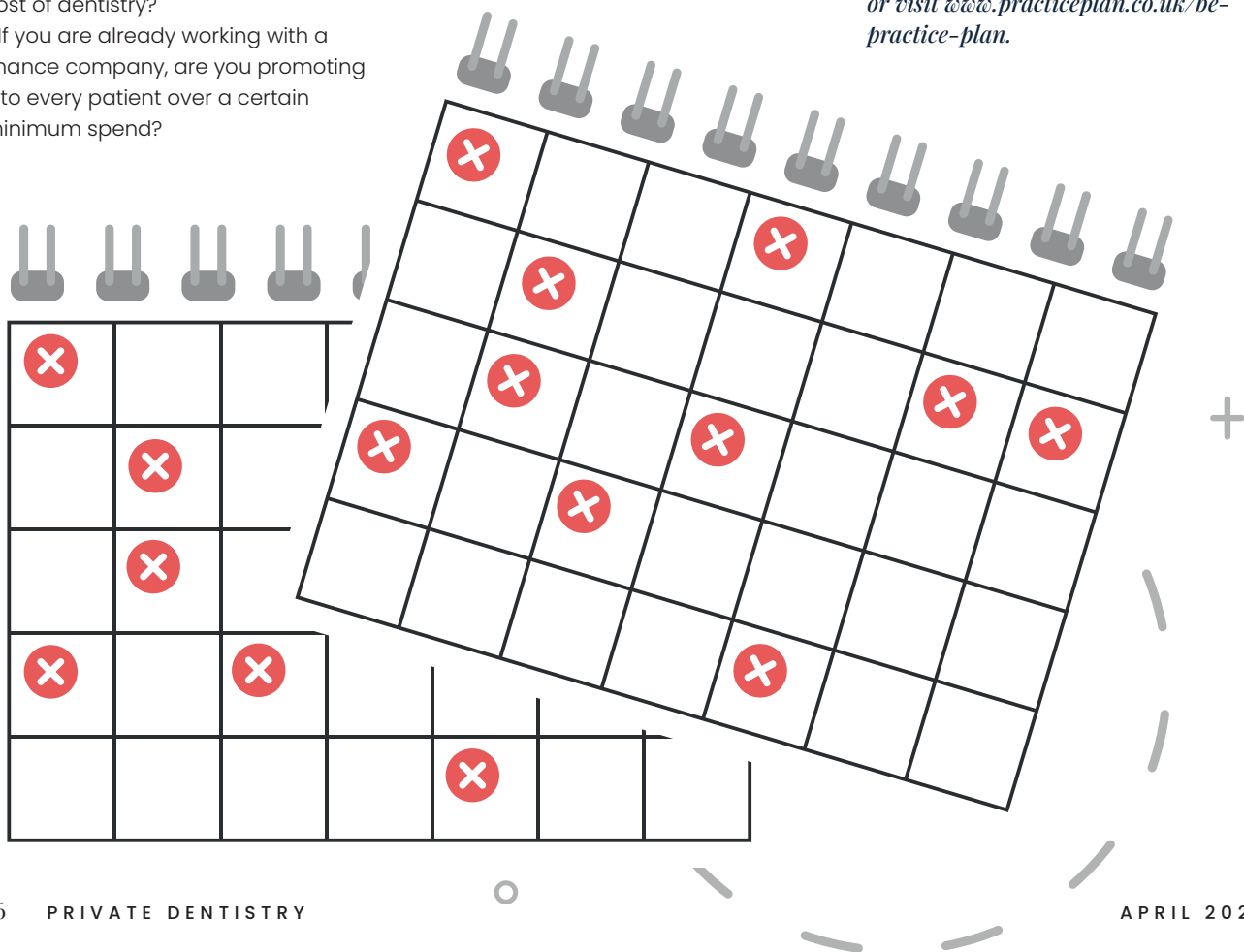
At every touch point you have with a plan patient, there is an opportunity to remind them of this. For example, if they're going on holiday, check they have a copy of the worldwide assistance scheme brochure to take with them in case they have any problems while they're abroad.

When a patient comes in for one of their included examinations or hygiene appointments, as they're leaving remind them there's nothing to pay because they're a member of the practice and it's included in their membership. Or if they need treatment make sure to highlight their member discount has been deducted from the final bill.

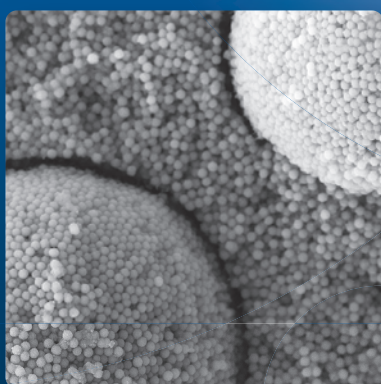
If you have built X-rays into your plan, remind the patient there's no charge as it's included in their membership plan. It's about taking advantage of these touch points to remind patients of the value of being on a plan and showing them the extra benefits they get that wouldn't be available to those who pay as they go.

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Leading the new *generations*

Mark Topley explores why, for the new generations, it's not about perks but about purpose

If you've ever wondered why recruitment feels harder than ever, why retention is a constant battle, or why team members seem to treat jobs as transactional rather than a career, you're not alone.

Over the past three years, I've witnessed the same conversations. Practice owners and managers are grappling with the reality that traditional incentives – higher pay, bonuses, and even free coffee – just don't seem to cut it anymore.

It's easy to fall into the trap of thinking: 'Young people today don't want to work'. Before you start waving a metaphorical walking stick and reminiscing about 'the good old days', remember that for more than a hundred years, every generation has been accused of being lazy.

Newspaper headlines from the 1920s claimed young workers lacked discipline. In the 1960s, employers bemoaned how the baby boomers were too rebellious. Now, gen Z and millennials are getting the same treatment.

The truth is they're not lazy. They're just different. And if we take the time to understand their expectations, we can build stronger, more engaged teams that not only stay but thrive.



Mark Topley

Mark is the founder of responsibledentistry.com and the Great Boss Academy – businesses that provide coaching, consultancy and training for leaders, owners and managers who want a more successful, positive and sustainable business.

WHO ARE WE DEALING WITH?

Millennials (born 1981–1996)

Millennials grew up in a world of rapid technological change, economic recessions, and the rise of social media. They entered the workforce with high expectations for work-life balance, development opportunities, and meaningful work. They were told to 'follow their passion', and they took that advice to heart.

FOR MORE THAN A HUNDRED YEARS, EVERY GENERATION HAS BEEN ACCUSED OF BEING LAZY

Gen Z (born 1997–2012)

Gen Z, on the other hand, grew up during economic instability, climate concerns, and – most recently – a global pandemic. They are the first fully digital generation, with instant access to information and a sharp radar for authenticity. Unlike millennials, they are more risk-averse when it comes to finances and value job security. However, they also demand flexibility, inclusivity and a sense of purpose in their work.

Both generations have been shaped by uncertainty, but rather than making them unreliable, it has made them adaptable. They know how to pivot, upskill and change paths when needed. And that's why job hopping – once seen as a red flag – is just a normal part of their career journey.



WHY DO THEY WORK DIFFERENTLY?

Many managers misinterpret what they see. I often hear: 'They don't want to work weekends', 'They don't check their emails outside of hours' and 'They want a pay rise after six months'.

But these aren't signs of entitlement. They're reflections of a shift in workplace culture:

- Boundaries matter. They watched older generations burn out and vowed not to do the same
- Development is non-negotiable. If they're not growing, they're leaving
- Loyalty is earned. They'll stay if they feel valued, respected, and part of something bigger.

A study by Gallup found that millennials and gen Z expect collaboration, coaching and purpose at work. They don't just work for a paycheque; they want to work for something they believe in.

As Simon Sinek puts it: 'People go to work for a paycheque, but they give their all for a cause.'

But before you panic – you don't need to have a world-changing mission. You just need to show them why their work matters.

LEADING MILLENNIALS AND GEN Z: 10 DOS AND DON'TS

1. Don't assume they're lazy. Do give clear expectations

They want feedback, clarity and direction. If they're disengaged, it's often because they don't know what success looks like.

2. Don't micromanage. Do coach

They grew up in an education system that rewarded creativity and independence. Micromanagement suffocates them. Instead, be a coach – ask questions, guide them, and let them figure things out.

3. Don't focus on hours worked. Do focus on outcomes

In dentistry, where opening hours are fixed and patient appointments dictate the schedule, the principle of focusing on outcomes rather than hours worked still applies – just in a different way.

Millennials and gen Z aren't asking to leave early; they're asking for autonomy, efficiency and a sense of purpose in how they work.

How this applies in a dental practice:

- Empower them to work smarter, not just longer. If they can streamline processes, reduce inefficiencies, or handle tasks more effectively, let them. Encouraging problem-solving and innovation increases engagement. For example, if a nurse finds a way to turn room setups around faster, acknowledge and implement it rather than sticking to rigid routines
- Recognise productivity over time spent. Instead of focusing on whether they are seen to be busy all the time, measure success by patient experience, teamwork and efficiency. A receptionist who organises patient flow so well that no one ever waits past their appointment time is achieving a great outcome, regardless of whether they're 'flat out' or not
- Flexibility within fixed hours. While core hours won't change, micro-flexibility matters. Allowing team members some control – like staggered start times for non-clinical roles, admin time from home where feasible, or shifting breaks to suit workloads – makes a difference in engagement and retention
- Encourage ownership of work rather than just compliance. A millennial or gen Z dental nurse might thrive when given clear goals beyond their usual duties, like leading sustainability initiatives or patient communication improvements. When they see their impact beyond just 'doing their shift,' they're more likely to stay motivated and committed.

In short, within fixed hours, focus on efficiency, effectiveness, and engagement rather than just 'time served.' When younger team members feel trusted to deliver results, they'll bring more energy, initiative, and loyalty to the practice.

4. Don't rely on 'that's how we've always done it'. Do adapt

They question things, not out of disrespect, but because they want to understand. Be open to explaining why things are done a certain way – or better yet, let them suggest improvements.

5. Don't ignore development. Do offer growth opportunities

They aren't interested in dead-end jobs. Give them training, mentoring and opportunities to progress, and they'll stay.

6. Don't make it just about money. Do provide purpose

Yes, they need to pay their bills, but they also need to feel like their work matters. Show them the impact of what they do – on patients, the team and the community.

7. Don't expect blind loyalty. Do build trust

They don't automatically respect authority; they respect leaders who show integrity, fairness and genuine care.

8. Don't dismiss wellbeing. Do support work-life balance

They won't work themselves into the ground. But a healthy, happy team is a productive team. Encourage self-care, flexible working where possible, and mental health support.

9. Don't avoid technology. Do embrace it

They expect efficient systems and digital tools. Outdated processes frustrate them. Invest in good tech, and they'll be more engaged.

10. Don't take their job hopping personally. Do create a culture they want to stay in

Many millennials and gen Z will change jobs frequently, but they will stay if the workplace culture is right. A strong sense of team, meaningful

Leading millennials and gen Z: 10 top tips

1. Give clear expectations
2. Be a coach
3. Focus on outcomes
4. Adapt
5. Offer growth opportunities
6. Provide purpose
7. Build trust
8. Support work-life balance
9. Embrace technology
10. Create a culture they want to stay in.



work, and opportunities to grow will make all the difference.

REAL-WORLD EXAMPLE

I see this play out with my own children and their friends. They job-hop, yes, but not always because they're unhappy. Sometimes, they just move on because they want to explore different industries, learn new skills, or find a workplace that aligns better with their values.

However, when they find a great

culture, they stay – even if the work itself is mundane.

One of my son's friends works in a role that isn't particularly exciting, but they love the camaraderie, the leadership and the sense of belonging. That's what makes the difference.

CLARITY, COACHING AND CULTURE

The bottom line is that leadership has changed.

The new generations aren't

difficult. They're just different. Their expectations are shaped by their experiences, and meeting those expectations requires a different kind of leadership – one that prioritises clarity, coaching and culture.

It takes more skill than ever before, but the reward could well be a team that is engaged, motivated, and committed to making your practice a great place to work.

And that's something worth leading for.

READY TO LEAD WITH CONFIDENCE?

The vast majority (86%) of leaders never set out to lead – they just found themselves in the role. If that's you, you're not alone. The good news is that leadership is a skill, not an accident. With the right tools, knowledge and support, you can build a team that thrives.

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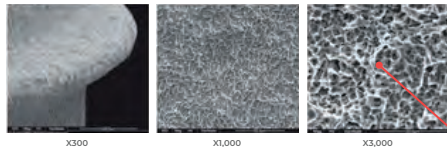
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Mindful listening: staying present

Mervyn Druian and Bernita Shelley explain how mindful listening and awareness can enhance communication and build stronger connections

Mindful listening is the practice of fully focusing on and being present in the act of listening. It is about giving your full, undivided attention to what is happening around you or to whoever is speaking. It requires being fully engaged in the conversation, actively listening to the words being spoken as well as observing the speaker's body language and



Mervyn Druian

Mervyn is a cosmetic dentist, one of the founders of the British Dental Bleaching Society and the honoured international president of the Alpha Omega Dental Society. He is co-author of *Dream Believe Achieve*. For more details, email contact@dba-success.co.uk.



Bernita Shelley

Bernita is a dental hygienist, coach and artist who blends her love for oral health, personal development, and creativity to positively influence others. She is co-author of *Dream Believe Achieve*.

non-verbal cues. It involves being non-judgemental, empathetic and actively engaged in understanding the speaker's perspective, not to be reactive. In dental practice, the speaker could be a patient, team member or colleague.

Mindful listening is a valuable skill that can enhance and build stronger connections and that fosters effective communication.

It is important to be fully present and attentive to your patient's needs. By listening actively and showing empathy, you can understand better their concerns and provide more effective care. It helps build trust and strengthens the patient-dentist relationship.

Interact thoughtfully:

- Ask questions
- Speak to the obvious of the other person (STOOP). In other words,

address what concerns the patient, not what is important to you as the clinician

- Listen without judgement.

PRACTISING MINDFUL LISTENING

We have all had moments where we have been in a conversation but found that our mind has been elsewhere. Likewise, we're certain that you have all had moments when reading a book, magazine or newspaper and then realised you have absolutely no idea what you have just read because your mind has been elsewhere.

We may be physically present in such situations, but our mind will be thinking of other things. This is where learning and practising mindful listening is important. It is what will enable us to bring our minds in line while being physically present.

There are many ways to practise mindful listening, but here are a few steps to think about:

1. Set an intention to be more present and to be a more mindful listener. To have a principle like this to always refer to enables us to guide our actions in line with our values
2. Put away distractions and listen to your inner silence. This will enable you to make space to listen to another person and be able to focus on that person. Practise listening to your inner silence by taking a few simple mindful breaths (breathe in for four seconds, hold for seven seconds, and then breathe out for eight seconds)
3. Show empathy and understanding. Avoid interrupting with any of your own judgements
4. Listen and be aware of the energy in the space emanating from the person talking. Take note of any fear, sadness, happiness etc
5. Summarise what you are sensing. Think about the key points that the person has highlighted. Help the person to feel seen, heard and cared for
6. Reflect on their words before responding and ask clarifying

Five tips for effective mindful listening

1. Be fully present. Set an intention to focus entirely on the speaker without distractions. This means putting away devices, maintaining eye contact and truly engaging in the conversation
2. Practise inner silence. Before listening, take a few mindful breaths to clear your mind and make space for the speaker's words
3. Listen without judgment. Avoid interrupting or forming opinions while the other person is speaking. Show empathy and focus on understanding their perspective rather than reacting
4. Observe non-verbal cues. Pay attention to the speaker's body language, tone of voice and emotions to gain deeper insight into their feelings and concerns
5. Summarise and reflect. After listening, summarise key points to show understanding and ask clarifying questions if needed. This helps the speaker feel heard and valued.

questions if needed.

Remember, it's all about being present and truly hearing what the other person is saying. Everyone wants to be made to feel important.

When we listen attentively to others, we can understand better their perspectives and needs. This understanding allows us to tailor our messages, proposals or treatments in a way that resonates with them and increases the likelihood of persuasion. By being a good listener, we can become more effective communicators and influencers.

Listening is one of the most difficult elements of persuasion because it requires patience. The two-word secret of patience and listening is not 'shut up' but 'take notes'. Taking notes shows respect and eliminates miscommunication:

- Be persuasive.
- Be resourceful.
- Be hungry to listen and learn.

MINDFUL AWARENESS

Mindful awareness encompasses being fully present and conscious in the moment, while mindful listening focuses on the act of listening itself. Mindful awareness is about openness, receptivity, conscientiousness and patience. Mindful awareness for yourself involves directing your attention inward and being fully present with your own thoughts, emotions and sensations. It is observing your internal experiences without judgment or attachment.

By practising mindful awareness, you can cultivate a deeper understanding of yourself, your patterns of thinking, and your needs, desires and values and make choices that align with yourself. Mindful awareness can help you navigate challenges, reduce stress and foster self-compassion and personal growth. It's a powerful

MINDFUL AWARENESS CAN HELP YOU NAVIGATE CHALLENGES, REDUCE STRESS AND FOSTER SELF-COMPASSION AND PERSONAL GROWTH

practice for improving self-awareness and living a more intentional and fulfilling life.

PRACTISING MINDFUL AWARENESS

To practise mindful awareness, use the following steps as a guide:

- When you wake up, sit up with your feet on the floor for grounding and close your eyes
- Think about what your intention is for the day. For example: 'What can I do to take better care of myself?' or 'How can I be more compassionate to others?'
- Next, set your intention for the day. For example: 'Today, I will be kind to myself' or 'Today, I will be more patient with others'
- Throughout the day, keep checking in with yourself. Check your intentions and be conscientious about them
- Find a quiet and comfortable space. Focus on your breath, observing each inhale and exhale. Try the breathing technique previously discussed (breathe in for four seconds, hold for seven seconds, breathe out for eight seconds)
- Notice any thoughts or sensations without judgement, allowing them to come and go
- Stay present in the moment. Bring your attention back to your breath whenever your mind wanders.

This is a great exercise, and it can be started with short sessions, gradually increasing the duration. It is simple yet powerful to cultivate mindfulness within your daily life, both privately and professionally.

YOUR BEST VERSION

By listening and learning, you will gain the knowledge and understanding to make healthier choices in both your personal and professional life. This will enable you to manage your own mental, physical and emotional states. It will enable you to better yourself and your life. It's important to always have the desire to improve, even when you feel at your best.

This article is taken from Dream Believe Achieve, a book on how to grow, progress and succeed in dentistry. Buy your copy at dreambelieveachievesuccess.com.



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How to retain *top talent*

Sarika Shah shares a guide to retaining top talent in dental practice for lasting success

As a dentist and a practice principal, I understand that one of the most important investments you can make for the long-term success of your dental practice is retaining your top talent.

Dental practices, just like any other business, rely on a dedicated and skilled team to drive growth, deliver high-quality care and build strong relationships with patients. But the reality is retaining top-tier dental professionals in today's competitive job market can be challenging.

Staff turnover can disrupt patient care, increase hiring and training costs, and lower morale among your existing team. So, how can you create an environment where top talent not only stays but also flourishes?

1 CULTIVATE A POSITIVE AND SUPPORTIVE WORK CULTURE

The foundation of retaining top talent starts with creating a workplace culture where people feel valued, respected and empowered.

When your team members feel supported in their roles, they are more likely to be engaged and motivated to give their best.

As a leader, you must establish a culture that celebrates teamwork, open communication and collaboration. Encourage your staff to share their ideas and concerns and actively listen to their feedback.

Regular team-building activities and open forums can strengthen relationships and help foster a sense of camaraderie.

When team members feel connected to one another and to the practice's mission and vision, they're more likely to feel a sense of loyalty.

2 OFFER COMPETITIVE COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

While a positive work culture is crucial in today's world, fair compensation and attractive benefits are also key factors in employee retention.

Skilled and experienced dental professionals want to feel that their skills and hard work are adequately recognised. A competitive salary not only attracts quality candidates but also motivates existing staff to remain with the practice.

In addition to a competitive base salary, consider offering a comprehensive benefits package that includes dental benefits (an obvious perk in the dental field), opportunities to learn, and paid time off (for birthdays, for example).

If you are able to offer flexibility in terms of working hours or the option for remote administrative work, this can be a huge selling point.

3 PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Dental professionals, like many other employees, want to grow in their careers. The more you can provide opportunities for development, the more likely it is that team members will stay.

Encourage your team to pursue additional certifications, attend courses and stay updated on the latest treatment trends, techniques and technology in dentistry. Not only will this improve the quality of care your practice provides, but it will also show your staff that you care about their professional growth.

Investing in continuing education is not only beneficial for the employee but also for your practice's growth and reputation. Offering to cover the costs of courses, certifications or conferences is an attractive incentive.

Allow staff to apply what they learn in the practice, empowering them to take on new challenges and responsibilities.

4 CREATE A PATH FOR CAREER ADVANCEMENT

One of the reasons why dental professionals leave a practice is because they don't see a clear path for advancement.

Employees want to know that there is room to grow within the business. That might mean promoting someone from a dental hygienist to a practice manager or from a receptionist to an office manager. By creating clear career pathways, you give your employees something to strive for.

Take the time to understand your team members' career aspirations and support them in their journey toward promotion. Regularly conduct performance reviews that focus on personal development and growth and set achievable milestones for career progression. Show your staff that their hard work will be rewarded with new opportunities.



Sarika Shah

Sarika is the founder and owner of Platinum Dental Care in London. She is an Invisalign and cosmetic dentist. She created the leadership course, Flourish as a Female in Dentistry for women in dentistry. For more details, visit www.flourishasafemale.com.

5 PROMOTE WORK-LIFE BALANCE

In today's fast-paced world, work-life balance has become an increasingly important factor for employees when choosing an employer.

If your dental practice is demanding long hours without any regard for your employees' personal time, it's only a matter of time before burnout sets in. To avoid this, focus on creating a flexible schedule that supports your employees' personal lives. Whether it's allowing for shift swapping, offering longer lunch breaks, or providing more generous paid time off, small adjustments to your work schedule can go a long way in improving employee retention.

You could also consider offering mental health days or wellness programmes, as maintaining a healthy work-life balance is essential for preventing burnout and boosting employee satisfaction.

6 RECOGNISE AND REWARD CONTRIBUTIONS

Acknowledge the hard work and dedication of your team. When your employees feel appreciated, they're much more likely to stay committed to your practice. Recognition doesn't always have to come in the form of a paycheque. Small gestures, such as a handwritten thank you note, small gifts, verbal praise or public acknowledgment during staff meetings, can have a powerful impact. Additionally, consider implementing an employee recognition programme where you regularly highlight achievements, whether it's a job well done, exceptional patient care or a team milestone. Recognition can be formal or informal, just ensure it's genuine and heartfelt.

7 FOSTER STRONG LEADERSHIP

A dental practice can only retain top talent if the leadership is strong, approachable and supportive. As the leader, you need to establish trust and respect with your team.

It's important to lead by example, offering guidance when needed, and empowering your team members to take ownership of their roles. Be the kind of leader who is empathetic to

their needs, listens to their concerns, and provides constructive feedback when necessary.

Great leaders also know when to step back and let others take charge. Recognising and promoting leadership within your team not only boosts morale but also creates a sense of ownership and responsibility. When employees feel trusted to lead and make decisions, they are more invested in the success of the practice.

8 CONDUCT EXIT INTERVIEWS AND LEARN FROM FEEDBACK

Despite your best efforts, it's possible that some team members will leave your practice. When this happens, it's important to conduct exit interviews to understand why they're leaving. This feedback is invaluable for identifying areas where your practice can improve. Perhaps there are areas of communication that need strengthening or employee needs that aren't being met. By addressing these concerns proactively, you can reduce the risk of further turnover.

By consistently evaluating and evolving your retention strategies, you'll create an environment where employees are not only eager to stay but also excited to contribute to the success of your dental practice.

THE IDEAL COMBINATION

Retaining top talent in a dental practice requires a combination of positive culture, competitive compensation, career development, work-life balance, recognition and strong leadership.

By creating a supportive and dynamic work environment, you will not only retain the best professionals but also set your practice up for long-term growth and success. Remember, the success of your dental practice



is not just dependent on your skills as a dentist, but also on the people you surround yourself with and the culture you cultivate.

As a leader, it's essential to invest in your team, offer team members the opportunity to grow, and ensure that they feel appreciated and

valued. When you prioritise retention, you create a thriving, motivated team that will help your practice flourish for years to come.

For female practice owners, the Flourish as

A DENTAL PRACTICE CAN ONLY RETAIN TOP TALENT IF THE LEADERSHIP IS STRONG, APPROACHABLE AND SUPPORTIVE

a Female course offers invaluable support in navigating the challenges that come with leading a dental practice. This course is specifically designed to empower women in dentistry by providing self-leadership tools and strategies to build a resilient, successful practice while balancing personal and professional goals.

By focusing on self-leadership development, effective team management, and creating a thriving practice culture, Flourish as a Female helps female practice owners retain top talent through building confidence, resilience, and clear communication. It provides a community of like-minded professionals who share experiences and support one another, allowing female dentists to flourish in every aspect of their practice ownership.

The recipe for emotional resilience

Need help navigating the pressures of dentistry with confidence, clarity and balance?
Barry Oulton explains how to build emotional resilience

Dentistry is an emotionally demanding profession. Between patient anxieties, team dynamics and the daily challenges of running a practice, it's easy to feel overwhelmed. But here's the good news: emotional resilience isn't something you're born with; it's something you can build. Like baking the perfect cake, resilience comes down to having the right ingredients and knowing how to combine them effectively.

In this article, we'll explore the three key components of emotional resilience and how mastering them can help you navigate the pressures of dentistry with confidence, clarity and balance.

WHAT IS EMOTIONAL RESILIENCE?

Emotional resilience is your ability to adapt to stress, overcome challenges and recover quickly from setbacks. It doesn't mean ignoring difficulties; it means facing them with a mindset that allows you to bounce back stronger.

For dentists, resilience is critical. It's what helps you stay calm when a patient is particularly anxious, maintain focus during complex procedures, and lead your team effectively, even on tough days.

THE THREE INGREDIENTS OF EMOTIONAL RESILIENCE

To build emotional resilience, you need to focus on three key areas: physiology,

focus, and language. Together, these elements form the 'recipe' for managing stress and maintaining a positive emotional state.

1. Physiology: your body shapes your emotions

Your physical state has a direct impact on your emotional state. When you're hunched over, breathing shallowly and feeling tense, it's much harder to think clearly or feel confident. Here are some tips for improving your emotional state through your physical state:

- Posture matters: stand tall, roll your shoulders back, and lift your head. A confident posture signals to your brain that you're in control
- Move to shift energy: physical movement, even small stretches between patients, can reduce tension and boost your mood
- Breathe deeply: deep, diaphragmatic breathing calms the nervous system and helps you reset during stressful moments.

2. Focus: what you pay attention to grows

Your focus determines your reality. When you fixate on problems, you feel stuck. But when you shift your attention to solutions or positive aspects of a situation, you regain control. Try:

- Reframing challenges. Instead of thinking: 'This patient is difficult', try: 'This is an opportunity to build trust and improve my skills'
- Practising gratitude. Take a moment each day to reflect on three things you're grateful for. This simple practice can shift your mindset and boost resilience

- Setting clear intentions. Before starting your day or a challenging procedure, take a moment to focus on your goals. For example: 'Today, I'll communicate clearly and create a positive experience for every patient.'

3. Language: the words you use shape your experience

The language you use – both internally and externally – has a powerful impact on your emotions. Negative self-talk can erode resilience, while positive and empowering language builds it up. Here are some considerations:

- Flip the script: replace 'I have to' with 'I get to'. For instance, instead of saying: 'I have to manage this anxious patient', say: 'I get to help someone overcome their fear'

Five actions to build emotional resilience

1. Focus on physiology: use posture, movement and breathing to manage stress and boost confidence
2. Shift your focus: reframe challenges, practise gratitude, and set clear intentions
3. Use empowering language: replace negative self-talk with positive and constructive dialogue
4. Build daily habits: incorporate routines and micro-practices that support resilience
5. Inspire your team: lead by example to create a culture of adaptability and positivity.



Barry Oulton

Barry is a practising dentist and the founder of The Confident Dentist. He is a qualified coach and experienced trainer, certified in hypnotherapy and a master practitioner in neuro-linguistic programming (NLP).

- Choose empowering words. To shift your mindset, use words like 'challenging' instead of 'difficult' and 'opportunity' instead of 'problem'
- Be kind to yourself: talk to yourself with the same compassion you would offer a friend. Celebrate your wins, no matter how small, and give yourself grace when things don't go as planned.

WHY EMOTIONAL RESILIENCE MATTERS IN DENTISTRY

Resilience isn't just about surviving tough moments; it's about thriving despite them. When you build emotional resilience, you're better equipped to:

- Connect with patients. A resilient mindset helps you stay calm and empathetic, even when patients are stressed or uncooperative
- Lead your team. As a leader, your energy sets the tone for your practice. Resilience allows you to inspire and support your team through challenges
- Protect your wellbeing. Resilience reduces burnout by helping you manage stress effectively and maintain a healthy work-life balance.

PRACTICAL STEPS

Ready to strengthen your resilience? Here are some actionable steps to get started:

1. Adopt a morning routine. Start your day with practices that centre and energise you, such as stretching, deep breathing or journaling
2. Take micro-breaks. Between patients, take 30 seconds to stand, stretch and reset your posture
3. Create a gratitude practice. At the end of each day, write down three things you're grateful for
4. Use power poses. When you need a confidence boost, stand in a 'power pose' for two minutes. Research shows this can lower stress hormones and increase feelings of control
5. Reflect and reframe. When faced with a challenge, write down the situation, your initial reaction, and a reframed perspective that highlights solutions or opportunities.

TRANSFORM YOUR PRACTICE

Building emotional resilience doesn't just benefit you – it positively impacts your entire practice. When you're calm, focused and confident, patients feel it. They trust you more, follow your recommendations, and leave with a positive impression of your care.

Resilience also inspires your team. As a leader, your ability to navigate stress with poise creates a culture of positivity and adaptability. This not only improves team morale but also enhances the overall patient experience.

Through my coaching programmes, I help dentists and their teams develop the tools to build resilience and thrive in high-pressure environments. By focusing on mindset, communication and practical strategies, we transform practices from the inside out.

By following this recipe for emotional resilience, you can navigate the demands of dentistry with confidence and balance, ensuring that you and your practice thrive in even the most challenging times.

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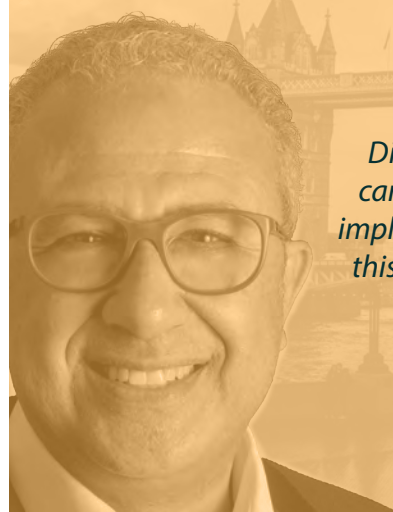
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Sustainability

– an investment that will yield returns

Katrina Rees speaks to **Mark Topley** about how we, as individuals and businesses, can act sustainably

Since President Trump announced the USA's withdrawal from the United Nation's Paris Agreement, it has become even more important to consider how, as individuals and businesses, we can act sustainably.

In the following discussion, Katrina Rees speaks to Mark Topley to get his thoughts.

Katrina Rees: We have taken a number of steps at Practice Plan towards improving our sustainability credentials, as you're aware. We've reduced our use of paper by making greater use of digital, and we're even swapping our gas heating in our building at Oswestry for electricity from renewable sources. We're making progress but we know we have some way to go yet.

In light of this, I wonder whether people understand, or still need reminding, that sustainability is more than just recycling.



Katrina Rees

Katrina is a Practice Plan area manager. She joined the dental sector in 2018 after 25 years' working in sales and people management roles. Practice Plan is a leading provider of practice-branded patient membership plans.



Mark Topley

Mark is committed to fostering work environments that inspire and energise. He is the driving force behind the Great Boss Academy, which focuses on holistic leadership development, creating resilient leaders who can not only withstand tough times but thrive in them.

Mark Topley: The short answer is 'yes', and I think there are a number of reasons why this is the case. The first one is because practice owners see it as a time and cost drain, as things are already tight. They're worried that focusing on sustainability could possibly increase costs, or they'll need to spend more time doing things that aren't important. People's focus is usually on what happens in the surgery. So, they will typically think, because they have to do all the single use things in surgery, they can't do anything else.

There's also some suspicion as to whether it is really that important. Because they don't see how their little bit can make a difference. Those are all understandable views. However, when you dig below the surface, you find that sustainability is not only the right way to think, it's also a good investment from the point of view of your team, reputation and costs.

The majority of things that you can do to become a more sustainable practice take place outside of the surgery or are nothing to do with what goes on in the mouth. That's not to say that there's not a huge amount that could be done in the mouth, and hopefully with the rewriting of HTM 01-05 and the waste one, which is 01-07, I think there will be a move towards more sustainability in those two protocols. So, hopefully they'll follow the evidence and prevent so much single use.

Also, within the clinical setting, sustainability and community are being added into the Care Quality Commission (CQC) statements. So, there is a lot that can be done outside the surgery, but more is coming, and it will be part of what we do.

Also, people think 'is it that important and can I make a difference?' – if everybody believes they're too small to make a difference, then you don't make a difference.

And the truth is, it was billions of small actions that led to the sustainability problem we now have. And the only solution to it is billions of small actions in the other direction. So, people must take off their cynical hat and say, 'in spite of what I think might be my contribution, I'm going to do it anyway,' for several reasons.

One, because it's the right thing to do. Two, because all the evidence suggests my team wants it. Three, because everything suggests my patients want it; and four, because the CQC wants it. Therefore, there will be some positive things in my practice if I do it.

It's not always going to cost more money because, for example, one of the first modules in my Go Practice Green course is about energy saving. Simply getting people to turn things off will result in a 5% to 10% reduction in their energy bill in the first year. So, it's not all extra cost to the practice. A lot of it is a cost saving.



IF YOU'RE GOING TO SPEND A THIRD OF YOUR LIFE AT WORK, THEN IT'S GOT TO MEAN SOMETHING

Katrina Rees: I'm still finding when I go into practices that a lot of them are struggling with staff recruitment and retention. In my experience, all the team members need to fit well together for a practice to be successful, so I always believe shared values come into that.

I've heard you say before that letting everyone know about your sustainability credentials and values can help attract and retain good staff. Is that really the case?

Mark Topley: Yes, all the statistical evidence says that's so if they're aged under 35. They won't necessarily ask: 'What are your sustainability credentials?' It's more about whether you care about things or whether your practice is the sort of place where it's all about getting people in and doing things so that we can earn as much money as possible to pay the boss. Or do the people who work here give a damn about the community, because those are all markers that younger people are looking for.

One of my clients noticed their recruitment got a lot stronger when

they started putting their values into their recruitment process. This was because it wasn't just about the pay, it was about what candidates would be signing up for.

One of the things that came out of the pandemic is people realised that life was short, and life was fragile.

If you're going to spend a third of your life at work, then it's got to mean something. It has to account for something. And it certainly shouldn't be spent somewhere that you don't enjoy being.

Members of gen Z, which comes behind millennials, are even more attuned to this, which is why they may move around jobs more. So, the employers that have got smart about looking after them and understanding their value base, are the ones that are recruiting and retaining people.

Katrina Rees: Thank you, Mark. It's always easier to do the right thing when it's good for you!

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A phoenix from the flames

Anushika Brogan, CEO of Damira Dental Studios, talks about how a burning ambition and life lessons fuelled her journey to become one of the UK's leading dental corporate owners



Anushika Brogan's Whatsapp profile – a dynamic photo of her mid-climb at an endurance sports event and a heart-on-fire emoji in her 'About' section – hints at an enviable and energetic spirit. This unrelenting enthusiasm is a common trait when discussing other areas of her life – her family and career, in particular. Passion, it seems, fuels the narrative.

Her Instagram, too, brims with inspiration. From multiple marathon victories and skiing adventures to downtime with friends and treasured family moments, her posts are evidence of a life well-lived.



Anushika Brogan

Anushika is the CEO and founder of Damira Dental Studios. She qualified as a dentist from King's College London in 1999 and continues to practise at Damira Bury Knowle. She bought her first practice in Oxford in 2003, and Damira Dental Studios was born. Anushika is also a director of the Association of Dental Groups.

Yet, behind these snapshots lies an equally remarkable story in dentistry – a journey marked by resilience, ambition and more than its fair share of emotional highs and lows.

A FRESH START

As founder and CEO of Damira Dental Studios, Anushika is a rare example of a female leader in multi-practice dental ownership. But her journey has not been without its challenges, including a pivotal moment with an acrimonious divorce and a financial settlement hard battled for that forced her to 'regroup' and begin anew.

After leaving her former husband in April 2010, the divorce went through the courts and was finally settled in 2014. It was, she says, the worst four years of her life.

'Dad had a stroke in 2010, and that gave me the prompt I needed to leave my ex. There was a lot of animosity, and the financial battle

at the High Court went as far as an appeal hearing. It was messy, but I got through it. You find out who your friends are.

'Afterwards, I felt like a phoenix, free after being trapped in a relationship. The passing of my brother in 2013 inspired me to embrace life and live it to the fullest. He was 39.'

Once again, she faced adversity head-on, drawing inspiration to 'seize the day'. Not easily derailed, she pushed forward, rebranding the business and leading Damira's expansion from a single clinic in Oxford in 2003 to a network of 42 practices across the UK. More recently, the group has extended its reach into Sussex and Norfolk.

Her resilience, ability to learn from setbacks, and a commitment to personal and professional growth have, it seems, given her the stomach for the 'toils and trouble' of business acquisition.

**SILENCE,
I'VE LEARNED,
CAN BE A
POWERFUL
WEAPON**

It's an ambition deeply rooted early in her career, during her first year of practice.

A BROADER VISION

Anushika went to university early, aged 17, and qualified with her BDS at 22 – 'I was very young, and it was tough. Although I thought I wanted my own space, I really missed my parents as I had enjoyed a wonderful childhood,' she recalls.

While her peers focused on refining their clinical skills, Anushika set her sights on a broader vision: building a corporate presence in dentistry. During her training, she proactively sought mentors to learn how to acquire and run multiple practices. This was unusual at this stage in a career – and rare for a woman – but her inspiration had sprung from working for a female practice owner. 'She also had a friend with multiple practices, which appealed to me. The next clinic I worked at was a multisite practice, and my plan to own a corporate started there,' she says. Did she ever have any doubts? 'No, I was blinded by my ambition and didn't want to hear the negatives. I'm not one to take no for an answer,' she laughs.

SUPPORTIVE AND EMPOWERING

Under her leadership, Damira Dental Studios operates with a clinician-first philosophy, ensuring that both dentists' and patients' needs are at the forefront of any decision-making. Her hands-on approach (she continues to practise part-time) aligns with her empathetic leadership. As a result, she has crafted a supportive environment where staff feel valued rather than 'just another number in a large corporate system'.

She believes that empowering team members allows them the freedom to perform at their best. Being present clinically makes her aware of how the business is performing, which means she can react when areas struggle.

'The role of practice manager, for instance, involves more administrative work than ever before, so we're currently focusing on strategies to make the job more streamlined.'

This includes embracing the digital transition, centralising processes, and ensuring teams are not overwhelmed with unnecessary tasks. Professional expansion is a key facet of the business, with training a focus throughout the group. Quality assurance measures and call reviews support this ethos and dovetail to help uphold the highest level of service.

She emphasises the importance of open communication over confrontation, believing it yields better results and fosters a more positive workplace culture. Interestingly, her personal life is deeply intertwined with this approach. Even her leadership style has been shaped in part by her parents' contrasting management



approaches – her mother's – a firebrand with a strict, highly organised approach – and her father's more relaxed and laid-back demeanour.

This upbringing, she says, helped her understand the delicate balance between being too strict and overly relaxed as a leader.

POSITIVE WORK CULTURE

Damira's social media presence paints a positive picture of a work culture that thrives on fun and inclusivity, embodying Anushika's core philosophy of maintaining a personal touch in business.

She's worked hard to avoid the common pitfalls associated with large corporates, like anonymity and detachment. Quite simply, genuine connections are what help the business flourish. If staff and patients feel respected by her and among themselves, then everything else will follow.

Finding the right cultural fit is so crucial to her that, even as CEO, she will personally attend interviews. With a keen intuition for reading people, she adopts an informal, conversational approach to ensure potential hires align with the organisation's culture.

'It's crucial that people are happy. One of the most important aspects is ensuring the staff and dentists feel valued and satisfied. For me, transparency is the most essential value at work and home. As humans, we all make mistakes, but what's vital is that we always strive to do our best with good intentions – and we remain honest and open.'



Almost to demonstrate this openness, she is frank about the challenges of managing stress and balancing the pressures of excellent clinical dentistry, happy staff and patients and commercial success.

The only thing that keeps her awake at night is when a particular aspect of the business demands her attention, she says. Throughout her career, challenges have often required a fresh perspective and relied heavily on her innate ability to pivot.

More recently, with dental recruitment facing significant challenges post-Brexit and following the pandemic, she embraced the obstacle as an opportunity for positive change. In search of dentists and amid the dearth of qualified clinicians, she changed tact.

She explains: 'Like many dentists, I previously relied heavily on European dental professionals. My husband was briefly involved in a recruitment project and discovered a unique opportunity to support dentists from Sudan fleeing the war. Today, we have around 57 Sudanese dentists in our network. Through a comprehensive training programme, we help them integrate into the profession while they, in turn, help us bridge staffing gaps.'

Such decisions may seem unusual, but they reflect a willingness to take bold steps to achieving her goals. In today's economic climate, her motto is 'optimistic yet cautious' and encourages dentists to view economic uncertainty as an opportunity. 'Maintain a positive outlook,' she suggests. 'Even in challenging circumstances, stay resolute in your mission to make your practice successful.'

SUCCESS AND SACRIFICE

Success can come with significant sacrifices, and Anushika credits her supportive husband with maintaining stability for their children, allowing her to focus on her demanding career. Has she ever felt the weight of missing out on precious family time as a mother? Her personal Instagram page captures the strength of her family bonds, and she evidently treasures every moment with them.

'Sometimes, I've felt guilty in my career – guilty about the time I spend away from my family. But I've always prioritised quality time over quantity. I've taken some lessons from my childhood – the big things, the feelings

that stick with you are important, not the daily grind. I try to create those big, meaningful moments with my own kids.

Life's about finding balance, staying resilient and making the most of the time you have. That said, I still enjoy some "me" time. I'm drawn to marathons, and I'm particularly proud of my kids for following their passions. My eldest has completed a 100k ultra, my middle son is a gym regular, and my youngest (a daughter, aged eight) is a ski monster. It's inspiring.'

This disciplined approach to managing her life is reflected in her daily routine. She often rises as early as 4am for a run or boot camp, and still finds time to connect with her family before beginning her workday at 8am.

So, what does she want her legacy to look like for dentistry and her children?

'I'd like to be remembered as the nicest CEO in the dental business – personable, not cutthroat. I've seen the harsher side of business, and it's taught me exactly how I don't want to be. I constantly reflect on my behaviour, asking myself, "Was I right? Could I change for the better?" In my younger days, I was feisty and ambitious, but we all change. Now, I try not to get bogged down with wanting to prove I'm right. Silence, I've learned, can be a powerful weapon.

'My father-in-law gave me the best advice: "You don't need to fight if you know you're right. The fight is already won." That changed my life, including how I approach business. I don't always feel the need to speak out.'

THE FUTURE

Looking ahead, Anushika has a 10-year career plan: to grow the business, eventually wind down, and one day hand it over to her children. After that, she plans to take a non-executive role for 10 to 12 years and enjoy some travelling.

'Time is everything, though,' she reflects. 'I learned that the hard way. I tore my hamstring falling out of a ski lift, and the consultant told me to give up running completely.'

Not one to accept defeat, she naturally sought a second opinion.

'The other consultant, who works heavily with professional footballers, told me to rest for a year. I did so, and last year was the first year I'd finally been able to return to normal. But perseverance is in my nature. I don't accept "no" easily. I think that many people in senior positions share that drive.'

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Winning matters

Faye Mear explains why and how to enter dental awards

In an increasingly competitive dental sector, standing out from the crowd is more important than ever. One of the most effective ways to boost your practice's reputation, attract new patients and motivate your team is by entering – and winning – awards. But why should you invest time and effort into the process, and how can you maximise your chances of success? Here's everything you need to know.

WHY ENTER DENTAL AWARDS?

1. Reinforce your reputation

Being nominated for, or winning, an award is a powerful endorsement of your skills, service and commitment to excellence. It demonstrates to patients and peers alike that your practice is among the best in the field, increasing trust and credibility.

2. A stamp of quality

Awards act as a third-party seal of approval. Potential patients often look for external validation when choosing a dental practice, and an award win can be the differentiating factor that encourages them to choose you over another practice.

3. Raise awareness

Winning – or even just being shortlisted – provides invaluable PR and marketing opportunities. Press releases, social media posts and website updates announcing your achievement will help boost visibility and attract attention from both existing and potential patients.

4. Gain a competitive edge

An award-winning practice is a more attractive choice for patients looking

for high-quality dental care. Moreover, awards allow smaller practices to compete with larger ones on an even playing field, particularly in categories like patient care and innovation.

5. Motivate and celebrate your team

Recognition through awards is a fantastic morale booster. It acknowledges the hard work of your team and creates a sense of pride and motivation. Plus, winning an award provides the perfect excuse to celebrate with your team – a great way to reinforce a positive workplace culture.

6. Strengthen recruitment efforts

Attracting top talent in the dental industry can be challenging. Award-winning practices are more appealing to potential employees, as they showcase a thriving, high-performing and well-recognised workplace.

7. Benchmark and improve your practice

The process of entering awards requires self-evaluation. This helps you assess where you excel and identify areas for improvement. Whether you win or not, this exercise alone can be highly beneficial for refining your services and operations.

HOW TO ENTER – AND WIN

1. Choose the right awards

The dental industry offers several prestigious award opportunities throughout the year, including the Private Dentistry Awards and Dentistry Awards. Each has different categories and judging criteria so take some time to research which awards align best with your practice's strengths and goals.

2. Select the best categories

Award competitions offer multiple categories, from Practice of the Year

and Patient Care to individual awards like Dentist or Team Member of the Year. Identify your strongest areas – whether it's a particular treatment, patient experience or your team culture – and enter accordingly.

3. Gather strong evidence

Winning an award requires more than just saying you're the best – you need to prove it. Strong applications include patient testimonials, photographs and videos, data and metrics, community and CSR initiatives.

4. Craft a compelling entry

Your application should be clear, concise and persuasive. Fulfil the criteria and answer all the questions thoroughly. Tell a story, highlighting challenges you've overcome, innovative approaches, and the impact you've made. Keep it professional yet engaging: make sure your entry is well-written, well-structured, and error-free.

5. Allow ample time

Don't leave your entry to the last minute. A strong application takes time to compile. Ideally, start preparing at least three months in advance to gather evidence, write a polished submission and refine your presentation.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Entering and winning awards is a powerful tool to elevate your dental practice, differentiate yourself from competitors and boost team morale.

While it takes effort and commitment, the rewards – both tangible and intangible – are well worth it.

For help with crafting a winning entry, call Corona Marketing on 0845 370 2211 or email hello@coronadenta.co.uk.



Faye Mear

Faye is client liaison at Corona Marketing, a specialist dental marketing agency. For more information, email faye.mear@coronadc.co.uk

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PRIVATE

DENTISTRY AWARDS 2025

Grosvenor House London

With registration open for this year’s **Private Dentistry Awards**, this month we’re putting a spotlight on the venue, Grosvenor House London



This year’s Private Dentistry Awards will make a welcome return to Grosvenor House London in November.

Located on Park Lane in the heart of Mayfair, Grosvenor House London is a distinguished five-star hotel conveniently located near Hyde Park. It offers exceptional accommodation, epicurean delights and sweeping views over the royal park.

The Private Dentistry Awards ceremony will be held in the aptly named Great Room.

Since the hotel opened in 1929, the Great Room has welcomed royalty, presidents, actors and musicians for the most exclusive and lavish events of the London scene. Making it the ideal venue to host this year’s Private Dentistry Awards!

Now an impressive ballroom, the Great Room was originally an ice rink, which saw Queen Elizabeth II learning to skate. And want to know why the production entrance to the Great Room is named the Jumbo Lift? It once transported a baby elephant!

LEGENDARY REPUTATION

For more than 20 years, the Private Dentistry Awards has been recognising and celebrating dental excellence in the UK and Ireland – earning a legendary reputation amongst the dental community.

Registration for the 2025 Private Dentistry Awards is now open at www.dentistry.co.uk/awards, where you’ll also be able to download the entry guide with the full criteria for each category. The deadline for entries is 12 September. Good luck!

Categories

- Young Dentist
- Treatment of Nervous Patients
- Child-Friendly Practice
- Charity or Community Project
- New Practice
- Most Improved Practice
- Referral Practice
- Practice Design and Brand
- Website of the Year
- Team of the Year
- Digital Practice
- Practice Principal
- Hygienist/Therapist, Dental Nurse, Technician/CDT, Receptionist, Practice Manager
- Patient Care
- Practice of the Year.

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Dr. Farooq Ahmed, Consultant Orthodontist

"The Swingle has been a fantastic addition to my orthodontic tool kit - I'm not sure how I lived without it! I can now carry out IPR so much quicker and more effectively mechanically than I could by hand. The Swingle has brought me to realise I wasn't carrying out sufficient IPR by hand - likely due to the huge amount of time it would take to do anything over 0.2mm."

Dr. Sian Walley, Dentist



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The Orthodontic Company

How AI supports minimally invasive dentistry

Here's how **Hello Pearl** helped Nishan Dixit build trust with patients while demonstrating the value of preventative care and early detection

For dentists and patients alike, early detection is key to better outcomes. But a significant number of patients do not come in for preventative treatment, like hygiene checks and annual X-rays. Per the NHS, only 40% of UK adults report visiting the dentist regularly – a number in decline since Covid.



Results

44

Early carious lesions detected

32

Initially missed by dentist but caught by Second Opinion

9

Lesions missed, requiring reassessment and restoration

Dr Nishan Dixit, a general dentist with an interest in minimally invasive dentistry, wanted to demonstrate the importance of preventative care to his patients at Blue Court Dental in Harrow. To do so, his team used Hello Pearl's Second Opinion to gather X-ray data between 17 October 2024 to 17 January 2025.

In that time, 145 X-rays were taken from 35 patients. The results:

- 44 early carious lesions were detected
- 32 were initially missed by dentist, but caught by Second Opinion
- Nine lesions were missed, requiring reassessment and restoration.

THE BENEFITS

Streamlined diagnosis process

'Hello Pearl has sped up the diagnosis process a lot,' said Dr Nishan. Second Opinion highlights areas of concern using colour and pop-up indicators, which speeds up film review.

Now, instead of spending time interpreting X-rays, he can fast-forward to patient education and care. He can also see more patients without sacrificing quality.

Better patient education

The coloured X-rays also allow Dr Nishan to include his patients in the diagnostic process. 'Patients are not trained to read X-rays,' he noted.

A dentist can see a nascent cavity, but a patient might not – and might refuse preventative treatment. By involving the patient in their care, he can build trust and encourage less invasive treatments.



More revenue-boosting actions

Through better patient education, Dr Nishan has increased sales of preventative measures like fluoridated mouthwashes, floss, and most importantly, hygiene maintenance bookings.

Lower costs for patients

When a patient can decide, based on their own reasoning, to treat a condition before it becomes a concern, they can save themselves hundreds of pounds in costly treatments.

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Hands-on courses at Zirkonzahn Education Center Brunico

Trainings on software, aesthetics, material diversity and design for any level of expertise from **Zirkonzahn**

Zirkonzahn Education Center Brunico is located in South Tyrol a few kilometres away from Zirkonzahn's central office and is the headquarters of all Zirkonzahn Education establishments worldwide. Here, many courses are offered in multiple languages by Zirkonzahn's team of instructors, who are continuously trained in-house and who form the company's dental laboratory research team. This ensures that participants receive up-to-date, practical knowledge directly from the firm's own experts.

All courses are regularly updated and expanded based on the latest innovations developed by the firm. Every new solution is integrated into the training programs through intensive sessions, fostering a collaborative atmosphere where instructors and participants can practice and network.

FOR ALL LEVELS OF EXPERTISE

At the Education Center Brunico, participants can choose from a broad range of practical courses suitable for all levels of expertise. For instance, for dental technicians interested in improving their skills in the use of milling units and software, the CAD/CAM Milling courses provide in-depth, hands-on knowledge along with valuable tips on the maintenance of Zirkonzahn's devices, workflow organisation and digital patient acquisition.

Those interested in improving their



software design skills and exploring material diversity can benefit from the CAD and Application courses. The Application courses are instead the perfect solution for those who are mostly interested in aesthetics and complementary techniques.

WEBINARS AND EVENTS

In addition to the courses held at the Education Center Brunico, Zirkonzahn offers online webinars covering various dental and dental technical subjects and organises international events in the premises of the Klinik DeMedici. In this location, dentists can also find special courses on the topics of minimally invasive tooth preparation and ultra-thin zirconia veneers. Furthermore, the company's

educational offering also includes The Zirkonzahn School, conceived by the company's founder, Enrico Steger.

All schools are immersed in the alpine landscape and what makes the teaching programme very special is the combination of solid technical education with a focus on life skills and South Tyrolean culture.

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To know more about courses at Zirkonzahn Education Center Brunico or any other educational opportunity, email education@zirkonzahn.com, call +39 0474 066 650 or visit www.zirkonzahn-education.com.

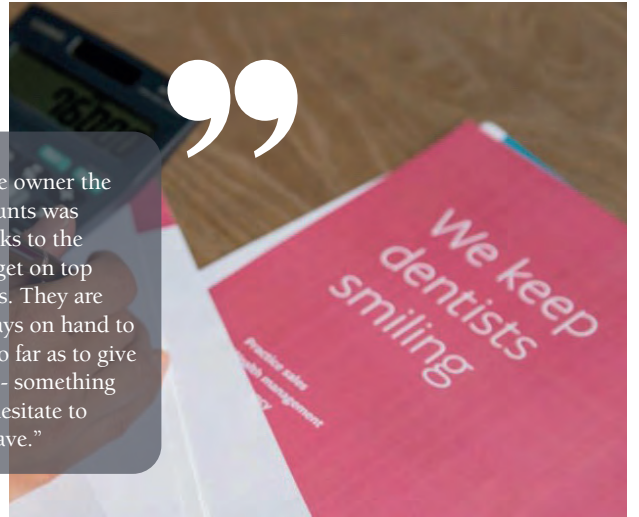
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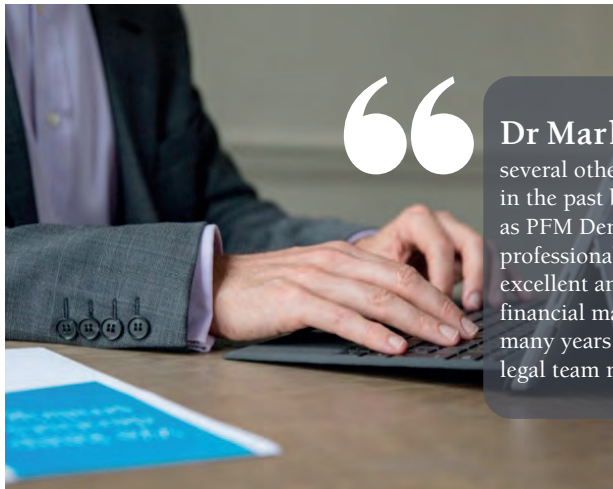
John Alker “As a new practice owner the challenge of tax planning and accounts was extremely daunting. However, thanks to the team at PFM we have been able to get on top of it all with minimal fuss and stress. They are extremely professional and are always on hand to answer our questions, even going so far as to give me a tutorial about the use of Xero - something completely new to me. I wouldn't hesitate to recommend and indeed I already have.”

”



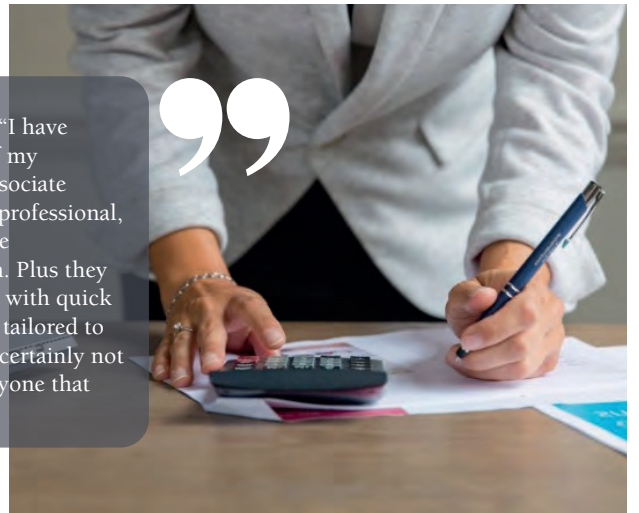
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Dr Mark Lawrence “We have used several other specialist dental accountants in the past but none have been as pro-active as PFM Dental Accountancy. Their level of professionalism and approachability has been excellent and an added bonus is the “in-house” financial management we have enjoyed for many years with PFM Dental. The addition of a legal team now can only add to a great team”.



”

Dr Hussein Hassanali “I have commissioned PFM to take care of my accounts since I first became an associate several years ago. They have been professional, timely, accurate and knowledgeable throughout my dealings with them. Plus they are always available to offer advice with quick responses and precise information tailored to each individual situation. I would certainly not hesitate to recommend them to anyone that asks”.



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The growing risk of legionella

Aura Infection Control shares details of its new, free service for private practices to strengthen their decontamination protocols, processes and understanding of legionella

Legionella is on the rise. As seasonal temperatures increase, it's important to review your practice's risk of legionnaires' disease... and help is at hand.

Recent data highlights the growing concern around legionella in dental practices. In the UK's largest-ever dental decontamination training survey, conducted by FMC, the publishers of *Private Dentistry*, in partnership with Aura Infection Control, 40% of dental professionals identified legionella as the area where they need more training. This underscores the critical need for improved knowledge and protocols to prevent bacterial contamination in dental waterlines.

LEGIONELLA AND DENTISTRY

Legionella presents unique challenges for dentistry. The legionella bacteria – and multiple other organisms, some harmless, some dangerous – can thrive in our water supplies.

Left untreated in dental waterlines, these biofilms can multiply at an alarming rate, especially as the lack of light and plasticiser present in the tubing makes the perfect recipe for growth. Worse, water in waterlines can remain stagnant overnight and at weekends.

That's a huge worry when that water is going into patients' mouths where it may encounter an open wound or end up being swallowed.

While dental patients may not give it a second thought, dentists must treat waterline management with the utmost seriousness.

Registered managers of dental practices have a general duty of care under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. A key part of this duty is to ensure that water supply, storage and distribution methods comply with all relevant legislation and best practice.

There are a number of health technical memoranda (HTM) to be aware of, including HTM 01-05 decontamination in primary care dental practices and HTM 04-01: safe water in healthcare premises, as well as HSE guidance on legionnaires' disease.

EFFECTIVE TRAINING AND REVIEWS

The only way to ensure the safety of patients and practice staff is to make sure water supplies are treated and rigorously monitored and that practices also consider robust protocols and effective training.

That's why Aura Infection Control – a leading dental infection control specialist – are offering private dentistry practices across the UK a new and totally free service to strengthen their decontamination protocols, processes and understanding of legionella.

Aura Infection Control can provide free dental decontamination reviews, especially for private practices. These 30-minute online consultations offer dental professionals a platform to seek advice and ask questions about legionella.

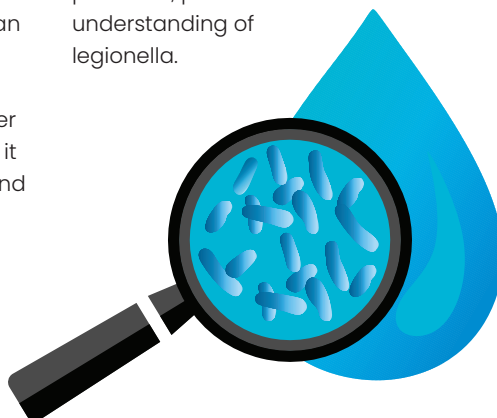
Bethany Powell, head nurse at Desford Dental Care, recently completed a decontamination review with one of Aura's specialists. She described the experience as 'incredible', highlighting the quality of advice and support provided. 'It's very hard to know if what you are doing is the absolute best it can be, Bethany explained, 'so to have this service available is fantastic.'

That's impressive praise. In the dental industry, success often depends on the quality of knowledge shared among professionals. Aura Infection Control exemplifies how expert guidance can help elevate practices and strengthen organisational standards.

Through these reviews, practices can ensure the robustness of their compliance protocols and training, thereby enhancing both patient and staff confidence.

As the dental sector evolves, one thing remains constant: the invaluable role of expert knowledge in fostering success and safeguarding patient wellbeing.

To book a free dental decontamination review, visit www.aiconline.co.uk/dental-decontamination-review. For more details, contact Laura Edgar on 01833 630393 or email orders@aiconline.co.uk.



Miracle shade matching
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Trycare Ltd is UK distributor of Tokuyama Dental's range of spherical composites, including Estelite Sigma Quick.

Featuring Tokuyama's patented RAP monomer and aesthetic spherical filler technology, Estelite Sigma Quick delivers an extended working time in ambient light yet cures in only 10 seconds!

There is also less residual monomer and minimal after-cure colour change for long term aesthetic satisfaction.

In addition, Estelite Sigma Quick offers miracle shade matching! Because of its spherical filler particles, it offers inherent shade mimicking so that, in most cases, just one shade will blend perfectly with the natural teeth, leaving invisible margins and undetectable restorations. These spherical fillers also facilitate outstanding polishing and a lustre that lasts and lasts, allied to high wear resistance and very low abrasion of the opposing teeth.

Estelite Sigma Quick is ideally used in combination with Tokuyama's award-winning Universal Bond II, which can be used to bond all direct and indirect restorative materials, Garrison Sectional Matrix Systems and, for the ultimate aesthetic finish, Eve polishes!

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MORE INFO

Innovation at the Dentistry Show 2025
A-dec

A-dec is excited to welcome you to stand B40 at this year's British Dental Conference & Dentistry Show Birmingham (BDCDS).

It will be worth visiting the A-dec stand at the show. Visitors can explore the cutting-edge A-dec 500 dental chair package, now available with the newly launched A-dec 500 Pro delivery system, featuring A-dec+, an updatable software platform offering future-ready digital capabilities.

Its new Dynamic Screen 7 (DS7) delivers a user-friendly interface, system diagnostics, and seamless software updates, ensuring your equipment evolves with your practice needs. You'll also find the A-dec 400 and A-dec 300 Core on display, so don't forget to visit A-dec.

With dental professionals potentially spending 26,565 hours in their chair during their career, selecting the right one is crucial. A-dec's territory managers will be on hand to provide expert advice on surgery design and equipment options.

The British Dental Conference & Dentistry Show Birmingham (BDCDS) will be returning to the NEC Birmingham on 16-17 May 2025.

This year's show is thrilled to welcome Gary Neville as the headline speaker, adding to an already exciting programme of industry insights and expert-led sessions.

Can't attend? Book a showroom visit in Bracknell, Warrington, or Nuneaton.

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The process involves carefully disassembling your chairs, topping old foam with high resilience anti-combustion foam and reupholstering with hydrophobic, antimicrobial, antiviral vinyl fabric.

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The Prettau zirconia line Zirkonzahn

Zirkonzahn's zirconia range has grown over time into a material line consisting of six different types of Prettau zirconia.

- With a very wide range of applications – from partial crowns to full arches – Prettau solves common problems such as narrow spaces, bruxism or ceramic chipping for functional and aesthetic restorations
- Prettau 2 and Prettau 2 Dispersive are translucent with excellent flexural strength. Their aesthetic properties allow the design of monolithic restorations, preventing the risk of ceramic chipping. With Prettau 2 and Prettau 2 Dispersive, patients receive biocompatible, individual and stable dental restorations, from single crowns to full arches. Dispersive has a slight natural colour gradient
- With the new Prettau 3 Dispersive zirconia, the concept of Gradual-Triplex-Technology was introduced. In addition to the colouring, also translucency and flexural strength levels change. In this way, while the incisally increasing translucency results in a highly translucent incisal edge, the cervically increasing flexural strength leads to an extremely high flexural strength at the tooth neck
- Prettau 4 Anterior and Prettau 4 Anterior Dispersive have been specially designed for the anterior region and are therefore characterised by a particularly high translucency. Both materials are suited for the posterior region. These two types of zirconia are suitable for the production of single crowns, inlays, onlays, veneers and three-unit bridges.

Zirkonzahn Shade Guides are composed of monolithic zirconia sample teeth in the shape of premolars, upper and lower incisors. They are available in Prettau 2 Dispersive, Prettau 3 Dispersive and Prettau 4 Anterior Dispersive zirconia.

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Enter a new dimension Planmeca

The Planmeca Viso G3 CBCT unit brings new features to the market, including video-based field of view (FOV) placement and a new generation sensor with an even better signal-to-noise ratio.



There is also an optional back of the head support for more comfortable positioning and a graphical user interface, which matches the style of the Planmeca Romexis software for ease of use.

With a FOV ranging from 3 x 3 to 20 x 10cm, the unit not only offers high-quality 3D images of the entire dentition, but is also able to capture detailed panoramic as well as extraoral bitewing images for interproximal diagnostics.

Combine this with Planmeca Calm – an algorithm that analyses and compensates for slight patient movements during 3D X-ray scanning, resulting in sharper final images – and you'll eliminate the need for retakes. It is a truly multifunctional CBCT device covering all extraoral imaging needs from 2D to 3D imaging, and it's available to order now!

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In a sphere of its own! Trycare

Tokuyama uses patented spherical filler particles of different diameters within its composite materials to maximise their optical and physical properties for the desired indication.

In addition to optimised optical properties, resulting in enhanced aesthetic restorations, Tokuyama's spherical filler particles offer other significant advantages.

They are quick and easy to pack into undercuts, reducing the risk of voids; easier to sculpt and carve, producing enhanced morphology; and a much smoother surface finish, which has a natural high sheen that requires minimal, if any, polishing.

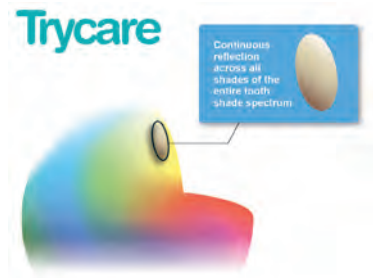
Tokuyama's development of spherical filler particles has culminated in Omnichroma, a colourless universal composite that matches every tooth colour no matter what the shade.

Omnichroma Flow Bulk is a low viscosity composite that can be placed in 3.5mm increments.

Like the other Omnichroma materials, it delivers unprecedented colour matching, high polishability and stain resistance. It also has low polymerisation shrinkage.

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IN THE HOT SEAT

This month, **Slaine Ker**, cosmetic dentist at The Row Dental in Edinburgh, answers our quick-fire questions

Q When and where was your last meal out?

A I went to L'escargot Bleu on Broughton Street in Edinburgh last weekend. It serves classic French dishes and is certified by Pasture for Life, who supports and promotes producers of 100% pasture-fed beef, lamb and dairy.

Q Who would play you in the movie of your life?

A Saoirse Ronan.

Q What's the best advice you've received?

A Control what you can, let go of what you can't.

Q What's your guilty pleasure?

A I can't resist GÜ Hot Chocolate Melting Middles.

Q What was the last gift you gave/received?

A The last gift I gave was a Coravin. And the last gift I received was a necklace with the initials of my three daughters.

Q Describe your perfect holiday...

A It would have to be skiing in the French Alps.

Q What's your all-time favourite book?

A My favourite book is *The Nightingale* by Kristin Hannah.

Q What song is guaranteed to make you want to dance?

A Shotgun – George Ezra.

Q What keeps you up at night?

A My newborn baby!

Q How do you unwind?

A Glass of wine. Reformer Pilates. But not together!

Q If you won the lottery, what would you do with the money?

A I would buy my dream house!

Q What was the last photo you took on your phone?

A This one of the Forth Bridge, which I took during a walk on Sunday.



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HAPPY
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