

### The BDJ news page

The BDJ accepts all general news items that might interest our readers. Press releases or articles should not exceed 500 words and may be edited. Please include a colour photograph if possible. As space for photographs is limited, priority will be given to good quality and/or interesting pictures. Please send BDJ news items to Kate Craig.

## Restrictions on GA welcomed

The British Dental Association and the General Dental Council have welcomed the Government's decision to finally remove general anaesthesia (GA) from general dental practice.

The CMO/CDO Working Group report, *A Conscious Decision: A review of the use of general anaesthesia and conscious sedation in primary dental care*, released on 21 July, concluded that general anaesthesia for dental treatment should only be administered in hospital by January 2002.

The use of GA by dentists outside hospital has fallen since the mid-1960s. While the numbers of deaths associated with general anaesthesia is small, in only seven of the last 35 years were there no deaths.

The British Dental Association has been calling on the government for two years to remove dental general anaesthesia from the list of treatments available under the General Dental Services. The BDA believes that it is essential that dental general anaesthetics are carried out in a hospital setting, which has all the necessary equip-

## First for Yorkshire



Practice Manager Jean Newsome (seated, second from left) and the team from Heckmondwike Dental Centre celebrate becoming the first dental practice in Yorkshire to be recognised as an Investor in People.

ment for the safe delivery of general anaesthesia, as well as easy access to emergency facilities.

John Renshaw, Chairman of the BDA's Executive Board, said: 'We are pleased that the government has listened to our concerns and taken steps to remove GA from general dental practice.'

The General Dental Council welcomed the report, saying protection of the public is the Council's most important consideration. The Council supports any guidance which aims to make the use of GA within dentistry safer.

## BDJ web site update

The BDJ web site has moved. The home site is still accessible through [www.bdj.co.uk](http://www.bdj.co.uk), however, in order to access deeper sites it will be necessary to update bookmarks as follows:

Classifieds can be found at:

<http://www.nature.com/bdj/classified/classifications.shtml>

The latest issue is located at:

<http://www.nature.com/bdj/current/redirect.taf>

Previous issues are at:

<http://www.nature.com/bdj/journal/index.html>

You can search the journal archive at:

[http://www.nature.com/dynasearch/app/dynasearch.taf?site\\_source=bdj](http://www.nature.com/dynasearch/app/dynasearch.taf?site_source=bdj)

Subscriptions are at:

<http://193.123.31.91/subscribe/>

BDJ Books can be purchased at:

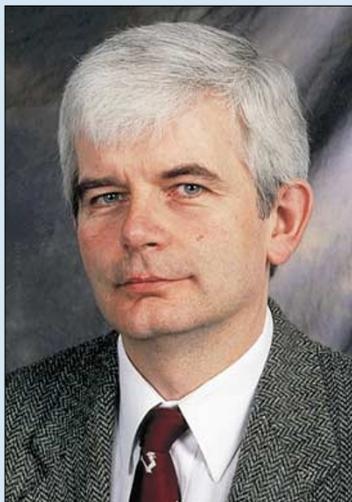
<http://193.123.31.91/books/>

For other pages go to the site homepage at:

<http://www.nature.com/bdj/index.html>

In addition to these changes, the BDA/BDJ has recently had a new phone system installed. The main BDA numbers are now 020 7563 4563 (phone) and 020 7487 5232 (fax).

The new direct phone line for the BDJ is 020 7535 5830. Our fax number is 020 7535 5843.



## New Chair

Tim Watson has been appointed to the new Chair in Microscopy in Relation to Restorative Dentistry from 1 September 2000.

Tim has been working in the Division of Conservative Dentistry at Guy's, King's and St Thomas' based at the Guy's campus, as a reader. This Personal Chair reflects the work that he has been doing in bringing together state of the art microscopy and its clinical application to restorative dentistry.

The appointment adds to the strength of the division, bringing the total of professors in the division to four.

## Two new web sites launched

The British Association of Dental Nurses (BADN) and International Association for Dental Research (IADR) have both launched new web sites.

The BADN web site (below) features the latest news, and more pages will be appearing over the next few weeks. The web address is [www.badn.org.uk](http://www.badn.org.uk).



The new IADR web site (above) features a new home page with new lay out, new features and search capabilities of the entire site's content.

The site can be found at [www.dentalresearch.org](http://www.dentalresearch.org) and has many new features exclusive to members only. These include a member search to help members locate colleagues throughout the world, access to full-text versions of *Advances in Dental Research* and subscriber access to IADR's journals.

## NHS complaints put in perspective

The recently released NHS Complaints Management Survey report showed that overall levels of complaints against NHS providers are actually lower than in most other sectors of the UK economy. Media coverage of NHS problems, however, is very intense and creates an impression that NHS complaints are out of control.

The report suggests that the travel industry has 10 times as many complaints as are made against doctors, nurses and dentists.

## Cheque for charity



Hywel Green (left) hands the cheque over to Bernadette Halton (right) of Macmillan Cancer Relief as dental nurse Jane Milbourne looks on.

When Kenilworth dentist Hywel Green was offered a £500 cheque for the use of his surgery for a photo shoot by the Medical Sickness Society he knew exactly what to do with it — the money was to go directly to Macmillan Cancer Relief.

Hywel's father Derek died of cancer in 1993, but his ordeal was made much more comfortable by the care of Macmillan nurses.

Macmillan Cancer Relief are attempting to raise £550,000 by the end of the year. 'We are nearly there,' said Bernadette Halton, Warwickshire appeal manager for Macmillan, 'and with wonderful gifts like this, it helps get closer to the target.'

### From the Chairman of the British Dental Association

Sir, You warn (leading article, July 28) that the Government's NHS Plan "may again raise expectations to an unsustainable level". In one important area of healthcare, however, the plan is almost silent.

Dental services merit only eight lines in a 144-page report. It mentions that nearly a million people visit their doctor each day but nearly half a million visit their dentist. By the age of 11 almost all children have visited their dentist at least once and every year 28 million people register at their local practice. Dentistry is an important part of the NHS for our patients.

We are told that the Government will soon publish a strategy for NHS dentistry, but it has been promising that since April 1998. If the NHS Plan is anything to go by, the public and profession will again be disappointed.

The Government says it "is firmly committed to making high-quality NHS dentistry available to all who want it by September 2001". If the Government is going to fulfil this pledge — first made by the Prime Minister at last year's party conference — then he and his ministers must recognise dentistry and dentists as an integral part of the NHS. For too long we have been a semi-detached part of the service.

Yours faithfully,  
JOHN RENSHAW,  
Chairman,  
British Dental Association,  
64 Wimpole Street, W1G 8YS.  
July 28.

Fig. 1 The Times, 1 August, 2000

## The NHS Plan

The Government's National Plan for the NHS, released on 27 July, stated that the Government is firmly committed to making high quality NHS dentistry available to all who want it by September 2001.

The Plan went on to say, 'The initiatives we have taken since 1997 have already made a real difference but more need to be done. In future, NHS Direct will help direct patients to NHS dentistry. The Government will fund more dental access centres and improvements to dental practices. It will reward dentists' commitment to the NHS and foster better quality services for patients, making NHS dentistry a modern and truly national service again. Health authorities will take the lead in delivering the changes which patients expect.'

It is mentioned elsewhere in the report that the National Institute for Clinical Excellence will publish patient-friendly versions of all its clinical guidelines. These guidelines will help patients navigate their way through the development of NHS Direct on Digital TV and NHS direct information points in key public places. This will include information on local NHS dentistry.

John Renshaw, Chairman of the BDA, commented on the brevity of the report's mention of dentistry in a letter published in *The Times* (figure 1).