

# Obituary

Obituaries should be submitted by email to the Editorial Office at [bdj.manuscripts@springernature.com](mailto:bdj.manuscripts@springernature.com).

All submitted obituaries should be 400 words maximum in length (apart from obituaries for past presidents of the BDA where the length should be 800 words).

Content of the obituary is down to the individual author, and the approval of the family should be given for the obituary prior to submission to the *BDJ*.



**Kevin Lewis**

1949–2025

Kevin Lewis bestrode the world of dentistry like a benign colossus but without seeking to draw attention to himself or his many contributions to it. His passing has brought deep sorrow and a profound sense of loss to his family, as well as numerous friends and colleagues across many countries.

Although Kevin was phenomenally talented in a wide variety of ways, he remained modest and approachable, always kind, generous and helpful to colleagues everywhere. He was honourable, reliable, wise and courageous, with a sense of humour that was as delightful as it could be playfully wicked.

He was a visionary and inspirational leader, able to assess complex situations with remarkable clarity – swift and sure when urgency demanded, yet unhurried and contemplative when reflection was required. Those who worked with him remember how effortlessly he appeared to move between deliberation and decisiveness. He could identify incipient dangers that no one else could see lurking and warn colleagues how to steer clear of them.

Kevin qualified BDS from The London Hospital in 1971 and LDS in 1972. He worked full-time as a general dental practitioner, establishing the UK's first truly preventive practice, which he owned and managed for many years while he developed exceptional expertise in the dento-legal field.

He spent 27 years at Dental Protection Ltd (DPL), initially as a member of the Board of Directors, then as a dento-legal adviser, and subsequently as Dental Director (1998–2016),

serving on the Council and Executive of the Medical Protection Society. However, Kevin was no 'gullible naïve softy', nor a stranger to misdeeds and sometimes bizarre problems caused by what he termed 'the sad, the mad and the bad in dentistry'. As Director, Kevin led by example, inspiring and enabling colleagues at DPL to, like him, go the extra mile to deliver his visionary 'dentists for dentists' philosophy. He had an instinct for detecting and nurturing talents in those he hired, generously delegating opportunities to develop within their roles, always supporting and giving them the credit for a job well done.

He also provided consultancy and advisory services to the BDA and a variety of organisations in dentistry and wider healthcare.

He was a fierce critic of any unaccountable monolith's abuse of power, and he dealt with complex political and regulatory challenges in the UK and internationally. He was respected for his courage in confronting injustice and the misuse of political or regulatory authority. His writing captured the essence of complex situations before dismantling flawed arguments, which gained him worldwide respect.

He was a champion for what was good in the wider dental profession – but a formidable critic of what was not.

Kevin had a remarkable ability to make people feel very special, mainly because he was such a great listener, nodding quietly while sensing the unspoken messages but saying little. He had a phenomenal memory for people, events, precise dates and regulatory small print, as well as for tactics employed successfully in previous cases. He also had an encyclopaedic knowledge about most sports, but especially rugby, cricket and football, and he was an ardent supporter of Manchester United.

He was a master of the written word and a prolific writer and clearly demonstrated that 'the pen is mightier than the sword'.

Those who were in his company when he penned his numerous articles observed that he drafted those in his very distinctive handwriting, pausing occasionally only to ensure the unbroken artistry of his prose.

He was Associate Editor of *Dental Practice* and Consultant Editor of *Dentistry* from 2006, and in that role provided the profession with expert analysis, opinion, and incisive political commentary. He wrote two textbooks on dental practice management and contributed guest chapters to several others.

He was renowned for his brilliantly engaging lectures at various conferences. He lectured throughout the UK and internationally, including seven FDI World Dental Congresses and regional or national conferences in almost 30 countries. He was extremely knowledgeable about the historical, cultural and regulatory nuances in those countries in which DPL operated.

He was a Fellow of the International College of Dentists, the Faculty of Dental Surgery of the Royal College of Surgeons of England, and the former FGDP, and he was awarded Honorary Membership of the British, Irish and New Zealand Dental Associations. He was a Founder Member of the College of General Dental Practice and was recently awarded the College Medal, its most prestigious honour.

Kevin adored his family, and he is survived by his wife Rhiannon (formerly Head Dental Nurse of the Periodontology Department at The London Hospital), his children and his two granddaughters: Nick, a Consultant in Restorative Dentistry at Guildford and a former Course Director of the FGDP Diploma in Restorative Dentistry; Sian, a solicitor in Yorkshire; his daughter-in-law Jane, a GDP in Hampshire; and his son-in-law Charlie, also a solicitor.

Len D'Cruz, Martin Kelleher, Jane Merivale  
and Raj Rattan