Setting the highest possible standards of healthcare

Welcome to the third edition of Dental Update in which all the main articles have been written by Fellows and Members of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow. Our authors work in all parts of the UK, Guernsey and Malaysia and represent our diverse membership. I would like to thank also those colleagues who responded to our request for articles but are not represented here as we were unable to find space for their contributions. The topics in this edition include recurrent aphthous ulceration, important facial skin lesions that the dentist should know about, evidence-based assessment of pain-related temporomandibular disorders, diagnosis and management of toothwear, autogenous bone grafting in the anterior maxilla, future applications for stem cells, a review of odontogenic cysts, the hidden dangers of free sugars in our diet, and implications of the new GDC Standards for Dental Professionals. This eclectic mix of topics is an excellent reflection of the wide range of expertise, knowledge and experience within our Faculty in healthcare.

The Dental Faculty remains focused on serving our membership and ensuring that the best support, services and opportunities are available to our dental professionals at every stage of their careers. This starts with specific lecture topics and interviewing techniques for undergraduate students, CPD days for Dental Care professionals and the rest of the dental team, targeted training days for national trainees in different Specialities, and mentorship programmes for Practitioners, Specialists and Consultants.

Training will start soon for dental professionals in the Clinical Anatomy Skills Centre (CASC), a state of the art cadaveric training centre resulting from a unique initiative between the College and Glasgow University. This is a fantastic facility which we hope will be able to accommodate Dental Faculty courses for many years.

Our MFDS Trainee package, which was launched in 2012, proved to be popular and has allowed our new graduates to get discounts on the overall cost for preparatory courses and examination fees whilst spreading this cost over 12, 18 or 24 months. The MFDS examination remains a benchmark qualification for dental professionals, both nationally and internationally. We currently run the MFDS Part 1 exam in over 12 centres throughout the UK and internationally and the Part 2 exam in both Glasgow and Manchester in the UK. We continue to respond to consumer demand and further centres are opening each year, including one planned for London later this year.

The Faculty of Dental Surgery continues to work with the other Royal Colleges to run the Intercollegiate Fellowship and Membership examinations for our future Specialists and Consultants. This is a critical role for all the Colleges as we strive to maintain professional standards and lead on setting the highest standards of healthcare for our population. All the Colleges maintain a strong voice in government and policymaking forums.

Our Faculty is growing fast with core membership increasing by more than 10% last year. We strive to ensure that a premium range of benefits is available to our Members and that they can choose from local CPD events of the highest calibre with direct relevance to their everyday work. We have recently purchased a five-storey building on Blythswood Square in Glasgow (20 yards from our back door) to help us in this aim, but also to ensure that our invaluable administrative staff have an appropriate working environment.

It is my privilege to be Dean of the Dental Faculty and Vice-President (Dental) of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow. On behalf of all my colleagues in Glasgow I would like to thank Dental Update and George Warman Publications and especially Managing Director Stuart Thompson, for the professional relationship we have forged with them. This has been of significant benefit to all Faculty Members.

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