A busy year ahead

124th BDA President Amarjit Gill speaks to Dental Tribune about his role and the coming 12 months

The BDA Conference and Exhibition saw the handover of the BDA Presidency from John Drummond to Amarjit Gill.

Amarjit qualified in 1981 from the Royal Dental Hospital, London. He joined the BDA as an associate in eight different practices, he became a principal in 1983, designing and building his own practice as part of a medical centre. In 1992 he became a Partner, relocating to a newly designed practice in the Wollaton area of Nottingham where he practises today.

Amarjit has significant experience of representing the dental profession. Locally, he has served as Chair of the BDA’s East Midlands Branch and the Nottingham Independent Practitioner Group, and as the development team leader of his Local Dental Committee. On the national stage he has chaired the BDA’s Private Practice and Equality and Diversity committees and served as Deputy Chair of the organisation’s Executive Board. He is also an invited member of the International Academy for Dental Facial Esthetics.

‘Absolutely fantastic’ Speaking to Dental Tribune about the Conference and the year ahead, Amarjit’s enthusiasm for promoting the best in dentistry shines through. “Taking over as BDA President at the Conference in Liverpool has been absolutely fantastic. I’ve really enjoyed the conference for me it has had everything but time for me to attend all of the lectures and presentations I would have liked to! Of course with having become President at the event I have had a lot of meeting and greeting to do, thank yous to make and loads of presentations to attend. For me this has all been great as well and I’ve had a fabulous time at the conference, but the reasons I love this event is the various post graduate lectures and this year I’ve missed out.

“A big part of the role of being BDA President is ambassadorial – I’m going to be extremely busy going places at home and abroad representing the BDA and UK dentists. Let me give you an example: I’m shortly off to Las Vegas for a conference, then I’ll be at a meeting in Sydney Australia with the Australian Dental Association, following that I am lecturing in Beijing. As you can see I’m not going to be around much!”

Impact on oral health As well as being involved with the BDA and practising in Nottingham, Amarjit is involved in other entrepreneurial activities, including acting as the spokesman for Dental Xpress (the mobile dental unit currently deployed in the Leicestershire area) and more recently as Clinical Dental Director for Philips Oral Healthcare. “What really impressed me was that Philips want to make an impact on the nation’s oral health and as our knowledge about the links between oral and systemic health grow, so the company has the potential to impact on the nation’s overall health too.”

Amarjit clearly relishes the wider challenges that participat ing in more than just life in the practice brings. “Being involved in an association such as the BDA lets you develop parts of yourself that you just can’t working as a general dental practitioner. It allows you to get out of your comfort zone”

He who rejects change is the architect of decay The only human institution which rejects progress is the cemetery. The challenge for the Association and the profession for the next ten years is to respond effectively to these changes. The next 10 years, however, do offer a real opportunity to shape the delivery of dentistry in the UK if and only if we positively embrace change and stop creating reasons why there is no need to do so.

We are training more dentists than ever before, but we will need to look at opportunities for career advancement and Continuing Professional Development. Now that Dental Care Professionals are registered, how do they fit into the delivery of care by the whole dental team? A recent BDA article found that patients attending a dental therapist had significantly higher levels of satisfaction compared to those who attended a dentist. The authors were from the Dental School in this very city. We in the UK have been the true abolitionists of this change and where we have gone the rest of the world will surely follow.

Let me say that whilst we have a right to expect the BDA to help change things for the better, it is up to the profession to help us make the changes and where we have gone the rest of the world will surely follow.

The Presidency is the highest honour the Association can bestow and I am honoured to have been chosen to take on this role. I want to thank the East Midlands Branch for nominating me and for the support I have had from colleagues in Nottinghamshire and across the profession. If I had to single out any one local colleague it’d be Dr Ralph Davies. He pushed me into local BDJ involvement and even collected me from home, to ensure my attendance. Today that seems a world away from this position of honour as BDA President.

“I believe that change will be a constant during the next decade. Harold Wilson said, “He who rejects change is the architect of decay. The only human institution which rejects progress is the cemetery.” The challenge for the Association and the profession for the next ten years is to respond effectively to these changes. The next 10 years, however, do offer a real opportunity to shape the delivery of dentistry in the UK if and only if we positively embrace change and stop creating reasons why there is no need to do so.

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