How far do we go? But exactly how far are we meant to take this? Should those dentists using this title really pay out for redoing their advertisement, letter headed papers, etc, etc, etc? Throughout the UK, private and public sector companies are taking active measures to reduce costs and... £78. This does raise the question of whether the fat of our £576 fee could be trimmed. If so, perhaps we could start with the consultation over the use of the title ‘Dr’, after all it is a title used by Dental Surgeons in a huge number of countries worldwide without controversy or dispute.

My main opposition to this debate is that once again the financial burden will seem to fall upon dentists and from a simply common sense point of view I cannot see how necessary or cost effective it is. Does the public really feel that we are second rate profession pretending to be doctors? If so, does the public have a similar feeling towards, let’s say, dermatologists? For, if we are to follow the same trail of thought, the public might expect them to be able to provide open heart surgery - after all they are both doctors. That is clearly not the case.

Pretext
There are many people out there pretending to be doctors who probably should be stopped. One example of many is the staff at the Clinique counter in my local department store, who all wear hospital white jackets, yet I don’t think any member of the public expect them to be able to treat serious skin disorders. What about the claims from numerous alternative health ‘experts’ who claim to treat anything from acne to cancer with the least evidence based backing?

In my opinion, whilst many people out there are pretending to be doctors, dentists are not among them. So let’s stop this constant degradation of our profession and exponential rise in costly regulations and instead allocate all available funds to letting dentists do what they are trained to do: treat patients.

About the author
Neel Kothari

Neel Kothari qualified as a dentist from Bristol University Dental School in 2005, and currently works in Cambridge as an associate within the NHS. He has completed a year-long postgraduate certificate in implantology at UCL Eastman Dental Institute, and regularly attends postgraduate courses to keep up-to-date with current best practice.

Doctor, Doctor...
Neel Kothari questions whether the title ‘Dr’ is as misleading as the GDC suggests...