One unwelcome side effect of having a DCP Register (or, a list of the names and addresses of around 60,000 people who have a CPD commitment to fulfil) is that companies with something to sell can buy it and bombard registrants with junk mail. And do they ever!

Companies offering CPD have caught on to this cheap and cheerful means of pestering dental nurses in particular; leading many of them – already panic-stricken at the thought of CPD, deadlines, cost, etc – to fork out large sums of money they can ill afford, often for very little in return.

More disturbing trend is the number of dental organisations who – until recently – considered “the girls” interchangeable, replaceable and of no importance whatsoever; but who (now there is money to be made from dental nurses) are falling over themselves to open their membership to dentistry’s latest cash cow.

Fighting for recognition
As someone who has spent the best part of the last 20 years fighting for recognition for dental nurses – and being opposed, blocked at every turn or just plain ignored by these same associations who now want to let dental nurses in through their hallowed doors so they can take their money, whilst at the same time continuing to deny dental nurses’ right to decent salaries, proper working conditions, funding for CPD etc – just the thought that some dental nurses will be taken in by these wolves in sheep’s clothing makes me angry.

But some will. And there will always be some dental nurses who think that joining an association run by dentists instead of by dental nurses makes them more ‘important’. All those dental nurses who say things like: “Of course, I’m not just a dental nurse any more – I’m a…” and don’t join BADN because ‘it’s just for dental nurses’ will rush to be parted from their money by the men in suits. And more fool them.

All I can say is – just because an association starts using the word ‘dental’ instead of ‘dentist’, or ‘professional’ instead of ‘practitioner’ doesn’t make them supportive of, or even interested in, dental nurses. They might take your money – they need it to prop up their ailing white elephants in Mayfair – but when it comes to the crunch, will they stand up and fight for you?

There is only one professional association in the UK, which is run by, for and on behalf of dental nurses - and it has been doing that for 70 years – its whole reason for existence is to fight for, support and promote dental nursing and dental nurses – and that includes those now working as practice managers, receptionists, tutors, managers… whatever. The membership package includes a professional journal, indemnity cover, verifiable CPD, legal advice – so you don’t have to pay out more money for any of those things – as well as advice, support, information and a wide range of discounts and other benefits. Don’t be fooled by cheap imitations.

To join BADN, phone 01253 338360, email join@badn.org.uk, visit www.badn.org.uk or stand L21 at Showcase.

New status equals new target market?
Many dental nurses are spending unnecessarily large amounts of money on CPD. But they needn’t, advises BADN chief executive Pam Swain.

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