Time for change?

Now’s a good time to make sure your practice and its team are prepared should difficult times continue into 2010, Mhari Coxon offers some ideas

I went to visit Tate Modern recently and walked into Miroslaw Balka’s dark hole piece. It is a large metal structure lined with black velvet, making it almost impossible to see once you get inside. On walking towards the exit, a need to slow down and watch my footing. Although I couldn’t see in front of me I was determined to reach the end. When I did finally touch the wall at the end, I turned and saw that it was not so dark looking out. It was interesting to watch the caution of those walking in from my vantage position.

I am trying to use the impression this piece of art has left on me, to see a way out of this dark year. If the media and those in the know (who are they by the way?) are to be believed then the worst of the downturn in the market is over and the recession has bottomed out. Although history tells us it might take a good few years more for this country to get back on track.

2009 in dentistry

Over 15 per cent of the UK public have cancelled a dental appointment due to cost, says a new study by Saga Health Cash Plan. Routine healthcare is becoming a victim of the current economic climate, with over a quarter (27 per cent) of Brits cancelling fees-based appointments.

If you and your practices have been fortunate, this year may have seen a slowdown on cosmetic cases, but otherwise things have remained stable.

I am grateful that, five years in, my practice has a large list of patients who appreciate the need for maintenance as part of their oral hygiene routine. This has been subsidised by a flow, but not a flood, of new patients.

Time to plan

Now that we are turning back to oral hygiene routine. This has been subsidised by a flow, but not a flood, of new patients. Patients who appreciate the need in, my practice has a large list of patients who appreciate the need.

The positive is that this is the perfect time to build a plan for each staff member, listing some targets they would like to achieve – team targets can be a good way to get us all working together.

The latter makes bleaching an impossible task, but we have sourced a lot of our consumables and have checked costs more regularly instead of settling with one supplier. Labs are interested in negotiating as work slows.

Developing the team

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Make the change

Whatever changes you decide to implement in practice, remember that the team is working hard to keep things going in this difficult time and should be recognised for this. It is too easy to find fault when things are not how we would like them to be. Lead by example.

Infection control compliance

Now could be the time to build the business plan and make a time-line for the practice to comply. Many companies have highly educated colleagues working with them to support the change in practice. Carmel Mather, working with Optident is a perfect example, having worked closely with Mike Martin and Martin Fullord.

Cementing your team

Team building can help to unite everyone in difficult times and can become a practice builder in its own right as most patients enjoy a friendly, supportive atmosphere that is based on respect.

For those who fancy challenging themselves and their team, try somewhere like team- buildingevents.co.uk which has lots of options you can choose from to help reduce your weaknesses as a team.

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