GDPUK was off to a flying start with the usual infinite variety of topics related to dentistry at the beginning of 2009.

Reading the crystal ball always appeals to forum members. One such prediction was that as the pound becomes weaker and as the credit crunch continues to take hold, fewer dentists from abroad will find it beneficial to earn a salary in sterling, and the resulting shortfall in human resource will make achieving UDA's across the country more difficult. I was not convinced by this argument though. If the dentist lived in the UK, a pound is still a pound. The corollary to this argument is that Europeans will suddenly find that complex dental work is now suddenly cheaper in the UK, so their Euros will go much further. I wonder if any colleagues have seized on this and advertised their services to mobile Europeans? I certainly saw this effect in London over Christmas. Europeans were raiding the shops, with 70 per cent off in the sales and their advantage of 1 equal to £1.

Work woes
A popular thread was initiated when someone mentioned their terrible journey to work and asked about his peers’ journeys. This sparked varied answers, with some describing very scenic routes, some cyclists, some commuting on the motorway. My personal journey is about 2,000 metres against the rush hour traffic, so no queues for me, morning or evening. No, this isn’t a dentistry-related topic I know, but we all enjoy a topic which stimulates some discussion.

Clinical issues
Some clinical topics discussed (condensed) asked:
• Should we leave second molars off full dentures?
• Should articaine be used for nerve blocks?
• Which washer disinfector should we choose?

A practice manager began a discussion when asking about overtime for CPD for a DCP. A dental nurse who worked part-time attended a (free) radiography course during the day, but not in her contracted hours. She asked for time off in lieu. But her fellow team members often attend courses in evenings, but do not ask for comparable time off. So, what should the practice policy be, if we all agree team training is very important? If the practice allows this, will all time spent on education be part of the 40-hour week? This is a difficult one to answer.