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 has been a member of the BDA for nearly 30 years and has been a trustee of various postgraduate practices. This year, 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 greets to do, thank yous to make and a lot of meeting and greeting President at the event I have had presentations I would have liked to!”

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 participating in more than just life in the from colleagues in Nottinghamshire and across the profession. If I had to a single out any one local colleague it’d be Dr Ralph Davies. He pushed me into local BDA 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.

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 BDJ 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, in the past, been the trailblazers 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 does not absolve us of our responsibilities. The world famous Indian sage, Mahatma Gandhi, encapsulated this with “Be the change you want to see in the world.”