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# **FUTUREPROOF YOUR PRACTICE WITH THE DENTISTRY SHOW LONDON PROGRAMME**

Dentistry isn't standing still, and neither is Dentistry Show London. With rapid advancements in digital dentistry, Al and technology, along with new ways of treating patients across every specialty - not to mention policy and political updates - it can feel difficult to keep up. That's where **Dentistry Show London comes in** 

ith a programme carefully curated to bring you bang up to do with dentistry, you can be sure it's time away from the practice well-spent.

July 2025 saw the launch of the NHS 10 Year Health Plan for England, including the Government's three shifts of sickness to prevention, hospital to community, and analogue to digital. The dental profession is well placed to support on the delivery of these strategic changes. This plan also pledged to begin wholesale reform of the NHS contract, which the BDA says must happen at pace to enable a prevention-focused, patient-centred model for dentistry. Join Eddie Crouch, Chair of the BDA, and Martin Woodrow, Chief Executive of the BDA on either day to analyse the latest updates on dentistry politics and policy and what they mean for you.

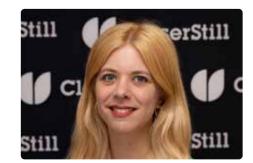
Our brand-new Keynote Theatre will also play host to some interesting questions that have come up regularly in recent conversations with the sector. First of all, the role of social media in today's dental practice - is it friend or foe (or a bit of both)? There's no denying that social media has a hugely important role in promoting your work and your dental practice, it's also a huge source of inspiration for newly qualified dentists - but has it also led to a rise in patient expectations and complaints, and a narrowing of what new dentists want to do? Our panel. including Chinwe Akuonu, Manrina Rhode and Niall Hutchinson will debate these questions, and more, on Friday 4 October. Meanwhile Helen Kaney from the Medical and Dental Defence Union of Scotland will explore the

indemnity perspective of social media and Al.

Another big question Dentistry Show London will debate this year is 'Patient or customer? Managing patient demand in modern dentistry'. Has the rise in perfect smiles represented on social media, and therefore patient expectations, led to a shift in the relationship between dentist and patient to one of dentist and customer? Our panel, comprising Sameer Patel, Justin Leigh, Simone Ruzario, and Sarika Shah, will explore this question, and what it means for the way in which dental professionals interact with patients going forward.

Remaining at the cutting edge of clinical practice is a vital part of future proofing yourself as a dental professional, and the content we have in store for you across the Clinical Excellence, Specialty Interest, and Aesthetic & Digital Dentistry Theatres will support you in this endeavour. Working with some of our trusted partners, along with incredible individuals leading the way in their field, we're covering everything from complex implant reconstruction with Azim Malik, to the connection between oral health and athletic performance for both elite and recreational athletes with Professor Peter Fine. You can also hear from Payman Sobhani on smile design and anterior aesthetics, Emily Lu on the impact of vitamin D on periodontal health, and Joseph Bell on navigating and communicating the risks of vaping from an orthodontics perspective.

With our partners the IDDA, you'll be able to really dig into the latest technology and how to use it. They will explore Al-driven treatment



planning and predictive health checks, the role of digital twins and instant simulation in smile design, and guided surgery '5.0' - with smart materials, AI, and zero-time workflow. The IDDA will round up with a panel on 'the dentist of 2030' - discussing augmented reality. Al copilots, and the connected clinic.

Ensuring your business is ready for the future is vital to your continued success. The Practice Owners & Business Management Theatre is the place to refresh your ideas and get inspiration on everything from creating a high-performance team with Justin Leigh, to ranking smarter with Al, Google and SEO from Shaz Memon. This theatre also plays host to a powerhouse of a panel - Raabiha Maan, Devinia Coco Lavan-Iswaran, Chinwe Akuonu and Shandy Vijayan give us the panel they wish they'd heard sooner with life lessons from women in dentistry.

Finally, the Dental Care Professionals' Hub plays host to a variety of sessions specifically curated for the whole team. Poppy Dunton will share insight on the missing menopause conversations we should be having in dentistry, while James Hyde will discuss clinical decision making for dental therapists and dental hygienists. Professor Mike Lewis will deliver the 2025 essential guide to mouth cancer, Chloe Phillips will share how to deliver a 7-star patient experience, and Hannah Lambourn will clear up some common myths in medical emergency training.

With more sessions to be added between now and 3-4 October, you and your team will find plenty to inspire, educate and excite across the two days - enabling you to ensure you're all ready for the future of dentistry.

**Head of Content Production** 







# **FRIDAY 3 OCTOBER**

09:15 Al and social media in dentistry -10:00 an indemnity perspective

Helen Kaney, Deputy Head of Dental Division, Medical and Dental Defence Union of Scotland

11:15 Stop worrying about litigation and start 12:00 enjoying dentistry

Len D'Cruz, Head of Indemnity, BDA

12:15 Session delivered by 13:00 Aligner Dental Academy

Aligner Dental

13:15 Update from the Chief Dental Officer 14:00 Jason Wong, Chief Dental Officer for England

15:15 Friend or foe? The role of social media in today's dental practice 16:00

> Chinwe Akuonu, General & Cosmetic Dentist, Educator Manrina Rhode, Cosmetic Dentist and Owner of DRMR Clinic and

Niall Hutchinson, GDP. Cherrutree Dental Care Sarika Shah, Practice Principal, Platinum Dental Care

# **SATURDAY 4 OCTOBER**

10:15 Empowering dental nurses: career pathways, transferable skills &

leadership development

Amelia Hodgson, Head of Dental Nursing, Bupa Dental Care

11:15 Emotional dentistru

12:00 Milad Shadrooh, The Singing Dentist

Session delivered bu

**Session delivered by UCL Eastman Dental Institute** 

**Aligner Dental Academy** 

14:15 Dentistry politics and policy: an update from the BDA

Eddie Crouch, Chair, BDA Board, British Dental Association

15:15 Patient or customer? Managing patient demand in modern dentistry 16:00

**SATURDAY 4 OCTOBER** 

Sameer Patel, Clinical Director, elleven Dental Wellness Justin Leigh, Managing Director, Focus 4 Growth Simone Ruzario. Dental Hugienist and Dental Therapist Sarika Shah, Practice Principal, Platinum Dental Care

# **CLINICAL EXCELLENCE THEATRE**

# **FRIDAY 3 OCTOBER**

# 09:15 Title coming soon!

10:00 Risha Patel, Specialist Endodontist

11:15 Session delivered by 12:00 DermapenWorld

Dermopenworld

12:15 Title coming soon! 13:00 Dr Jan Einfeldt, Clinical Director, Staplehurst Dental Practice,

alian

13:15 Session delivered by Dentagua 14:00

Tandlaege, University of Copenhagen

Dentagua

14:15 LIVE DEMONSTRATION: The power of aesthetics: 15:00 understand what you can really achieve

Dr Priyanka Chadha, Consultant Plastic Surgeon,

12:00

12:15 Talking the truth in aesthetics with an 13:00 expert panel

Dr Priyanka Chadha, Consultant Plastic Surgeon, Acquisiton Aesthetics

09:15 Inner leadership - leading to excellence

10:00 Amber Qureshi, Coach and Founder, Dr Amber Q

11:15 Session delivered by Dentaqua



Dentagua

Session delivered by **DermapenWorld** 14:00

Dermopenworld

15:15 Multidisciplinary approaches to a patient whose 16:00 teeth are failing clinically and aesthetically

> Varkha Rattu. Founder, Perio-Diabetes Hub Akhtar Khan, Prosthodontic Postgraduate Trainee

16:15 From club runners to elite athletes: the impact of 17:00 performance nutrition on oral health

> Professor Peter Fine. Director of Restorative Dental Practice MSc and Sports Dentistry Oral Health in Sport MSc. UCL Eastman Dental Institute

# 15:15 Smile design and anterior aesthetics

16:00 Payman Sobhani, Dental Beauty Partner, Hampstead and Bromley

Complex implant reconstruction: from horizontal & vertical grafting to soft enhancement

Azim Malik, Specialist Periodontist and Implant Surgeon, Norton Implants

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# PRACTICE OWNERS & BUSINESS MANAGEMENT THEATRE

# FRIDAY 3 OCTOBER

09:15 "Let's talk about it" – real conversations ADAM 09:45 that matter in dentistry

Lisa Bainham, President, ADAM Mark Topley, Director, Great Boss Academy

10:00 Creating a high-performance team through coaching 10:30 Justin Leigh, Managing Director, Focus4growth Ltd

10:45 Embracing innovation: revolutionising private dental practice management



∧ DentalElite

Michaela Klopper, Project Leader: Learning and Development, GoodX Software

11:30 Don't blow the deal: 15 learnings from 15 years of Dental Elite in practice sales



12:30 AI, Google & SEO: ranking smarter with dentistry's most trusted marketing DIGIMAX DENTAL channel



Session delivered by **Pearl and Dentally** 15:15

16:15



15:45 Dentistry politics and policy: an update from the BDA

> Martin Woodrow, Chief Executive, British Dental Association



# **SATURDAY 4 OCTOBER**

09:15 Career crossroads: creating your next chapter

09:45 Tejal Doshi, BDS (Lond) PgCert Aes Rest Dent PgCert Advanced and Specialist Healthcare (Dental Education Practice), Roots and Resilience Nehal Doshi, BDS (Hons) PgCert Advanced Aesthetic  $\delta$  Restorative Dentistry PgCert Dental Education (Distinction), Roots and Resilience

10:00 The panel I wish I'd heard sooner: life lessons from women in dentistry 10:30

> Raabiha Maan, Dentist, Practice Owner, Founder, Dental Mums Network Devinia Coco Lavan-Iswaran, Dental Surgeon, Founder, Wow Chinwe Akuonu, General & Cosmetic Dentist, Educator Shandu Viiauan. Associate Dentist. Clinical Lecturer. COO. Dental Mums Network

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10:45 Session delivered by Dentally dentally 11:15

Don't blow the deal: 15 learnings from 15 years of Dental Elite in 12:15 practice sales

> Luke Moore, Co-owner, Dental Elite Tommu Glasscoe, Finance Broker, Dental Elite

12:30 From drill to destination: financial freedom Quilter Steven Sylvester-Ajudua, Chartered Financial Planner, Quilter Financial Advisers

13:15 AI, Google & SEO: ranking smarter with dentistry's most trusted marketing channel

Shaz Memon, Director, Digimax

14:45 The lean green tooth-fixing machine: a roadmap to sustainable dentistru

Karl Walker-Finch, General Dentist and Owner, Smiles in Tandem

"Let's talk about it" - real conversations that matter in dentistry 16:00

Lisa Bainham, President, ADAM Mark Topley, Director, Great Boss Academy



# **AESTHETIC & DIGITAL DENTISTRY THEATRE**



VGG

DDA

# FRIDAY 3 OCTOBER

11:30 From Image to Insight: The Power of 12:15 DiagnoCat AI in Everyday Practice

Diagnocat Dr Nick Fahey, Specialist in Prosthodontics, Woodborough House

12:30 Al-driven treatment planning & predictive patient health checks 13:15

Professor Patrik Zachrisson, Digital Dentist, The IDDA

Professor Adam Nultu. The Digital Dentist. The IDDA

14:45 Beyond full arch: the next generation 15:30 of Al-driven All-on-X implantology

Professor Adam Nulty, The Digital Dentist, The IDDA Professor Patrik Zachrisson, The Digital Dentist, The IDDA

# **SATURDAY 4 OCTOBER**

09:30 Smile design in the age of generative AI: 10:15 digital twins & instant simulation

Professor Quintus Van Tonder, Digital Dentist, The IDDA

Guided surgery 5.0: smart materials, 12:30 artificial intelligence & zero time

workflow

Professor Chris Lefkaditis, Digital Dentist, The IDDA

13:45 Redefining consent: embracing digital ecosystems in aesthetic dentistry 14:30

Kunal Patel, Owner and Clinical Director, Love Teeth Dental

The dentist of 2030: augmented reality, Al co-pilots & the connected clinic 16:30

Professor Chris Lefkaditis, Digital Dentist, The IDDA Professor Quintus Van Tonder, Digital Dentist, The IDDA



alian

# **DENTAL CARE PROFESSIONALS' HUB**

15:00

DOA

PHINAMALIGNAL BURNS

DDA

# FRIDAY 3 OCTOBER

10:45 The 7-star patient experience: luxury, loyalty & lifetime clients 11:30

Chloe Phillips, General Manager, Stella Dental Collective

11:45 Hormones, health and hygiene: the missing 12:30 menopause conversation

Poppy Dunton, Dental Business Consultant & Dental Therapist

13:30 Clinical Dental Technicians...the future

14:15 Stephan Avetoom, Chairman, Clinical Dental Technicians Association UK (CDTA UK)

14:30 The role of dental nurses in optimum 15:15 patient care

Rebecca Silver, Dental Nurse, Dental Nurse Guru/BADN Panel of Representatives

15:30 Busted! Clearing up common myths and misinformation in medical emergency training

Hannah Lambourn, Dental Compliance Manager

# **SATURDAY 4 OCTOBER**

09:15 Smiles ahead: how exemptions are shaping the future of dental care delivery 10:00

Dr Fiona Sandom, Dental Therapist, British Association of Dental Therapists

10:15 Clinical decision making for dental therapists and

dental hygienists

James Hyde, Speciality Trainee in Restorative Dentistry, Cardiff Universitu

12:15 The 2025 essential guide to mouth cancer

Professor Mike Lewis, Emeritus Professor of Oral Medicine, Mouth Cancer Foundation Ambassador

13:15 Session title coming soon!

Agata Bak, Owner, Black Pearl Dental Laboratory 14:00

14:15 Dental nurses in suits: careers beyond the clinic

Fiona Ellwood BEM, Executive Director, Society of British

Dental Nurses

15:15 From disclosure to action: domestic abuse and the dental professional's

16:00 dutu

Preetee Hulton, President, BADN



Mouth Cancer

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# **SPECIALTY INTEREST THEATRE**

BOS

# **FRIDAY 3 OCTOBER**

10:00 Pearls for efficient excellence and DvnaFlex® 11:00 outside-in aesthetic concepts

(vertical dentofacial aesthetics part 1 & 2)

Dr Chad Foster, Editor, Orthotown Magazine

11:15 The perio update

12:00 Reena Wadia, Founder & CEO | Specialist Periodontist, RW Perio & Perio

13:15 Vaping, orthodontics and oral health: 14:00 understanding the evidence, identifying the risks, and supporting patients

> Joseph Bell, Specialist Registrar in Orthodontics, North Cumbria Integrated Care NHS Foundation Trust

14:15 Keep it alive: vital pulp therapy in everyday practice

15:00 Omayma Siddig, Dental Practitioner, Kingswells Dental Practice

15:15 Planning for the future in implant dentistru 16:00

> Raid Ali, Wales Representative, ADI Manraj Kalsi, South East England Representative, ADI

16:15 Navigating periodontal treatment as a team: practical strategies for success in NHS and private practice

> Jade Campbell, Dental Therapist, MSc 3rd year Advanced Periodontal Practice, University of Essex

Cher Farrugia, NIHR Academic Clinical Lecturer in Periodontology, University of Bristol and Periodontology Speciality Trainee

# **SATURDAY 4 OCTOBER**

09:15 Pearls for efficient excellence and DynaFlex® outside-in aesthetic concepts (central incisor dominance & the power of

disocclusion-positioning and shaping bite turbos)

Dr Chad Foster, Editor, Orthotown Magazine

10:30 Session delivered by College of **Medicine and Dentistry (COMD)** 



Managing the diseased pulp - a new dawn for vital pulp therapy!

Phil Tomson, President, BES



13:30 Healthy smiles for life: Medway's journey in oral

health improvement

Albert Akhidenor, Health Improvement Senior Project Officer (Oral Health & Early Years), Public Health Directorate, Medway Council

14:30 The impact of vitamin D on periodontal health: biological basis and clinical relevance

Emily Lu, Senior Clinical Lecturer/ Honorary Consultant in Periodontology, King's College London

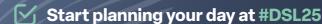


Challenges of managing the anterior dentition:

function vs aesthetics

Kathryn Taylor, Chair/Hon Consultant in Oral Surgery, School of Medicine and Dentistry, University of Central Lancashire

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AKHIDENOR Health Improvement Senior, Project Officer (Oral Health & Early Years), Public Health Directorate

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**AVETOOM** Chairman
Clinical Dental Technicians Association UK (CDTA UK)

STEDHAN



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JOSEPH BELL Specialist Registrar in Orthodontics North Cumbria Integrated Care NHS Foundation



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The IDDA



SPEAKERS

KIINAI **PATEL** Owner and Clinical Director **Love Teeth Dental** 



CAMPBELL Dental Therapist, MSc 3rd year Advanced Periodontal Practice (University of Essex), Clinical Supervisor
Oracle Dental Group



**CHADHA** Consultant Plastic Surgeon **Acquisiton Aesthetics** 



**LAVAN-ISWARAN** Dental Surgeon, Founder



**CROUCH** Chair, BDA Board **British Dental Association** 



**D'CRUZ** Head of Indemnity BDA



**DOSHI** Associate GDP Roots and Resilience



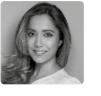
**PATEL** Specialist Endodontist



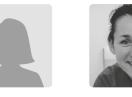
**PATEL** Clinical Director e11even Dental Wellness



**RATTU** Founder Perio-Diabetes Hub



**RHODE** Cosmetic Dentist and Owner DRMR Clinic and Academy



**SANDOM** Dental Therapist **British Association of Dental Therapists** 



TF.JAI DOSHI Associate GDP Roots and Resilience



DR.JAN **EINFELDT** Clinical Director, Staplehurst Dental Practice, Tandlaege University of Copenhag



FIONA **ELLWOOD BEM** Executive Director Society of British



DR NICK FAHEY Specialist in Prosthodontics Woodborough House



CHER FARRUGIA NIHR Academic Clinical Lecturer in Periodontology and Periodontology Speciality Trainee University of Bristol



**PROFESSOR PETER** FINE Director of Restorative Dental Practice MSc and Sports Dentistry Oral Health in Sport MSc UCL Eastman Dental Institute



**SHADROOH** The Singing Dentist



ОМАУМА SIDDIG Dental Practitione Kingswells Dental Practice



REBECCA SILVER Dental Nurse, Dental Nurse Guru



ΡΔΥΜΔΝ **SOBHANI** Dental Beauty Partner Hampstead and Bromley



**RUZARIO** 

Dental Hygienist and

Dental Therapist

**KATHRYN TAYLOR** Chair/Hon Consultant in Oral Surgery
School of Medicine and Dentistry, University of



FOSTER Editor Orthotown Magazine



GLASSCOE Finance Broker **Dental Elite** 



**HYLTON** President BADN



KALSI Periodontist and Implant Dentist Teddington dental



KANEY Deputy Head of Dental Division Medical and Dental



KHAN Prosthodontic Postgraduate Trainee



**TOMSON** President BES



**TOPLEY** Director **Great Boss Acaden** 



**PROFESSOR QUINTUS VAN TONDER** Digital Dentist The IDDA



VIJAYAN Associate Dentist, Clinical Lecturer, COO
Dental Mums Network



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Chartered Financial Planner

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MICHAELA KLOPPER Project Leader: Learning and Development GoodX Software



LAMBOURN

Dental Compliance Manager

HANNAH



PROFESSOR CHRIS JUISTIN. **LEFKADITIS** LEIGH Digital Dentist Managing Director The IDDA Focus4growth Ltd



**LEWIS** Emeritus Professor of Oral Medicine, Mouth Cancer Foundation Ambassado **Mouth Cancer Foundation** 

**PROFESSOR MIKE** 



**EMILY** LU Senior Clinical Lecturer/ Honorary Consultant in King's College London



WATSON Maxillofacial Surgery Doctor & CEO **Acquisition Aesthetics** 

ΙΔΡΔ



JASON WONG Chief Dental Officer for England



WOODROW Chief Executive **British Dental Association** 



PROFESSOR PATRIK **ZACHRISSON** Digital Dentist The IDDA





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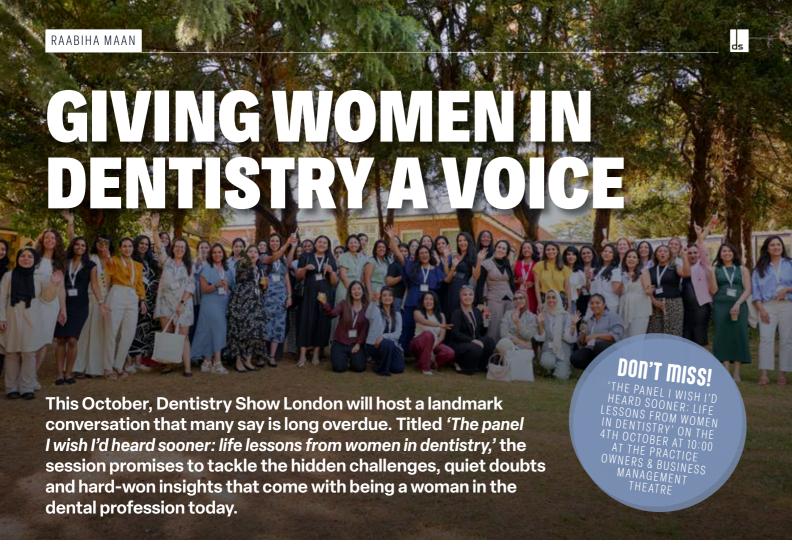


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bristolcadcam.com







Dr Raabiha Maan is a dentist, practice owner, author, and mum of three with a passion for empowering women in dentistry. She is the co-author of the number 1 best-selling textbook 'Dentistry in a Nutshell' and the founder of Patient Journey Academy. She is also the founder of Dental Mums Network - a thriving UK platform that supports, connects and uplifts women in dentistry. especially mothers.

# Can you tell us about the inspiration behind this panel, and why now is the right time for this conversation?

Many women in dentistry carry untold stories. The times we nearly stepped away. The resilience it took to keep going while managing clinical work, newborns, fertility treatment, leadership roles, hormonal shifts, and societal expectations.

When these realities aren't spoken about, it's easy to feel isolated - as if we're the only ones

This panel was born from a desire to break that silence. It grew out of the Dental Mums Network, a space where women can speak honestly and feel seen.

Dentistry often shows a polished front, but behind the scenes, many of us are navigating complex personal challenges. The time is right because women in this profession are no longer content with being quietly resilient. We want to be understood, not just applauded for "doing

# What's one life lesson you've learned in your dental career that you wish someone had told you earlier?

That dentistry is 80% communication and

We're trained to master clinical skills. But the core of our work lies in how we listen, reassure, adapt, and build trust - with patients, teams, and ourselves. Clinical excellence matters, of course, but true impact comes through human connection.

### What kinds of stories or insights can attendees expect?

Raw honesty. We'll be talking about what usually gets left out of professional conversations: imposter syndrome, burnout, self-doubt, guilt. The real moments where we've had to choose between showing up for work or showing up for

This isn't just for mothers. Dr. Chinwe Akuonu, one of our panelists, doesn't have children yet, but she's navigating the same questions many

of us ask: When is the right time? Can I do it all? What will it mean for my career?

You'll hear stories from women who've been through it or are still figuring it out. And you'll be reminded that you're not alone.

# As a woman in dentistry, what are some of the biggest challenges you've faced and how have you overcome them?

I've been fortunate not to experience some of the more overt discrimination others have shared, but I've heard those stories too often to ignore them.

Sexual misconduct. Maternity discrimination. Being talked over. Working twice as hard for the same opportunities. Being called "bossy" for being decisive, or "cold" for setting boundaries. Feeling pressure to prove yourself after having kids. Navigating fertility treatment, loss, guilt, exhaustion with little support.

My own challenges were more internal: imposter syndrome and perfectionism. That belief that if I don't do everything flawlessly, I've failed.

These experiences are real. They're why this network exists - to shine a light on what's been unspoken, and to remind women they're not alone.

# How has becoming a mother impacted your professional identity, priorities, or confidence within dentistry?

Motherhood changed everything and made me calmer

After managing the chaos at home - meals, naps, emotions - work can feel like the easy part. I'm more focused, more patient, and far less worried about small things. I've also become more empathetic - with patients, my team, and myself.

And some days, I feel like a superhero. The juggling act is real and I want to give every parent a medal!

What advice would you give to earlycareer dentists or dental students who are struggling with imposter syndrome or burnout?

You're not broken. You're just early.

Imposter syndrome makes you feel like you're pretending, but really, you're becoming. No one starts out confident. Confidence comes from doing, not waiting.

Burnout isn't always dramatic, it can feel like quiet exhaustion. You don't need to earn your worth through perfection. Grow at your own pace. Ask for help. You're not alone.

# How important is peer support and community, like the Dental Mums network, in navigating life as a woman in dentistry?

It's everything. We're taught to stay professional, push through, keep going. But it's exhausting to carry everything silently.

The Dental Mums Network is a place where you don't have to explain - people just get it. It's more than support. It's connection. It's a collective voice. And it's what's been missing in our profession for too long.

# Have you seen progress in how the industry supports women - particularly those balancing clinical roles with parenting or leadership?

Yes, but we have a long way to go. There's more openness around flexible working. More women stepping into leadership. More voices calling for change.

But real support is still patchy. Maternity policies vary wildly. Part-time roles can feel like a step down. Leadership still often requires being available 24/7.

We're making progress. But we need to move

faster, not just for us, but for the next generation.

# What would you say to practices or employers looking to create more inclusive and flexible working environments?

Start by putting more women in leadership. Women make intuitive, resilient, empathetic leaders. But we need more than encouragement, we need tools.

Flexible, inclusive practices don't happen by accident. They happen when leaders truly understand what women need.

# The dental world is evolving rapidly. What excites you most about the future for women in dentistry?

That we're no longer waiting for permission.

Women are redefining success. Building community. Leading practices rooted in wellbeing. Choosing mentorship over competition.

The future feels more open. Not easier, but more possible.

### What do you hope attendees walk away with after hearing this panel?

That they leave feeling lighter. Like they've been let into a conversation they didn't know they needed. That they're not alone in their thoughts or experiences.

I hope they feel permission - to be honest, to ask for support, to do things differently. And that they know: your path is valid, and there's a whole community cheering you on.



# **LESSONS FROM A LIFE IN** DENIZI MURSING

In this reflective feature ahead of Dentistry Show London, Fiona Elwood (registered Dental Nurse, educator and long-standing advocate for the profession), shares the story of her journey into dental nursing and the lessons she's learned along the way. Fiona offers an inspiring perspective on the value of dental nurses, the evolution of the profession and the importance of recognising the many different paths a dental nursing career can take.



# A CAREER SHAPED BY FATE

If you'd asked me at 16 what I wanted to do, dentistry wouldn't have been on the list. I had my heart set on joining the Wrens (The Women's Royal Naval Service). But life had other ideas.

My first real experience of dentistry came by accident. I couldn't get the sixth-form work placement I wanted, so I picked a dental practice from a local list. It was an old-fashioned private surgery, complete with a green footpump chair and a dentist in a belted white coat who scared the life out of me. Still, something about it intrigued me. A few weeks later, I picked up Saturday work at another practice. I didn't see it as the start of a career, more something I'd stumbled into, but that's how it began.

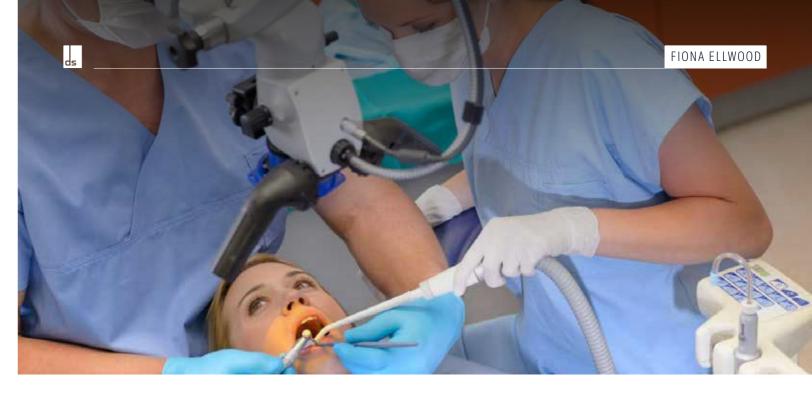
Still aiming for a naval career, I sat the entry tests, planning to train as a fitness instructor. But to apply for that, I needed a recognised profession. I thought, I'll qualify as a dental nurse first, then reapply. That decision changed everything.

I applied to dental schools, sat interviews and was often nudged toward hygiene or therapy. But at the time dental nursing seemed more flexible - something different every day, with more autonomy than you might find now.

We weren't registered back then. There was no formal educational pathway or structure and no need to undertake the qualification, that was optional. There was certainly no talk of 'scope of practice.' It wasn't safer, but it was broader. I feel lucky to have worked during that era. We even administered general anaesthetic in practice unthinkable now, but routine then. Thankfully, nothing ever went wrong, but those experiences made me the nurse I am: adaptable, unflappable and aware of just how far we've come.

### **MAKING YOUR OWN OPPORTUNITIES**

It's been an incredibly rewarding journey. Yes, dental nursing has its challenges, but I've loved



every stage of my career. That drive to move forward has shaped everything I've done.

One thing I tell people now is this: opportunities don't come knocking, you have to go find them. I've never waited for doors to open. I've stuck my foot in them.

Especially in dental nursing, where structured pathways can be limited, you often have to create your own route. That could mean writing a business case, pitching a new idea, or simply saying, 'I can help with that.' If you see a gap and know you can fill it, don't wait to be invited.

That's how I found my voice and shaped a path that was uniquely mine. I believe there are many ways to succeed in this profession. Yes, some nurses feel undervalued or underpaid and those issues are real. But they're not the whole story. There are also dental nurses building careers with variety, progression and deep professional satisfaction.

# **ELEVATING THE VOICE AND VALUE OF DENTAL NURSES**

Dentistry across the UK is incredibly varied, and that diversity is even more pronounced in dental nursing. Most dental nurses are employed while training, learning on the job while managing the demands of full-time practice. This work-based model, unlike university or hospital-based pathways, can sometimes reinforce the false idea that dental nursing is somehow "less professional." That needs to change.

We don't need to create value for dental nurses

- it already exists. What we need is to recognise and elevate it. Dental nurses are foundational to the profession, yet their contributions often go unrecognised, particularly in non-clinical

While clinical roles are essential, they are not the only roles of importance. Non-clinical positions in education, mentoring, research, governance and leadership are just as vital. Without them, there would be no future pipeline, no training infrastructure, and no oversight to protect patients and professionals alike.

Some dental nurses reach a clinical plateau or discover passions in other areas but feel conflicted about moving on. Our culture still elevates chairside roles, making some feel guilty for pursuing something else. We must shift that mindset. Choosing a non-clinical or hybrid path is not a step down, it's a valuable contribution that strengthens the whole profession.

Much has been said about "retention," but I don't use the term much. If we improved working conditions and created healthy, respectful team cultures, we wouldn't need retention strategies. People stay where they feel seen, valued and supported.

There's a quote I love from Richard Branson: "Train people well enough so they can leave. Treat them well enough so they don't want to." That should be the guiding principle behind how we approach the dental nursing workforce.

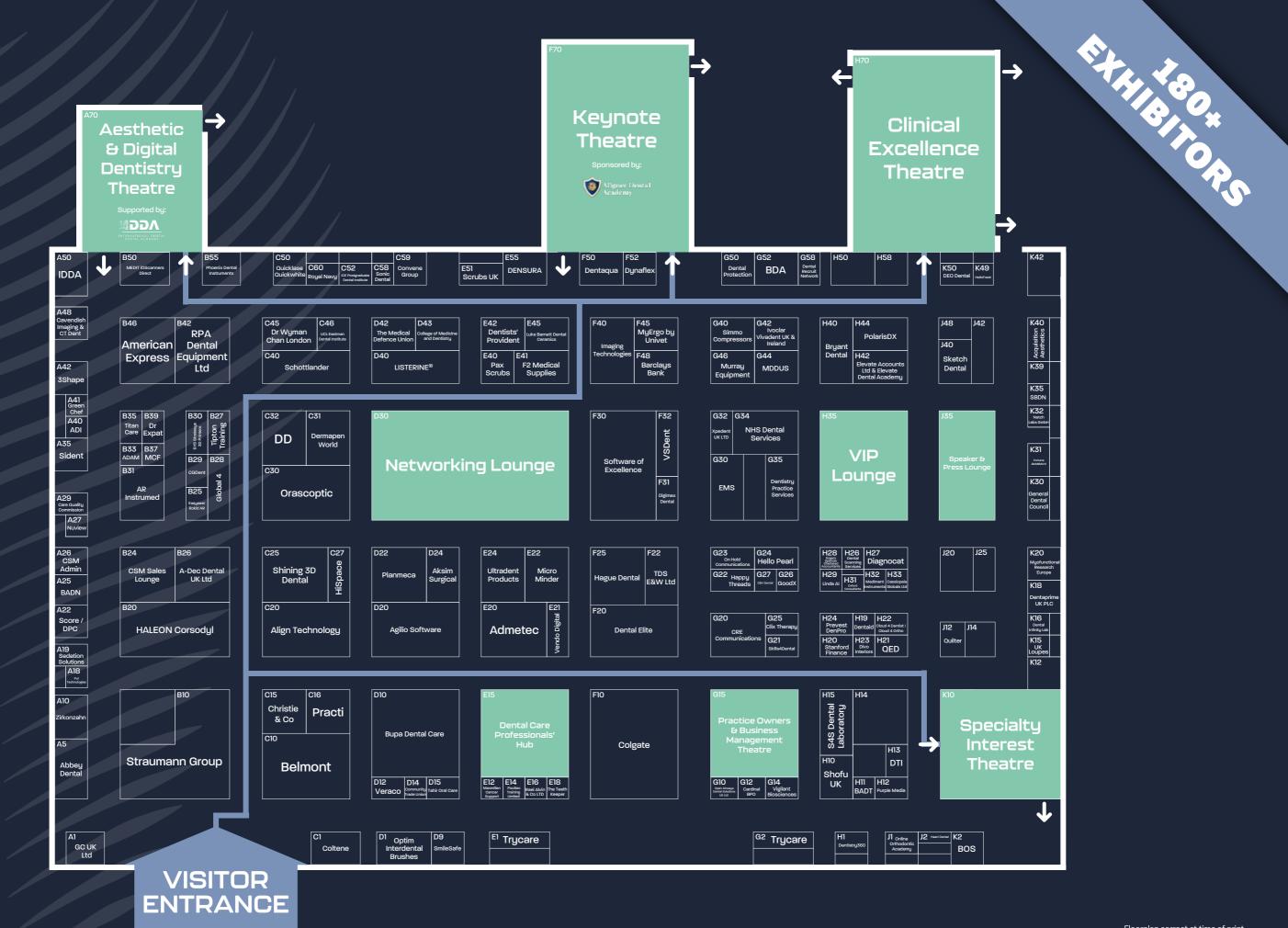
Language matters. How we talk about our profession shapes how others see us and how we see ourselves. We need to affirm the value of dental nursing at every level. That includes championing legacy mentors - those with years of clinical experience who now contribute through education, regulation, or mentorship. Their insight is invaluable.

During one of my courses, I read a study on employee engagement. It showed how disengagement leads to talent loss. I've seen it happen - promises made about recognition and opportunity, only to be quietly withdrawn. It's disheartening.

We must stop treating dental nursing as a stepping-stone. It's a profession in its own right - rich with potential, purpose, and value. If we challenge outdated assumptions and build a culture that nurtures every stage of a nurse's career, there's no limit to what we can achieve.

**Opportunities don't come knocking, you have** to go find them. I've never waited for doors to open. I've stuck my foot in them.

# TRY SHOW LONDON



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| COMPANY   | STAND |
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| Association of Dental Implantology                  | K39   |
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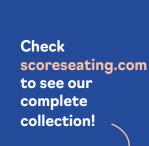
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| Vendo Digital                | E21                   |
| Veraco                       | D12                   |
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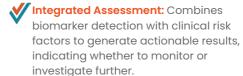


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# WHY ORAL HEALTH MATTERS IN THE WORLD OF SPORT

As more patients, from weekend warriors to elite athletes, embrace performance nutrition, dental professionals are increasingly seeing the unintended consequences in the chair. In this insightful feature, Professor Peter Fine, a professor of dental education and lecturer in sports dentistry, explores the critical link between performance nutrition and oral health, ahead of his talk at Dentistry Show London.



en I was still in general practice, found myself treating several high-level athletes and I started to notice a trend I could not ignore. Despite being fitter than most of my patients, they had more dental disease. I'm not just talking about trauma from contact sports, though that was common too, but a higher incidence of decay, gum disease, and tooth erosion.

That was the beginning of my journey into sports dentistry. What started as curiosity became a passion and, eventually, a new lens through which to view oral healthcare.

Traditionally, sports dentistry was considered a niche field focused on managing dental trauma in athletes. But we now understand it to be so much broader. It includes prevention strategies, nutrition, education, and crucially the impact of poor oral health on athletic performance.

### THE IMPACT OF POOR ORAL HEALTH

One of the key drivers behind this observation is inflammation. We now know that inflammation originating in the mouth can affect multiple organs, including the heart, liver, and kidneys. It's deeply connected to systemic health, and athletes are especially vulnerable. Infections, particularly around wisdom teeth for example, or untreated gum disease, can weaken the immune system and directly affect an athlete's ability to train, recover, or compete.

There was a well-known case at the Beijing Olympics where one of our British rowers tipped for a medal - ended up finishing eighth. The reason? A dental infection that undermined his performance. That's how serious this can be.

What's even more surprising is how little awareness there still is. I've met plenty of elite

athletes and nutritionists who've never been told there's a connection between oral health and athletic performance. Even those with advanced qualifications in sports nutrition often aren't taught to consider dental health as part of the performance equation.

### THE IMPORTANCE OF PREVENTION

When we're invited into professional clubs or teams, we often arrive after an issue has already occurred. But the real value is in prevention. Now, more clubs, teams and sports bodies are recognising that and inviting us to carry out pre-season or pre-sporting event screenings and oral health education for players. Once the medical team, physiologists, and nutritionists understand the link, it becomes a lightbulb moment. They get it and they start to embed it into their athlete care plans

Gum disease and dental decay are the two biggest issues we see, followed closely by erosion. One factor is undoubtedly sports drinks and gels. These are highly acidic, and when used frequently, especially sipped over time, they wreak havoc on enamel. Younger athletes, especially those aged 16 - 17, are showing worrying levels of disease. This same group are irregular dental attendees, often because they "don't have time."

There's also the mental health aspect. Pain, discomfort, or missed sporting competitions due to oral infections can have a huge psychological toll - especially for athletes who've trained for years for a single moment of performance.

We're not trying to get athletes to change their habits dramatically, that's not realistic. But we do encourage behavioural strategies: rinsing the mouth with water immediately after consumption, using either water or milk as a recovery drink, and brushing twice daily with a fluoride toothpaste (without rinsing after brushing, to allow the fluoride to soak in).



As dental professionals, we have a vital role to play. But we need to equip ourselves with the right knowledge. It's time we stop thinking of this as a niche issue. Whether it's giving practical dietary advice or advising athletes on safe and effective cosmetic treatments, we can support not just oral health, but performance and wellbeing.

have oral health screening as part of their preseason assessments. I sometimes take dental in this work soon, giving oral health teaching sessions to athletes and their support staff.

injuries. It's about prevention, education, and a broader understanding of health and performance. We need to build stronger

relationships and collaboration between dental teams, nutritionists and sport medicine professionals to make oral health a standard part of the conversation around performance

### **LOOKING AHEAD**

At Dentistry Show London, I'll be sharing more on this expanding field, highlighting the research, real-world case studies, and practical strategies we can all use, whether you're treating elite athletes or enthusiastic amateurs.

From rugby and football to cycling, swimming, and hockey, we've seen the impact poor oral health can have across a wide range of sports. Swimmers, for example, often suffer higher levels of tooth erosion due to the acidity in pool water. These nuances matter.

If you're a dental professional who wants to understand how to better support your patients who train or compete regularly or if you're curious about how oral health links into wider conversations about nutrition and performance, I hope you'll join me.

Together, we can help shift the focus from damage control to proactive care and in doing so, make a measurable difference in both oral health and sporting success



We're already seeing progress. Some clubs now nurses with me to help at the screening, and I'd like to see hygienists and therapists embedded

Sports dentistry is no longer just about managing

We need to build stronger relationships and collaboration between dental teams, nutritionists and sport medicine professionals.

PETER FINE

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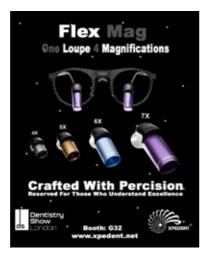
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Zirkonzahn

# SOFTWARE

Convene Group Micro Minder

# SOLICITORS

Barclays Bank

# **STERILISERS/ SOLUTIONS**

Hague Dental Nuview

# SURGERY EQUIPMENT

A-dec Dental UK Ltd

Dentally

Imaging Technologies

Planmeca

Sident

Software of Excellence

Straumann Group

Trycare

**UK Loupes** 

# SURGERY PLANNING / **DESIGN**

Hague Dental

### **TOOTH WHITENING**

College of Medicine and Dentistry Prevest Denpro

S4S Dental Laboratory

Trycare

Ultradent Products

# UNIFORMS & SURGERY **WEAR**

Happythreads

# WASHER / DISINFECTORS

COLTENE

### WATER FLOSSERS

Tahir Oral Care

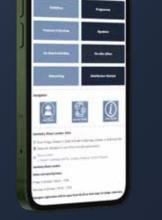
# WEBSITE DESIGN / SEO

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We're not so big that you become just another number on a spreadsheet. But we're not so small that your urgent message sits in someone's inbox for three days while they finish "a big project". We're processobsessed (inspired by The E Myth, if you know, you know), which means our clients get speed, consistency, and structure, with a human touch.



Wise Agency works with over 150 When it comes to words, our director dental practices across the UK. Some Kieran is... opinionated. You might've are private squat startups. Others are seen his pieces like: top-tier referral centres for complex "Beyond the Smile: Chewing and oral rehab. We've seen it all. And our Brain Health" and "Biohacking, Cold most well-known service? Monthly Showers & Perfect Peters". We're nationwide content creation. Every 30 Wise. We do dental marketing, days, we land in practices across the properly. If that sounds like your vibe country, filming high-quality, high- (or your current agency's last caption converting content, used for everything still says "Merry Christmas from the from TikToks to Google Ads. It's our team" in July), you know where to bread and butter.

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