

Editorial

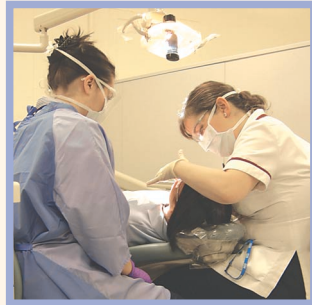
Variety is said to be the spice of life, and if this is the case, life should certainly become spicier for dental care professionals (DCPs). There have never been so many opportunities for career progression within dentistry.

Registration and the requirement for lifelong continuing professional development (CPD), together with an apparent shortage of all types of DCP in most parts of the country, should raise the professional profile (and perhaps the salaries) of DCPs. However, there will doubtless be winners and losers.

The winners may well be those who take advantage of the increasing opportunities now available. One of the articles in this edition of *Team in Practice* highlights some of these opportunities, and the FGDP(UK)'s work in trying to create more through its proposed Career Pathway for DCPs.

Reading the article, it strikes me how much the careers of the four DCPs featured have changed in the last ten years, and how much more difficult it would have been for them to make those changes in the past.

The common feature among the four is that they wanted to advance their careers rather than continuing to do exactly the same jobs day in day out, so they undertook further training to develop their skills and knowledge. Although it is not mentioned in the article, I suspect that in order to achieve their goals they



all made sacrifices, in terms of time with their families and, in the short-term, salary. As ever, there is no gain without (some) pain, and it is important that recognition is given to the achievements of DCPs. In this context, at the Dental Awards in April, editorial

board member Jane Armitage made history when she received the Practice Manager of the Year award for the third year running, and her team also gained the Dentist of the Year and Team of the Year awards. Congratulations to them all.

Recently, much has been made of the concept of a skills escalator. This is supposed to enable people to obtain further skills and knowledge over time and, it is hoped, more responsible and better-paid jobs. The problem with an escalator is that it goes in a straight line. Careers rarely do! A pathway is a better term, as pathways do not necessarily go in straight lines, and people do not have to travel on them at a uniform speed. These concepts



are certainly enshrined in the Faculty's Career Pathway.

I hope that the contents of this issue, and the CPD quiz, will help to move Faculty members a little way along the pathway. As always, please send in your comments and suggestions to me, Charlotte, or Dave.

Ken Eaton