

inefficiency not being created by impeding appropriate acute management? Admittedly, not all emergency departments have DCTs but this is a consequence of scarce resources and does not reflect who the most appropriate practitioner to treat such injuries is.

Removing the night on-call element of OMFS DCT posts compromises the training DCTs receive. Specialty training person specifications and the DCT curriculum mention qualities such as leadership, decision-making and coping with pressure, all of which are undoubtedly gained by holding a departmental bleep overnight. These trainees are also best placed to acutely manage TDIs and removing them from night on-call rotas appears myopic and does not serve patients well.

*K. Patel, N. Adam, C. Mannion, London, UK*

## References

1. Kanoun N. OMFS: Out of hours provision. *Br Dent J* 2018; **224**: 665.
  2. Mannion C, Tyler D. OMFS: Seven day services. *Br Dent J* 2016; **221**: 211.
- <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41415-019-1013-0>

## Gerodontology

### Ice lolly pain relief

Sir, I work as a dental nurse in the local maxillofacial department and am writing to tell you about a novel approach to pain relief that I developed with a member of my family and to ask if there are any dentists with an interest in the care of the elderly who might be able to undertake a pilot study involving the technique.

My mother recently passed away having been nursed by myself and siblings at home after she had been discharged at our request from a nursing home.

She had severe thrush in her mouth with limited pain relief due to the fact her mouth was too sore to take her medication. One day my mother asked for an ice lolly and I came up with a plan to administer the medication for her thrush on the end of the ice lolly. From that day on she never looked back, her thrush started to clear up and she then let me put her dentures into and out of her mouth.

During the last weeks of her life she was pain free and comfortable mainly due to the fact we could give her pain relief liquids on the ice lolly. I appreciate that it was not possible to accurately measure the dose of the medication with this technique but it certainly improved the quality of her life.

The dental care of the elderly is often overlooked in hospitals and nursing homes and patients may be left in pain when a simple solution such as the one described for my mother could be easily implemented.

*J. Eve, Bowness, UK*

<https://doi.org/10.1038/s41415-019-1012-1>

## Social media

### Adapting to current trends

Sir, with the rise in social media and the variety of available networking platforms, Instagram has become an extremely popular photo and video-sharing platform with approximately one billion registered users. It is a social networking app where users can share photos and videos from a smartphone and can follow other users/pages and geotag images with the name of the location. Instagram accounts can also be linked to other websites and social networking platforms, which enables content to be shared to these sites and allows for collaborative networking.

Appropriate information sharing can be challenging within the dental profession and the current form of dissemination from East Anglia's Local Dental Network is through emails and letters. This pathway can be lengthy and an uninteresting form of communication. It also faces other issues such as failure to open letters/emails, generic email accounts, and accounts being used for purposes other than for Local Dental Network information. This may result in a lack of engagement from the target audience to events and knowledge in the region, as well as other information.

It seems there is an increase in the number of dentists using Instagram as a portfolio



Fig. 1 The East Anglia Local Dental Network Instagram logo

platform to showcase dental cases; but also, a growing trend in dental practices using Instagram for marketing and engagement purposes. In addition to this, many NHS campaigns, Health Education Events and universities use Instagram as their information sharing platforms.

The East Anglia Local Dental Network Instagram (Fig. 1) has been created with its own personal logo and will simply provide another means to disseminate information to dental care professionals, general dental practitioners and practices within the area. We hope that by using simple picture format we would help users to rapidly understand a message rather than having to interpret and analyse large amounts of text. Due to the busy nature and stressful climate of dentistry, time as well as convenience is of the essence. We feel this method of information sharing should pique interest and attention and no matter the context, images increase exposure and engagement due to their visual appeal. It is said after all that 'a picture paints a thousand words'. How many among us would prefer a block of black and white text to a colourful and captive image?

We feel that it is important to adapt to current trends and for members of the dental community to use social media in order to achieve better engagement in our profession. It is time that the profession reunites with a collaborative working style to benefit both the members of the profession and our patients!

*A. Thomson, I. Hussain, T. Norfolk, East Anglia, UK*

<https://doi.org/10.1038/s41415-019-1011-2>

## Oral health

### Foetor ex ore

Sir, I write regarding the article *The link between periodontitis and erectile dysfunction [ED]: a review*.<sup>1</sup> This erudite article fully reviewed the academic evidence for a link between periodontal disease and male impotence (ED). However, surely in some cases, should not significant foetor ex ore secondary to poor periodontal health, not also be mentioned as a contributor to ED?

*A. Flower, King's Lynn, UK*

## References

1. Bizzarro S, Loos B G. The link between periodontitis and erectile dysfunction: a review. *Br Dent J* 2019; **227**: 599–603.

<https://doi.org/10.1038/s41415-019-1010-3>