

## Editorial

# Dental Public Health in Action

G. Davies

In Michael Lennon's inaugural editorial in the March 2011 issue of this journal he noted that the Journal is subscribed to, and read, by a wide range of members. Some of these will be academics and many more will be practitioners in the fields of dental public health or clinical care of special groups. In order to ensure the Journal meets the needs of its wider readership the new editor has charged the incoming members of the Editorial Board to give these members a voice.

During times of change, such as are currently being experienced by many countries and health services as a result of the changing economic climate, the principles and disciplines of dental public health (DPH) remain. Similarly, the key functions of practitioners continue, regardless of the organisational structures within which we work. DPH practitioners are more likely to seek support during such times and the networks offered by BASCD and EADPH may provide assistance so that practitioners do not feel that they are working alone. Currently these informal networks are augmented by member's presentations at BASCD conferences and poster presentations at EADH which demonstrate the practical activities of members.

The Journal intends to provide an additional forum for practitioners by instigating a new feature which will offer another avenue of shared working. This will comprise a new section for short articles from DPH practitioners and will be published under the banner title of 'Dental Public Health in Action'. In contrast to academic papers these shorter items will not describe research or standard epidemiological surveys, nor will they follow the format of such papers. Rather, they will describe a piece of work that has been undertaken by a DPH practitioner and their team that is likely to be of interest and relevance to other practitioners.

These may cover such topics as service re-design or re-alignment, health needs assessments or equity audits, examples of good engagement with patients, population or professionals, health improvement activities or any other topic which would be of interest to fellow DPH practitioners. It is anticipated that this list will expand as practitioners read early articles and identify work of their own that they would like to describe and share.

Authors will usually be asked to write their offerings under the following headings; Initial impetus, solution suggested, actual outcome, challenges addressed, future implications and learning points. This structure may not be suited to all types of projects or commentaries but authors should bear in mind the aims of the initiative and the British and European membership. Authors will be encouraged to share setbacks or unexpected outcomes within their articles, as well as positive and successful actions, as these can have great benefit for others who can learn from other's experience. Articles should be limited to 2,500 words with no more than one table and one small figure. A reviewing system will be applied and editorial assistance will be freely available, particularly for those who may not have wide experience in reporting for a journal.

Any DPH practitioner, at whatever level, may offer suitable articles to Gill Davies, Deputy Editor, at gill.davies@manchester.nhs.uk. Suggestions of topics of interest are also sought so that useful articles can be commissioned from those who have worked on the area of interest but are not spontaneously forthcoming in terms of reporting these.

The first of these 'Dental Public Health in Action' articles is published in this issue. It is written by a Clinical Director of a Primary Dental Care service and it describes the establishment of a primary care based service for oral surgery. Members will see that it describes the benefits of the service and the past and future challenges the author and her team face.

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## Reference

Lennon, M.A.(2011): Editorial. *Community Dental Health* 28, 3.