

# The work of the Faculty of Dental Surgery



Faculty of Dental Surgery  
The Royal College of Surgeons of England

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The Faculty of Dental Surgery (FDS) of The Royal College of Surgeons of England was founded in 1947 but its historical roots are much earlier than that. The 1858 Medical Act, which regulated medicine in the UK, said: *'It shall [...] be lawful for her Majesty, by charter, to grant to the Royal College of Surgeons of England, power to institute and hold Examinations for the purpose of testing the fitness of persons to practise as Dentists [...] and to grant certificates of such fitness.'* It was in 1860 that the Royal College of Surgeons set up the LDS RCS diploma and organised the first examinations.

I am proud to have taken take over as the 22nd dean of the Faculty, which in association with the Faculty of General Dental Practice (UK) represents the presence of dental surgery at the College. Over the past 61 years the FDS has given

our fellows and members a voice at national level and provided them with informed specialist help and advice in the UK and all over the world, and through this work served the public need. We have developed expertise in many areas, setting high standards in clinical dental and surgical practice, in postgraduate education, in examinations and in the quality assurance of dental training, particularly speciality training.

Over the coming years we have opportunities to develop and change and we will face many challenges in our field of work from which I hope we can influence positively the general and oral health of people both in the United Kingdom and overseas. Of paramount importance in our work in the UK is the changing face of the NHS. The changing role of the dentist and doctor in both primary and secondary care means we must continue to ensure that the public have access to the highest quality of clinician. The current target-driven culture, while improving access for some aspects of our work, is in danger of adversely affecting the quality of care that our patients receive. Quality is now the forefront of the UK health care agenda and the advice of our fellows and members will be needed in all areas of our practice.

Doctors and dentists deal with uncertainty, not protocol. They are trained to manage the unexpected. In medical, surgical and dental practice we must be vigilant that in particular the changing roles of the various health

practitioners do not undermine the complex diagnostic and treatment role of the dentist and doctor. The Faculty of Dental Surgery is in good heart and we will grasp the many opportunities available to us. Our administrative team led by our registrar, John Vandridge-Ames, is ready to assist the Board members, dental fellows and members, and other agencies in taking the quality agenda forwards.

Brian Avery is now a past dean of the Faculty. He demitted office on 20 June 2008. Brian has been our longest-serving dean and served nearly four years. He managed big and unprecedented change, which resulted in our happy team in the Faculty's offices. He has made an enormous contribution over the years to the College and the Faculty; he is widely respected nationally and internationally. We owe a great debt to him. I am most pleased that the Faculty Board have agreed to award him its most prestigious medal, the Colyer gold medal, at our Diplomates day in 2009.

The team at the Faculty of Dental Surgery are looking forward to the challenges of the coming years. We will make the most of the opportunities available to us for the benefit of the oral health of the community.