

DR GERALD LEATHERMAN AWARD

The winner of the 2013 Dr Gerald Leatherman Award was Sarah Murray MA, Dip DH, Dip DT, FHEA. An approachable, dedicated, knowledgeable and highly professional lady Sarah is a true ambassador for the dental profession, and a credit to her Society - a most worthy recipient of our most prestigious award.

There's something about Sarah...

Sarah is a gifted teacher, mentor and a campaigner for professional excellence and independence. As a staunch supporter of all aspects of our profession, Sarah epitomises the spirit of Dr Gerald Leatherman.

Sarah has been an active member of the British Society of Dental Hygiene and Therapy (BSDHT) (and formerly the British Dental Hygienists' Association) since qualifying in 1990 firstly as a Dental Therapist, then in 1996 as a Dental Hygienist. She has served our professional society as Chairman of the London Regional Group and, from 1993, on the Publications Committee of Dental Health for 14 years. Her commitment to standards and understanding of the importance of the professional status of the cadre was instrumental in the decision to move the journal towards cited status. As secretary to that committee from April 2004-December 2007, Sarah dedicated much of her time and effort to aid the team in developing all aspects of our professional publications. The Publications Committee was most grateful for her skill and expertise given.

Working tirelessly behind the scenes to help others succeed, Sarah has positively influenced the career outcomes of her students and colleagues alike. Supportive, precise and pragmatic, her counsel is sought by many and is given generously without expectation of return.

Sarah is currently Principal Hygienist/Therapist and Head of Centre in the Institute of Dentistry, Queen Mary University of London (QMUL) – Barts and the London School of Medicine and Dentistry, having worked there since 1993.

Her teaching career has developed with her involvement with the School of Health and Human Sciences (SHHS), University of Essex (UoE) which she joined in 2006 and gained a formal appointment there as Lecturer in 2010. She has made a clear commitment to the success of SHHS at UoE in its development in the field of oral health science, and has helped a small team achieve a significant amount in a relatively short timeframe. She is committed to continue this process, evidenced by her enthusiasm for the development of the Dental Therapy and Masters programmes. In spite of being a departmental head at another institute there is absolutely no evidence that her loyalty to UoE is of a lesser extent to that which she devotes to Queen Mary University of London, and her dual role has proved very useful in the existing collaborative arrangements between UoE and QMUL, as well as in the potential for future developments.

In recognition of her work at the University of Essex, Sarah was promoted to Senior Lecturer and Clinical Lead Oral Health Sciences in October 2012.

Sarah's active involvement as Chair of the National Dental Tutors' Group for Dental Hygiene and Therapy and, over recent years, as a committee member of the National Directors' Group, evidences her dedication to develop high quality teaching in her field.

In 2003, Sarah was recognised as a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy and in 2007 she was awarded the coveted title of 'Hygienist of the Year'.

Sarah's continued commitment to furthering the profession has been demonstrated by her significant contribution to the development of the proposed new BSc (Hons) Oral Health Science at University of Essex, being keen to support the opportunity for registered Dental Hygienists to continue their education and be able to register as Dental Therapists. She has been an



advocate for further professional development opportunities for both Dental Hygienists and Dental Therapists.

Her keenness to share her comprehensive knowledge of the Continuing Professional Development requirements of the General Dental Council (GDC) is demonstrated in her track record for developing and delivering bespoke 'extended duties' courses for existing registrants, as well as courses for applicants for registration with the GDC by 'equivalence' from other countries. Sarah has been central to the design and delivery of such courses.

The journey towards Direct Access was significantly aided by Sarah's work in mapping the curriculum for comparison with the undergraduate programme which was a key element in the BSDHT submission to the GDC.

Additionally, Sarah has recently been involved with industry in the development and delivery of web based educational seminars for dental registrants (webinars). She regularly writes for dental journals and contributed to a chapter of the 2nd edition of The Clinical Textbook of Dental Hygiene and Therapy which was published in 2012.

Each year Sarah volunteers for Crisis at Christmas, a homeless charity, where she carries out both clinical practice and assists in the management of the dental team and guests during the week they are in operation. She normally contributes five out of the seven days and is particularly involved in the setting up and closing down of the service. In 2012, she volunteered during the Paralympics and worked in the dental care centre in the athletes' village for a number of days.

Are you the next recipient?

The Dr Gerald Letherman award may be given to any individual who has taken an active role to further the aims of the profession or the British Society of Dental Hygiene and Therapy. Each nomination should be accompanied by a resume of services to our profession along with written testimonials from two sponsors who should be full members of the British Society of Dental Hygiene and Therapy. The individual must agree to be nominated. Candidates must have shown consistent support to our profession; for example, by acting as a respected ambassador or by working actively at a regional level.

Nomination forms are available from BSDHT administration. **Nominations for the current year, accompanied by your reasons for the award, should be marked 'Dr Leatherman Award 2014' and returned to BSDHT, 3 Kestrel Court, Waterwells Drive, Waterwells Business Park, Gloucester, GL2 2AT to arrive no later than 31st July 2014.**