

The Dr Gerald Leatherman Award

Background



The late Dr Gerald Leatherman played a very important part in promoting the role of the dental hygienist as one of the pioneers of preventive dentistry in the UK. Described as 'The Father of World Dentistry' by the late Dame Margaret Seward, he dedicated his professional life to raising the profile of both the dental hygienist and dental health promotion. He was actively involved with the British Dental Hygienists' Association (BDHA) and from the start played a leading role in the establishment of the first dental hygiene training school in England. Following his retirement from the office as President of the BDHA in 1957 he was appointed Honorary Vice President until his death in 1991.

It was during his early professional years, whilst working in the United States, that he first experienced the 'new profession' of the dental hygienist and oral health clinics. Being the great visionary that he was, Dr Leatherman could see the potential benefits of such a group of dental auxiliaries. He brought his ideas back to the UK and began the crusade with like-minded colleagues which led to the recognition of the dental hygienist as an integral member of the dental team.

To recognise the work and support of Dr Leatherman, the 'Dr Gerald Leatherman Award' was established in 1994 to perpetuate and honour the name of this great man.

The Dr Leatherman Award is held in the highest regard by the profession, with past recipients having demonstrated dedication, professionalism, and consistent support of the profession and the BSDHT. (Formally BDHA).

The Award is in the form of a lapel pin bearing the words: 'Dr Leatherman Award' and a certificate to commemorate the date that the presentation was made.

Nomination Criteria

Nominations must demonstrate how the nominee has shown:

- Consistent support to our profession
- Consistent support to BSDHT (Formally BDHA)
- Altruistic traits in achieving their goals

Self-nominations will not be considered.

The nominee does not need to be a dental hygienist or dental therapist

Submission Documentation

To remain open to the various ways in which the qualities of a nominee may be conveyed, the Dr Gerald Leatherman Committee recommend the nomination should include:

- The name, address, and a contact telephone number of the nominee.
- A citation demonstrating why the nominee should be considered as a worthy recipient of the Dr Gerald Leatherman award, including:
 - how the nominee fulfils the criteria
 - a brief CV of the nominee.

The name, title and academic or professional affiliation of the **proposer**, their contact details, BSDHT number (if applicable) and length of time the individual is known to them.

- The name, title and academic or professional affiliation of the **second**, their contact details, BSDHT number (if applicable) and length of time the individual is known to them.

Eligible Nominators

All BSDHT members can propose or second a nomination.

Nominations by a non-BSDHT member must be seconded by a **full BSDHT** member.

The nomination form must be signed by the proposer and second and accompanied by synopsis and brief CV.

Selection of the recipient

Nominations will be considered by the Dr Gerald Leatherman Award Committee who are responsible for the selection of eligible nominees and for choosing who will receive the award for the award criteria.

The Committee is composed of three members:

- The BSDHT President and
- Immediate Past President
- Former recipient of the Dr Leatherman Award.

*If one of the committee members has proposed or seconded a nomination, then the Executive Team will replace the committee member with either:

- Member of Executive Team

- BSDHT Past President
- Previous recipient of the award.

**If a member of the awarding committee has proposed or seconded a nominee this would constitute a conflict of interest therefore the position on the awarding committee must be relinquished.*

If nominations are found not to meet the exacting standards, then the Dr Gerald Leatherman Award Committee will not present the award.

Submission Date

Nominations are requested on an annual basis.

Nominations can be emailed or posted to BSDHT and must be received **no later than 5.00pm on Fri, 2nd October 2026.**

Nomination papers must be forwarded to:

POST: BSDHT, Bragborough Hall Business Centre, Welton Road, Braunston, Daventry, Northamptonshire, NN11 7JG.

OR

EMAIL: enquiries@bsdht.org.uk

Nominations received after the closing date will not be accepted but can be resubmitted the following year.

Awarding the Dr Gerald Leatherman award

The award will be announced and presented at the annual Oral Health Conference in November of the year of nomination.