

EDITORIAL

Dear colleagues, I hope winter is treating you well!



Hanna Lähteenmäki is a dental hygienist, a clinical expert, a postdoc researcher at the University of Helsinki and the president of the Finnish Association of Dental Hygienists (FADH).

The days are getting darker, and the weather is foggy and cold, but we dental hygienists have by no means gone into hibernation. On the contrary – our training day in Tampere provided a good selection of everything a dental hygienist should know. It was interesting to hear advice on how to approach clients with special needs and to learn how the current hot topic in orthodontics, clear aligner treatment, is carried out and what the role of a dental hygienist is or could be in the treatment process.

Well-being at work has sparked plenty of discussion, especially in light of the recent study conducted by Akava Special Branches and the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health. The study concerned employees in the social and healthcare sector who have been transferred to the wellbeing services counties. Burnout is already on most people's radar, but we should also talk more about how burdensome work is. **Helena Ukkonen**, who is training to become a clinical supervisor, explained some of the psychosocial factors behind occupational well-being.

During the autumn, we also had the opportunity to visit Berner's facilities in Helsinki and learn more about the company. It was great to see and hear about the diverse and high-quality work being done in Finland. I think Berner's toothpastes and mouthwashes are unique among their kind. We also collaborated with corporate partners at the Finnish Dental Congress, where we set up a stand with

Koite Health Oy, which markets Lumoral. This was one way to promote the visibility of our little Association. We saw a record number of visitors at our joint stand, and our joint raffle attracted hundreds of participants.

The Akava Special Branches Union Meeting was held in Helsinki in November. It was wonderful to have our Association's former chairperson and representative **Mari Heinonen** present. She is representing us as a deputy member of the Board of Directors of Akava Special Branches. A multi-talented member of our Association, former chairperson **Virve Jääskeläinen**, was also present at the Union Meeting as a representative. The meeting agenda included, among other things, a rule amendment and confirming the Union's action and financial plan. I am pleased that the Union's membership fees for both the Association and for individual members will not be increased even though there has been pressure to do so.

At the Association meeting held at the end of our training day in Tampere, the Finnish Association of Dental Hygienists (FADH) elected a new Board for the 2026–2027 term. Several new enthusiastic and skilled Board members were appointed. A big thank you to the departing Board members. Your contributions made many of our successes possible this past year. You can read more about the new Board's objectives in next year's first issue.

In Tampere, our umbrella organisation also held a member event titled "Työelämä ihmisten ehdoilla" (Working Life on People's Terms) to discuss what kinds of actions are needed to build a functional working life. What can we do to ensure that our workdays go smoothly? Which solutions and development suggestions could bring more joy into our workdays? This is something that we and Akava Special Branches take seriously. We act as the voice of dental hygienists in negotiations, and we do our utmost to ensure that our professional skills are recognised, that dental hygienists feel better at work and that our work remains as engaging as possible. But this also requires our members to raise their voices. We encourage you to express your opinions and ask for advice when needed. ■