

# It's a kind of magic

Dr Richard Charon and his team reveal why The Wand Plus has proved magical in a preventive way

In England, 70% of adults said they would feel slightly to extremely anxious when it came to receiving local anaesthesia, from those who responded to the 2009 Adult Dental Health survey. So, anything which can be used in the battle to change people's attitudes and pre-conceived ideas will in the end have a preventive effect. Regular attendance may well increase, if the fear of injections can be mitigated and so early intervention can be instigated thus preventing dental decline requiring far more invasive options.

I first heard about The Wand Plus seven years ago and have been a very satisfied user since then. However, this computer-controlled injection system and the special techniques it allows were being described in the late 1990s.

Focusing on the need for painless local anaesthesia, there are almost as many hints, tips and tricks as there are dentists in practice, which evidences the fact that what may on the face of it, seem to be a simple matter, is in fact fraught with potential difficulties and dangers.

After 27 years as a GDP, I thought, in general, I was pretty adept at giving LA successfully, so why would I need a machine to do it for me? Over the years, I had moved from non-aspirating Sterling syringes of the thumb-press type, via rubber-bung engaging, thumb-ring pull, aspirating syringes to Astra type aspirating syringes and finally for a good number of years I used the Septodont safety-Plus system, when the advent of HIV and Hepatitis C, made the avoidance of needle stick injury even more important. I had for many years before that used a variety of needle guards, too.

### The Wand Plus

I was first introduced to it via a study club. One of the guest speakers, Dr Wayne Williams, gave a presentation and demonstration and I was pretty much hooked. It opened my eyes to a variety of techniques. For me, the two major benefits were that for the many anxious patients that we care for and indeed, even those who do not profess or appear to be anxious, the lack of a syringe being



### The dental hygienist's view

**Nicky Smith EDH**

I have been working, on a part-time basis for Dr Charon for nine years.

I did my LA training module 16 years ago at Guy's Dental Hospital, when I did my hygiene training, using standard aspirating syringes. I did only the infiltration training, not blocks. I haven't done the training for blocks, as I very rarely need one for the work I do. When the The Wand Plus was introduced to his practice in 2005, Dr Charon trained me in its use.

I still use it only for buccal infiltrations as I have no real need for more specialised types of injection or ID blocks, which it can be used for. What I most like about the The Wand Plus, is the patient is so much less anxious about having an injection, because it is so discreet when they are having it, no view of syringes/needles. For me, I do not routinely give LAs daily, therefore I am not continuously practicing my technique. The Wand Plus is less technique sensitive than conventional injections, and it is easy to give a pain-free LA, as I have more control of the positioning of the needle and the speed of administration and completely out of view of the patient's eyesight. Relaxed patients helps for a relaxed hygienist.

### The dental therapist's view



**Laura Woosey BSc**

I joined Richard Charon as a newly qualified dental therapist in spring 2010 from Portsmouth University, where I completed my LA training using standard aspirating syringes.

As a practice renowned for helping anxious or phobic patients get over their fear, I soon learnt that the wand was a vital instrument to avoid this. I had vaguely heard about it but was quite excited to join a forward thinking practice who could offer me extra training and a chance to add another treatment modality to my portfolio.

One of the most common manifestation of dental anxiety is fear of the LA injection. Although The Wand Plus does incorporate a needle, it is disguised by the pen-like form, making it very discreet and not as threatening as a large barrel syringe.

The Wand Plus is also very ergonomic and requires minimal adjusting or moving from the clinician, therefore allowing your hand to feel steady, comfortable, controlled. A pedal is then used to administer a slow dose of anaesthetic into the tissues. This may take a little longer to administer than a standard syringe but there is less pressure and pain felt in the tissue and the time allows the anaesthetic to start working.

Not only is The Wand Plus a relatively pain-free way to admin LA, but is also still allows you to apply topical anaesthetic first and continue using your existing LA administration techniques with a choice of three different needle lengths.

Most of all, I find that my patients take an interest in the new technology and products and are more willing to give it a go! Needless to say I haven't picked up a barrel syringe in our practice since I came here!

brandished was a huge plus. Yes, we know there is a needle involved and so I never lie about this if asked, but from the patients perception, most often no syringe equals no needle.

Secondly, I can attest to the fact that delivering the LA using The wand is also much less stressful for me, both physically in terms of posture (no more flying elbows when giving ID blocks in particular) and the slow and effortless delivery, is sure to help prevent one's own heart rate increasing.

When I first purchased the unit, I expected to be using it for specific occasions, for example the P-ASA technique. Here, the short needle is inserted within the incisive canal via the incisive papilla to anaesthetise all upper incisors with one injection site without

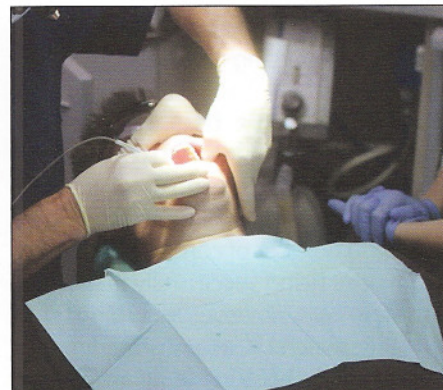
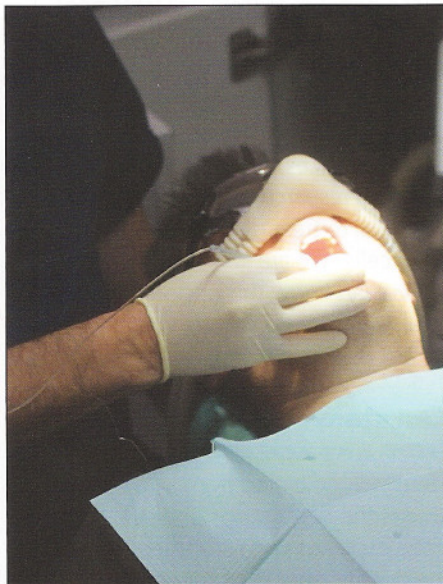
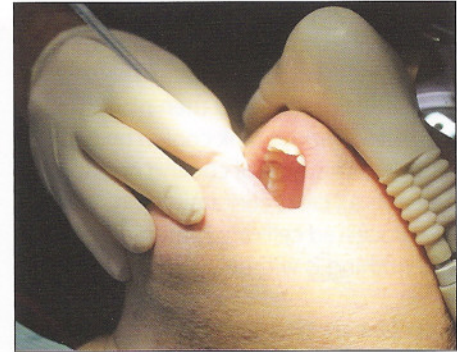
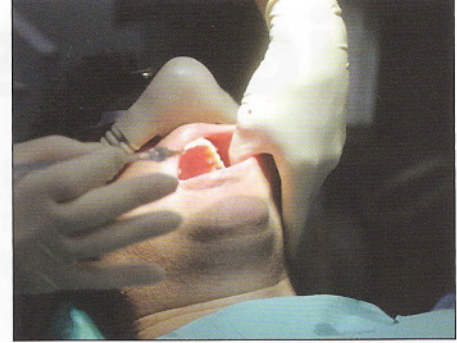
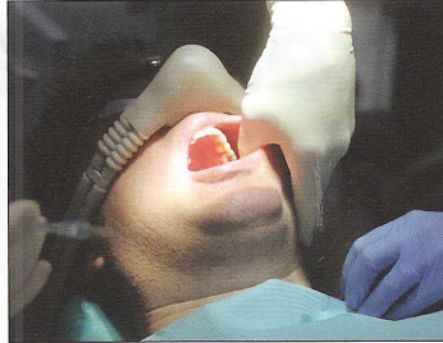
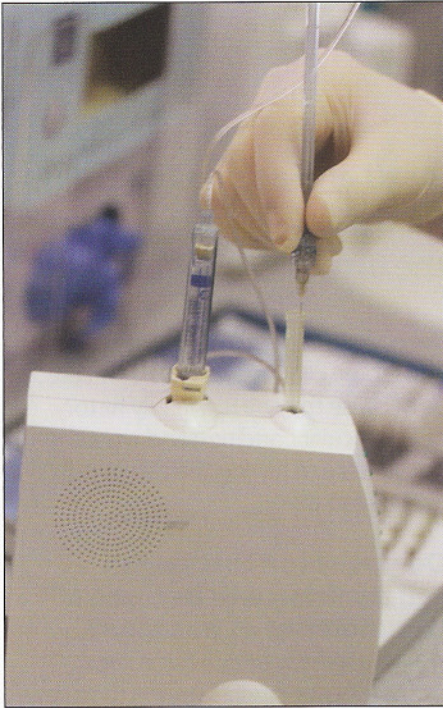
creating a numb nose and numb upper lip, which is an important option for aesthetic cases. Asking a patient to check the pain-staking restorations you have just completed by smiling at themselves in the mirror just doesn't work with a deadened upper lip.

However, within a few weeks, I found myself using The Wand for all regular buccal infiltrations and inferior dental blocks as well as the additional techniques described elsewhere. In fact today, I'd be hard pressed to know where to find a standard dental syringe in the practice! It's worth noting that The Wand Plus has now been superseded by the The Wand STA (Single Tooth Anaesthesia) with additional design features built in to make the unit even easier to use!

• **References available on request**



# Innovations

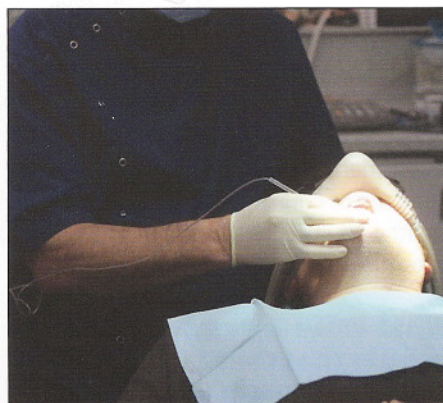


Note the relaxed position of the author's hand and arm during the standard Inferior alveolar block

Once the needle is inserted into the correct position and the anaesthetic solution begins to pass into the tissues, then the hand and arm position can relax for typically, the next 60 to 90 seconds for both buccal infiltrations and standard inferior dental blocks, if these are the chosen techniques.

Note the position of the upper arm, elbow and forearm and upright posture compared to that adopted when using a standard syringe.

It so happens that this patient was receiving treatment under inhalation sedation, too.



Richard Charon BDS (VU Manc.1975) owns a two-surgery, town-centre private dental practice in the market town of Newbury in Berkshire and is the lead clinician of a team of DCPs. His team includes a part-time hygienist and a part-time dental therapist, two RDNs, one of whom is his wife, who runs the practice as a receptionist/practice manager and also a trainee dental nurse. They provide the usual range of GDP services as well as conscious sedation, dental implants and Invisalign. He also runs independent, one-day, theory and practical, hands-on training workshops in Inhalation Sedation. For more, email [richard@the-ra-coach.co.uk](mailto:richard@the-ra-coach.co.uk).

For details regarding Wand Plus and its successor the STA (Single-tooth anaesthesia) machines, contact DPS: Dental Practice System by visiting [www.d-p-s.uk.com](http://www.d-p-s.uk.com), or calling 07855 239695.