A new recruitment agency in Northern Ireland has been set up to attract experienced dentists from across the globe to work in Northern Ireland.

KMS Dental Recruitment on Spencer Road in Northern Ireland, is the first of its kind in the country, and already has a number of vacancies and candidates on its books.

There is an ongoing shortage of dentists, particularly in the north west region of Northern Ireland and recent recruitment drives by local health authorities have failed to attract dentists, with many local practices last year closing their books to NHS patients.

The company’s main aim is to attract experienced, qualified dentists to Northern Ireland from Britain and further afield. This will add to the existing pool of local dentists and ensure easier access to dental services for local people throughout Northern Ireland.

KMS Dental Recruitment serves dentists and dental practices across the whole of Northern Ireland from its Derry headquarters.

Calling international dentists

Benfleet Dental Studio, in Downer Road North, had planning applications rejected twice by Castle Point Council.

Planning officers were concerned that the new surgery would cause traffic jams on Bread and Cheese Hill. But the National Planning Inspectorate in Bristol overturned the judgement.

Stephen Denny, partner at the NHS practice, said: ‘I don’t think the council ever wanted it used for this because of the amount of traffic. But since we opened, transport has been absolutely fine.’

He added: ‘It was a shame we had to fight for so long, because the area really needs more dentists.’

The new surgery was given permission to open on the condition it is used as a satellite surgery, taking extra patients from the practice’s other surgery in High Street. As well as a regular surgery, the dentist also provides specialised treatment.

There is an orthodontist at the surgery and the practice also offers home visits. It also houses a training facility for up and coming practitioners and Mr Denny wants to recruit young dentists who will want to stay and work in the area.

Fully booked surgery

Courses are being held in Watford for dental professionals looking to further their skills in facial aesthetics.

The Get Hands-On With FaceTec course is being held by Dr Brian Franks, the clinical director of dentistry for Bupa and a recognised tutor for botulinum toxin wrinkle reduction treatment and dermal fillers.

The courses will be held at Senova Dental Studios in Watford on 7-8 March, 18-19 April, 5-6 May.

For further information and to book a course contact Jan on 07975 538 595 or email brian@drbrianfranks.com.
More NHS dentistry for Scotland

The number of Scots registered with a NHS dentist has gone up by a fifth in a year, according to official statistics.

A total of 57.2 per cent of adults, or more than 2.5m people, were signed up with a dentist at the end of September 2008. This is an increase of 19 per cent on the previous year.

A total of 810,682 children or 77.4 per cent of those under the age of 18 are also now registered with an NHS dentist, a rise of 10 per cent over the 12 months to the end of September 2008.

The figures, released by ISD Scotland, showed that an increase of registrations was recorded in all health boards but the figures were still very low in some areas of the country.

In NHS Grampian, 59.2 per cent of people were registered with a dentist, compared with 73.5 per cent of patients in Greater Glasgow and Clyde.

Children between the ages of six and 12 are most likely to be signed up, with 87 per cent registered with an NHS dental practitioner.

The statistics have been published in the wake of the announcement from the Scottish Government that it is investing £82m in dental healthcare in Scotland, providing 15 new dental centres as well as new GP surgeries and other community health facilities.

Shona Robison, Minister for Public Health, said that improving NHS dentistry was a ‘top priority’ for the Scottish Government.

She said: ‘The fact that more people than ever before are registered with an NHS dentist is great news for patients the length and breadth of Scotland.

However we cannot be complacent, because there are still longstanding geographical variations that will take time to even out.

With record numbers of dentists working in the NHS, I am confident we are laying strong foundations to reverse the years of decline seen under previous administrations.’

She added: ‘The problems in the north of Scotland with access to NHS dentistry are of long standing, but this government is working hard to reverse the years of decline seen under previous administrations.

We have already opened the new £21m dental school in Aberdeen, which will produce an extra 20 graduates per year.

And just last week NHS boards in the north of Scotland outlined their plans for spending more than £17m of Scottish Government money, with new dental centres planned in Inverness, Fraserburgh, Huntly, Inverness, Oban, Thurso, Campbeltown, Kirkwall and Stornoway.’

However Lib Dem health spokesman Jamie Stone said people should not lose sight of the bigger picture, as 45 per cent of adults are still not registered with an NHS dentist.

‘It is generally accepted that more dentists is the answer to the crisis in dental services, particularly in remote and rural areas. The government needs to make training new dentists a priority,’ the Highland MSP said.

While Lib Dem north-east MSP Mike Rumbles said the government had to make it lucrative enough for dentists in the private sector to work for the NHS.

He said: ‘There is only one way to solve it and that is for the Scottish Government to sit down and negotiate with the British Dental Association to change terms and conditions and bring them back into the NHS.’

Dentist wins invention award

A dentist from Oxfordshire, who has won an award for his invention which safely removes surgical needles from a syringe – a device which protects against needle stick injuries.

Steve Cooley, a dentist in Adderbury in Banbury, won the annual Banbury Innovation Award. Mr Cooley has won free legal and financial advice, free office space for a year, £500 in cash, and financial advice, free of charge.

He used a credit card to make it work, and business partner Phillip Field. He hopes that one day the product will be used in hospitals, doctors’ surgeries and as part of vaccination programmes around the world. Safe-Point is a low voltage electrical device designed to address the problem of cross infection through needle stick injury.

The device automatically unscrews the needle from the syringe and deposits it in a lockable bin.

Private dentistry at NHS prices

A new dental surgery in Burslem in Stoke-on-Trent is competing with the NHS by offering private dental care at NHS prices.

The Advanced Dental Clinic has opened in the premises of the former Moorland Road dental practice which closed last year.

Nearly 5,000 NHS patients were forced to look for a new dentist. Now they are being invited to return to join the new private surgery.

Partner Paul Harrison said: ‘We have taken the roll on and we are now trying to compete with the NHS by offering similar prices.’

The new owners have inquired about getting an NHS contract but so far they have been unsuccessful.

Dental surgeon Nuno Ferreira said: ‘The intention is to provide real quality treatments at a price similar to the NHS, with an extra quality which will compensate for the little bit extra that people may need to pay.’

He said patients could typically expect to pay £20 for a consultation, as opposed to the under-review £16.20 NHS charge.

A straightforward filling will cost £45. The NHS currently charges £44.60 for fillings. The same price applies for root canal treatment or extractions.

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A conference covering the five core areas for Continuing Professional Development recommended by the General Dental Council, will be touring the UK this year.

Smile-on has joined forces with Professional Conferences and is putting on The Core CPD Update Conference 2009.

A spokeswoman for Professional Conferences said: ‘Designed to meet the needs of the whole dental team, the event will enable dentists and dental care professionals to satisfy the General Dental Council’s (GDC’s) requirement for verifiable Continuing Professional Development (CPD) in core knowledge areas and will initially take place in the following three venues: Hilton Hotel, Watford on 50 March; Hilton Hotel, Gatwick on 6 May and Kensington Town Hall, London on 11 May. The conference will also be held in Manchester, Bristol, Leeds and Birmingham.’

Speakers include Dr Colin Cook, founding member of the European Association of Dental and Maxillofacial Radiology. His presentation Dental Radiography: Today’s Requirements, Tomorrow’s Possibilities will cover the implications of changing radiation regulations and the training required across the dental team.

Dr Cook will examine the different imaging options available, along with the benefits of each, including cone beam technology.

Dr Len D’Cruz, member of the British Dental Association’s General Dental Practice Committee, will give delegates the benefit of his dento-legal advisory experience with his lecture Legal and Ethical Issues: Risky Business – Avoiding the Banana Skins. Topics to be covered include consent, confidentiality, principles of criminal negligence and medico-legal pitfalls of the NHS contract. Dr D’Cruz will also explore current dento-legal topics to keep delegates up to date, and provide an understanding of where common problems occur and how risks can be minimised and avoided.

Dr Martin Fullard’s lecture Dental Decontamination in the 21st Century will present an overview of infection risks in the practice, the range of decontamination methods available and how teams can achieve best practice.

With his presentation Dealing With Complaints Professionally, dento-legal adviser for Dental Protection Ltd and oral surgery expert Stephen Henderson will discuss patient feedback, the common causes of complaints and strategies to handle objections effectively.

With the NHS complaints procedure due to change on 1 April, Mr Henderson will look at the new procedure, the Dental Complaints Service and the role of the GDC. Learning objectives include complaint definition and resolution, with delegates gaining a thorough understanding of how the NHS complaints procedure and Dental Complaints Service work.

The fifth core area will be covered by Dr Yusuf (Joe) Omar with his lecture Medical Emergencies In Dental Practice, to help delegates develop a real group of their role in managing emergencies including epileptic seizures, diabetes and anaphylaxis. The lecture will incorporate helpful learning tools including films and when faced with an emergency, delegates will know exactly what equipment they need, and how to administer the necessary drugs.

The conference costs £99 plus VAT (excluding lunch) or £114 plus VAT (including two course sealed lunch with wine).

Delegates can receive up to seven hours of certificated and verifiable CPD, and will be able to apply their knowledge immediately in their day-to-day duties.

For more information, and to ensure your place, call Professional Conferences on 01925 859626 or go to www.proconferences.com.

Dental school ‘will cut waiting lists’

The head of Aberdeen University’s dental school claims the new school will cut NHS dental waiting lists in the north-east of Scotland.

Professor James Newton, who has just been appointed head of the school, hopes that as many as 10 to 15 per cent of patients on the NHS dental waiting list can be treated by students.

The region’s dental waiting list is thought to be nearly 51,000. Consultation with patients begins next month to see who can be and who is willing to be treated by students. The programme will start in the summer.

Professor Newton believes that once people are aware of the dental school, more patients who are not even on the waiting list will come forward. Professor Newton previously worked at Dundee University where he was sub dean for teaching. He was also a senior clinical lecturer and honorary consultant in restorative dentistry.

He worked as a practising NHS dentist for six years before joining the university.

Professor Newton said: ‘This is an exciting opportunity to develop a centre of expertise for dentistry which will be beneficial not only for Aberdeen and Grampian, but for Scotland as a whole. We are looking forward to working with other established dental schools in providing high-quality, caring dentists so as to improve and maintain the oral health of the people of Scotland.’

Professor Stephen Logan, senior vice principal of the University of Aberdeen, called Professor Newton, ‘an experienced dentist who has worked closely in dental education for many years’ and said: ‘We very much look forward to him taking forward and developing our new dental school’.

It is hoped that the dental school could also provide training for dental nurses and hygienists in the future. It will also be available for referrals and extra support for GPs working in the area.

The new University of Aberdeen Dental School building will be completed in September and open for use in October.

The purpose built complex will feature facilities for oral surgery, dental accident and emergency, restorative dentistry, integrated oral care, orthodontics, paediatric dentistry, radiography as well as dental laboratories, student laboratories and office accommodation.

High standards at Nith

A dental surgery in Dumfries in Scotland has been accepted onto the Good Practice Scheme by the British Dental Association.

The Nith Place Dental Practice has been recognised for its high standard of service by the British Dental Association (BDA). There are 102 requirements that the practice has to comply with under the scheme.

Philip Bown, at Nith Place Dental Practice, said: ‘It has been a lot of hard work, but everyone has found it worthwhile and we really do feel that we have improved our service to patients.’

The BDA Good Practice Scheme offers practices a way of telling their patients that they are committed to working to a standard of good practice set by the profession’s national association.