Eye-opening dental venture across Yorkshire

Dental chain to open surgeries in opticians across Yorkshire in innovative joint venture, which is first of its kind

A dental chain is to open a string of surgeries in optician practices across Yorkshire, in what is thought to be one of the first partnerships of its kind.

Ideal Dental Care has signed an agreement with Premier Vision Opticians to open four new joint venture dental surgeries in opticians in Castleford, Huddersfield, Bradford and Wakefield.

The first is expected to open in Huddersfield in July, and the remaining three are scheduled to open by the end of the year.

The practices will be branded Ideal Dental Care and will operate on a joint venture partnership basis within the opticians.

Both Ideal Dental Care and Premier Vision Opticians see a synergy between dentistry and optometry and want to create a one-stop shop on the high street for patients.

It is a new venture for both parties, according to Ideal Dental Care’s managing partner, Peter Thompson, and one which is centred on delivering a value for money, patient-oriented experience.

“This can only be a good thing for consumers because they can access care for their eyes and teeth under one roof. Both companies have a remarkably similar outlook on business and the way we want to deliver service and treatment,” said Mr Thompson.

He added: “We are committed to delivering the very highest standards of care which represent excellent value for money and having this proposition on prominent high-street locations makes it very accessible for customers to choose to seek a range of treatment under one roof.”

Premier Vision managing director, Steve Keough, said he had been looking to develop his business model and saw dentistry as the perfect partner for his opticians.

“Ideal Dental Care were the first people I came across that were serious about joint venture partnerships and had a well-developed and robust franchising model,” said Mr Keough, a former operations director with Specsavers.

“I know that in the conception of Ideal Dental Care, Peter Thompson studied the Specsavers model in great detail and this goes a long way in explaining how he has created a business model which resonates with the way I run my business,” he added.

Both Mr Thompson and Mr Keough said they are delighted to have reached an agreement and are excited about rolling out the dental-optical proposition and developing a niche in the market.

Ideal Dental Care already has practices in Lancashire, London and South Yorkshire.

Meet the GDC
Dental professionals will have the chance to speak directly to General Dental Council staff at this year’s British Dental Conference. The British Dental Association’s British Dental Conference and Exhibition is being held at the Arena and Convention Centre in Liverpool from Thursday 20 May to Saturday 22 May 2010. Delegates will be able to speak directly to GDC staff throughout the three days by visiting Stand A54 in the exhibition hall. In a seminar session on Friday 21 May entitled ‘Update from the GDC,’ registrants can find out more about the role of the regulator, how it is funded and how registrant activity impacts on the costs of regulation. There will also be updates on the latest thinking on revalidation and other policy developments.

Professional development
A total of 16 dentists have still not complied with their Continuing Professional Development (CPD) requirements. At the end of March, 1,555 dentists were sent an end-of-cycle declaration by the General Dental Council (GDC) asking them to add or amend their declared CPD hours for the years 2005 to 2008 and to advise the GDC of the hours they have completed for 2009. The deadline for the response was 30 March. Following the expiry of the deadline, 16 dentists have not complied with their CPD requirements. The GDC will now write to the dentists to advise them that within 28 days they need to respond within 28 days will be written to again and advised to respond to its letter and either request a grace period or provide compliant CPD evidence. Those who do not respond within 28 days will be written to again and advised that they will be removed from the register in a further 28 days unless they want to appeal.

GDC registered dentists
The total number of registered dentists stands at 56,415 and the total number of dental care professionals (DCPs) is 58,586. Approximately 1,000 dentists are likely to join the register before the end of July. The transitional period for applications to join the Special Care Dentistry list on the basis of demonstrating relevant specialist training, qualifications and experience closes on 50 September 2010. To date, 120 applicants have been added to the list since the start of transitional arrangements in October 2008.

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