Incentives tempt Scottish graduates

Graduate dentists at a new dental school in the north east of Scotland are being offered incentives to remain in the area and practise as NHS dentists.

The new Aberdeen Dental School will produce 15 graduates this year and 20 fully-qualified dentists every year after.

Graduates will be offered incentives to remain in the region as NHS dentists.

The dental school, which has received £2m of funding from the Scottish Government and NHS Grampian, will have facilities for radiography and restorative dentistry as well as dental laboratories.

Public Health Minister Shona Robison said: "The Aberdeen Dental School will be a centre of excellence for the north of Scotland and an important asset for the whole country."

"Young dentists who train at the school will provide a significant boost to the numbers of trained practitioners in our country, helping to bring NHS dentistry within reach of more and more people."

North east Lib Dem MSP Mike Rumbles called it "a step in the right direction" but added "it's not the solution to the problem, which is what the government seems to think it is. It is not a fully-fledged school, it is a post-graduate facility."

"What the government has done is not good enough because the school should be producing at least 60 dental students a year, not 15."

The new four-year, graduate-entry dental course has already recruited its first 52 students, who will spend time at the £5.2m dental school in Preston before working for eight or more of them to come to East Lancashire.

Quality teachers compete

Some of the best practitioners in dental education will be battling it out for the title of teacher of the year in the 2009 DDU Educational awards.

Rupert Hoppenbrouwers, head of the Dental Defence Union, said: "The finest teachers are able to communicate their enthusiasm for dentistry, as well as their knowledge of the subject, to students and newly-qualified dentists."

These qualities are always evident in our finalists, so we look forward to some interesting and inspiring presentations and, as ever, I'm sure it will be tremendously difficult to choose a winner."

Two finalists have been selected from a shortlist of nominees in three categories.

CDO opens new dental school

The government's Chief Dental Officer has officially opened a new dental training school in East Lancashire.

Before unveiling the official plaque, Barry Crockett met dental students who are training at the centre.

The £2.2m Oak House NHS Dental Centre will act as a training facility for new dentists and for dental therapy students and is one of the first new dental schools to be opened in nearly 100 years.

The aim is to train ‘home-grown’ dentists for the future, with the hope that they will stay and work in the area where they have trained.

The centre also has four purpose-built, NHS dental surgeries which act as a new base for the local NHS out-of-hours emergency dental service.

The centre is part of a project between the Preston-based University of Central Lancashire and the Universities of Lancaster, Lancaster, and Cumbria, together with East Lancashire Primary Care Trust (PCT) and the North West Strategic Health Authority.

NHS dentistry abroad

The government is carrying out a consultation on an EU directive that will allow patients to ask the NHS to pay for their dental treatment abroad.

It is asking for the views of healthcare professionals, patient groups, health organisations and the public on the new Patient Mobility EU Directive.

The government wants to make sure the directive does not adversely affect the NHS’ ability to plan and manage services – and ensure patients can only access services to which they are entitled to on the NHS.

Public health minister Dawn Primarolo said: 'We want to ensure that, where UK patients choose to travel abroad for care, the NHS retains the ability to decide what care it will fund."

Equally, anyone from other member states travelling to the UK specifically for healthcare will have to pay the full NHS cost of treatment upfront.'

She emphasised that the government is "committed to providing high quality healthcare close to patients' homes."

The consultation will help formulate the UK’s negotiating position when discussions on the directive are held by Council of EU health ministers on 15-16 December.

The consultation closes on 3 December.

New links for CIC

Smile-on is joining forces with the international dental association, Alpha Omega, to hold next year's Clinical Innovations Conference.

The conference in 2009 will bring together the Clinical Innovations Conference and the Annenberg Lecture.

Dr Nitazan Bichacho and Dr Dubi Schwartz-Arad will present the Annenberg Lecture: Success factors in dental implantation: a multi-disciplinary approach between the surgeon and the prosthodontist', on 15 May 2009.

On 16 May, delegates can take part in a series of lectures and hands-on sessions.

A spokeswoman for Smile-on said: "Alpha Omega promotes lectures, seminars and study groups. Its partnership with Smile-on is set to provide delegates with a rich educational experience."

The 2009 Clinical Innovations Conference will be held at the Royal College of Physicians in Regent's Park, London.

For more information, or to make a booking, please call 0207 400 8989 or email info@smile-on.com.

Stripping for charity

Dental patients in Sunderland have agreed to be photographed wearing nothing but a smile for a saucy charity calendar.

Riveredge Cosmetic Dentistry practice in Sunderland decided it wanted to do a charity calendar after losing its manager, Amanda Fisher, to bowel cancer three years ago.

The calendar features the Riveredge team, Rugby League player Paul Sculthorpe and nine Riveredge patients.

The 2009 Wearing Nothing but a Smile calendar costs £10. It can be bought by calling the Sunderland clinic on 0191 567 1020.

Lesley Collard, practice manager, said: ‘We were keen to do something a bit different to support St Oswald’s, the hospice that looked after Amanda so well. We were all pretty nervous about doing the calendar, but it was great fun and for a great cause."

Three cancer charities are set to benefit from the venture including St Oswald's Hospice, where the Ma Fisher, was treated before she died.

The calendar features the Riveredge team, Rugby League player Paul Sculthorpe and nine Riveredge patients.