

Peninsula Dental School inspires Ireland's first community-based dental programme

The University of Plymouth's Peninsula Dental School prides itself on its award-winning community-based model – the first in the UK. Now its impact is set to extend to Ireland, with a long-term collaborative agreement signed with the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI) University of Medicine and Health Sciences.

The partnership will support RCSI in delivering a new undergraduate Bachelor of Dental Surgery (BDS) degree programme. This will be the first community-based undergraduate dentistry degree programme in Ireland.

Peninsula Dental School's award-winning programme, established over many years, offers an innovative approach to dentistry education, combining first-rate dental training with outstanding community dental care.

Focusing training solely in primary care, Peninsula was the first dental school to bring meaningful NHS patient contact to students from the earliest months of their course, as well as embedding community engagement within the curriculum. It was also the first to train a variety of dental professionals side by side, reflecting the reality of dental practice.

The partnership will enable RCSI to adopt a community-based approach to dental education. The partnership's modern, comprehensive and bespoke curriculum



is designed to equip graduates to deliver excellence in dental care for patients in a primary care setting, improving their oral and general health near where they live.

This community-based approach has particular benefits for people in underprivileged communities who often struggle to access dental care. It provides a holistic and rich learning experience for students and perhaps instil a desire to practise in the community following their graduation.

The five-year programme will increase the number of dentists that qualify in Ireland each year. RCSI will welcome the first student intake in September 2025 (subject to regulatory approvals) and will qualify the first cohort of dentists in the summer of 2030.

Professor Ewen McColl, Head of Peninsula Dental School, said: 'Since Peninsula Dental School was established, more than 600 graduates have taken their learning and applied it to their careers, making enormous differences to patients and dental care delivery where they work. The creation of Peninsula Dental Social Enterprise, which sees students treat NHS patients under supervision and address oral health inequalities, has seen over half a million treatments delivered to people who might not otherwise have been able to access them.

'Access to dental care is a huge issue in the UK and Ireland, so to be able to work with and support RCSI to have an impact in their community is a huge next step, and we look forward to accompanying them on their journey.'

ADEE and BARDES sign memorandum of understanding

The Association of Dental Education in Europe (ADEE) has recently signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the British Alliance of Research in Dental Education & Scholarship (BARDES) to better enable collaboration between the two associations. The MOU puts in place a framework for joint activities between ADEE and BARDES where there is mutual interest and opportunities to advance oral health professionals' education.

The ADEE said: 'We very much value the contribution of [BARDES'] UK members in our activities and see this MOU as a key future enabler of this collaboration.'



Dr Vivian Binnie, BARDES President (University of Glasgow) and Professor Barry F. A. Quinn, ADEE Secretary General (University of Liverpool) signing the memorandum of understanding between the two organisations

Memorial event for Prof Newell Johnson

A memorial event for the late Professor Newell Johnson will be held from 4–8pm on Friday 19 April 2024 in the Wheatley room at the Royal Society of Medicine, 1 Wimpole Street, London, W1G 0AE.

The programme will be as follows:

4:00–5:00 four short speeches of 15 minutes' duration covering Professor Newell's major areas of work: dental caries, periodontal diseases research, oral cancer, and global oral health

5:00–5:30 sharing memories of Newell

5:30–8:00 drinks reception.

If you are planning to attend, please inform Nicola Johnson, nicolaj@doctors.org.uk.