

The BDJ News section accepts items that include general news, latest research and diary events that interest our readers. Press releases or articles may be edited, and should include a colour photograph if possible.

Please direct your correspondence to the News Editor, Joanna Lyall at the BDJ, The Macmillan Building, 4 Crinan Street, London N1 9XW or by email to j.lyall@nature.com

ENTRY TO DENTAL SCHOOLS TO BE DEPENDENT ON TESTING FOR HEP B, HEP C, HIV AND TB

All prospective entrants to dental school must be screened for hepatitis B, hepatitis C, HIV and TB, according to new guidance from the Council of Heads and Deans of Dental Schools.

The requirements, which will also apply to entrants for dental hygiene and dental therapy courses, state that admission will be conditional on the results of this testing for blood-borne viruses (BBVs).

Dental schools will make clear their expectations with respect to BBV screening on their websites, in their prospectuses and in information supplied to applicants, the guidance states. Ideally these will be consistent across all schools.

The guidance, endorses the recommendations of Department of Health guidance, *Health clearance for tuberculosis, hepatitis B, hepatitis C and HIV*, published in March last year.

'The admission of students to dental school should be a transparent process that provides equality of opportunity to all applicants, but the nature of undergraduate training precludes entry

of those who may pose a risk of blood-borne infection to patients,' says the latest guidance. 'Many of the clinical procedures in which undergraduate dental students must gain competence are exposure prone procedures.'

Dental deans are responsible for ensuring that only students who have been tested to exclude BBVs are accepted on to undergraduate dental courses and students should not be responsible

for meeting the cost of testing, it says. The guidance also states that 'Routine re-screening of newly qualified dentists in the UK will not normally be required if they are graduates of UK dental schools.'

Liz Kay, Dean of Peninsula Dental School, Plymouth, said testing had been common practice in most dental schools for some time. 'But there are cost implications as the schools should pay for the blood tests. It would be sensible for this to be a pooled cost as students do not always attend the school they expect to,' she said.



DENTISTS DISAPPOINTED AT PAY AWARD

The Government's decision to award GDPs and salaried dentists pay increases of 2.2 per cent has disappointed dentists' organisations.

The award, announced this month, is in line with the recommendation of the Doctors' and Dentists' Review Body report. It proposed an uplift of 3.4 per cent to gross earnings for GDPs in Eng-

land and Wales, intended to produce an increase of 2.2 per cent net.

The DDRB report noted the 'encouraging' number of GDPs who had taken up the new contract and said primary care trusts (PCTs) and local health boards appeared to be commissioning extra services. But it also acknowledged persistent access problems. PCTs and health boards might need to consider setting aside additional funding to meet the Government's objective of everyone

having access to an NHS dentist, it said.

Susie Sanderson, Chair of the BDA's Executive Board, said 'Dentists in general practice will be extremely disappointed in the level of increase which we fear will not tackle the problems the DDRB has recognised in its report.'

Derek Watson, Chief Executive of the Dental Practitioners' Association, said: 'The Review Body are hopelessly confused about how to set wages to retain dentists in the NHS.'

GDC REQUIREMENTS COULD HARM NURSE RECRUITMENT, SUGGESTS FORMER MEMBER

Mandatory training for all dental nurses could make it difficult to recruit staff to practices, according to Baroness Gardner of Parkes, a former member of the GDC who worked as an NHS dentist for 35 years.

Speaking in a debate on the Health and Social Care Bill last month, Baroness Gardner (Conservative), former chair of the Royal Free Hampstead Trust and former vice-chair of North East Thames Regional Health Authority, who sat on disciplinary committees during her time at the GDC, said mandatory CPD for all DCPs from August 1 'must be good, but it is important that some flexibility is applied.'

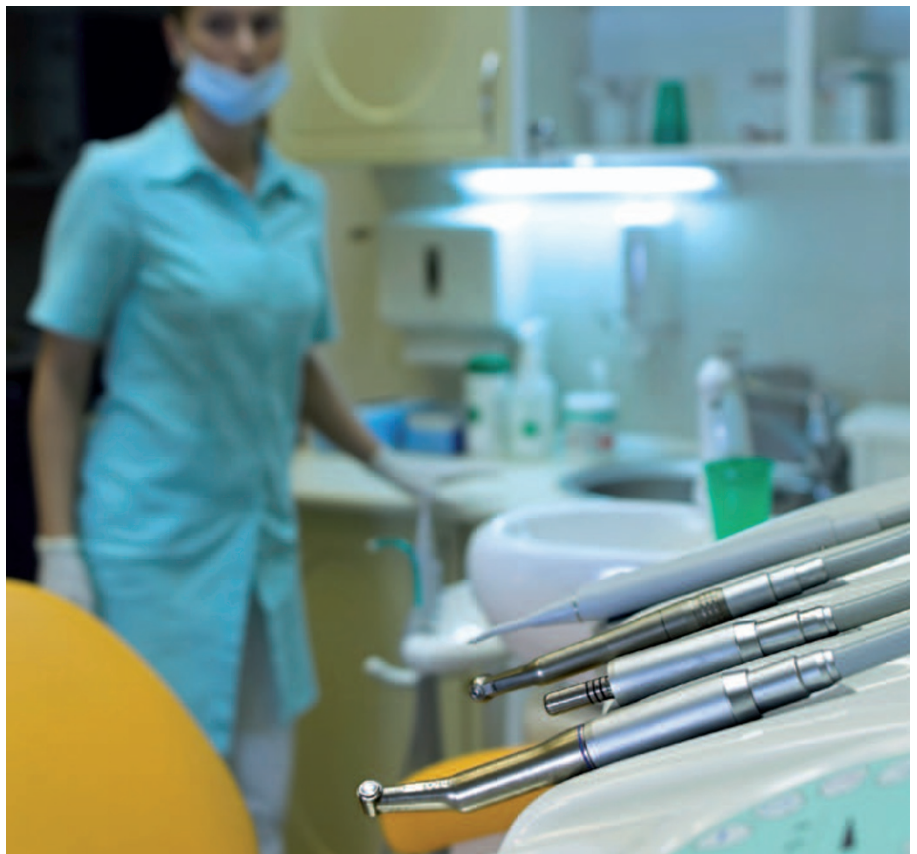
The requirement for anyone registering as a dental nurse after July 30 to have a qualification might affect recruitment, she suggested. 'When I was in practice dental nurses, then known as chairside assistants, were trained on the job,' she said. 'Some went to evening classes and got extra qualifications, but they were optional, not mandatory.'

'I can remember when there was full employment and it was extremely hard to get anyone to work as a chairside assistant – it is not a job that has instant appeal and is quite hard work. I am concerned that the time might come when it will be hard to attract enough applicants,' she said.

'To have proper, well trained dental nurses is good for everyone: for the nurses who will have achieved a high standard, for the dentists they work with and for the patients. How can we ensure we have enough qualified nurses?' she added.

A former NHS adjudicator, Baroness Gardner said a shortage of nurses

could produce medico-legal problems for dentists. 'The dentist has a medico-legal requirement not to treat patients unless another adult is in the surgery with them, because they can be accused of attacking the patient, for which I have seen dentists struck off,' she said. 'What will the dentist do if his nurse is ill and there is no one to step in? Will he simply send the patient away? There must be some degree of flexibility in these things.'



DENTAL LECTURER TO LOOK AT REDUCING ALCOHOL ABUSE IN PUBS

Simon Moore, Senior Lecturer in dentistry, and colleagues at Cardiff University have been awarded £415,000 by the Medical Research Council to look at ways of reducing alcohol abuse in pubs.

The researchers will be looking at ways of cutting disorder and violent injury. The health and economic costs of alcohol misuse in the UK are estimated to be between two and five per cent of gross domestic product.

Dr Moore said: 'Research of this type

is very challenging and complex and we are lucky to have assembled a great team. We will also be working with South Wales Police whose support has been instrumental in getting this off the ground.'

He will be collaborating with Laurence Moore, Director of the Cardiff Institute for Society Health and Ethics (CISHE), Simon Murphy, Senior Research Fellow at CISHE and Jonathan Shepherd, Vice-Dean of the dental school and Professor of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery.

TELEDENTISTRY EFFECTIVE FOR CHILDREN'S ORTHODONTIC CARE

Limited orthodontic services for children can be effectively provided by a general dentist supervised by an orthodontic specialist using teleconferencing, according to research presented at the annual meeting of the American Association for Dental Research in Dallas, Texas, this month.

Socially disadvantaged children have limited access to orthodontic services and this approach could increase availability, according to the study by Jeffrey Berndt, of the University of North Carolina, and colleagues.

An orthodontic specialist at a remote site used teleconferencing to supervise a general dentist who provided limited orthodontic services to Medicaid-eligible children in a public health clinic

in Toppenish, Washington.

Treatment results of the general dentist were compared with those obtained by orthodontic graduate students, supervised by orthodontists, at a public health clinic in Seattle, Washington. The two groups of children and the treatments were similar.

The study showed significant orthodontic improvement in both groups of children. The results suggest early orthodontic treatment provided by a sufficiently trained general dentist, supervised by an orthodontic specialist via teleconference, is a viable approach to reducing the severity of malocclusion in groups of disadvantaged children where referral to an orthodontist is not feasible, the authors concluded.



GDC WARNS GENERAL DENTAL PRACTITIONERS ON IMPLANTOLOGY

General dental practitioners should not practise implantology without further training, the General Dental Council has warned.

In a policy statement issued this month 'in the light of concerns raised with us about the practice of implant dentistry by general dental practitioners', the Council warns that dentists who carry out work for which they are not trained put their registration at risk. 'A UK-qualified general dental practitioner will not be competent to carry out implant dentistry without further training,' the statement says.

It supports the requirements set out in *Training standards in implant dentistry for general practitioners*, produced by a GDC working group in 2005. This document says GDPs should complete a course in implant dentistry and undergo mentoring 'until the experienced implant clinician considers the practitioner to be competent.' It also recommends that all GDPs should keep a detailed portfolio of their training, their mentoring and an audited record of the implants they have placed. 'Such portfolios of activity could be used in any dispute as to whether they were competent in implant dentistry, including complaints to the GDC' the document concludes.

The GDC is considering whether further measures are required to regulate dentists' practice in skills significantly beyond those acquired in their primary qualification for registration. This month's guidance is an interim statement.

CHURCHILL LETTER TO DENTIST FETCHES MORE THAN DOUBLE GUIDE PRICE

A letter from Sir Winston Churchill to his dentist, Sir Wilfred Fish, expected to fetch £600-£800, was sold for £2,100 at Bonhams in London last month (March). The auction house would not reveal the buyer's identity.

In the typewritten letter, sent from Downing Street in January 1954, Sir Winston tells the newly-knighted Fish how pleased he was to recommend him for the honour and asks him to

tighten up an enclosed set of dentures. 'The others are working very well,' the letter adds.

Well fitting dentures were a concern for Churchill through most of his adult life. One set (pictured), designed by Fish and manufactured by Derek Cudlipp from cast gold plate with platinum clasps, are on show in the Hunterian Museum at the Royal College of Surgeons, London.



Photo credit: Hunterian Museum, Royal College of Surgeons

DIARY

MAY

BDA British Dental Conference and Exhibition

Date: May 1-3 2008
Venue: Manchester Central Convention Complex
Tel: 0870 166 6625
Email: events@bda.org

British Society for Disability and Oral Health

Unlocking barriers to care

Date: May 9 2008
Venue: Marriott Hotel, Mill Lane, Cardiff
Tel: 01372 457144
Email: lande.baily@tiscali.co.uk

Dental Technology Show

Date: May 9-10 2008
Venue: Ricoh Arena, Coventry
Tel: 0115 968 3181
Email: kim@dla.org.uk

British Orthodontic Society Spring Meeting

Date: May 10 2008
Venue: Celtic Manor golf resort, Newport
Tel: 020 8566 8811
Email: tracyposner@positivecomm.com

9th Oxford Course in Evidence-Based Dentistry

Date: May 12-16 2008
Venue: Department of Continuing Education, Oxford University
Tel: 01865 286941
Email: cpdhealth@conted.ox.ac.uk

GDC Dental Technician registration days

Date: May 14 2008
Venue: Holiday Inn Plymouth
Date: May 15 2008
Venue: Sandy Park Conference Centre, Exeter
Contact: 0845 222 4141
Email: communications@gdc-uk.org

Annual Meeting of the European Society of Dental Ergonomics

Date: May 30-31 2008
Venue: Desenzano del Garda, Lake Garda, Italy
Email: secretary.esde@live.be

JUNE

Annual conference of local dental committees

Date: June 13 2008
Venue: Kensington Town Hall, London
www.ldcuk.org/news

114th Meeting of the American Dental Society of Europe

Date: June 19-22 2008
Venue: Lapa Palace, Lisbon, Portugal
Tel: +44 (0)141 331 0088

ONLINE DISCUSSION FORUM TO LAUNCH NEXT WEEK

An online discussion forum on research in primary care will be launched at the BDA Conference in Manchester next week. This will allow dentists to voice their opinion on issues and clinical scenarios they encounter in everyday practice and would like answers to.

The aim is to ensure that research carried out in primary care is relevant to professionals in practice. The forum will be part of a study which will

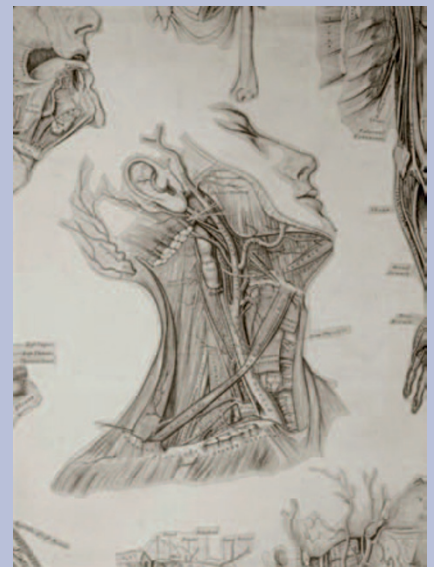
identify research questions arising from general practice. Literature reviews on each theme identified will be carried out and the results fed back to participating practices.

A link to the forum will be available on the BDA website at the beginning of May. Further information is available from Beth Caines, Shirley Glassstone Hughes Administrator, at b.caines@bda.org.

LAST WEEK FOR GRAY'S ANATOMY EXHIBITION

An exhibition devoted to the world's most enduring anatomical textbook is running at the Royal College of Surgeons in London until 2 May. It includes the engravings for the first edition of Gray's Anatomy, which was published in 1858, the creation of two young doctors Henry Gray and Henry Carter. The exhibition explores the lives of its creator as well as looking at the history of the publication.

The exhibition is on show in the college library, Monday to Friday, from 10am-5pm.



EASTMAN PLANS NEW PAEDIATRIC PROGRAMME

The UCL Eastman Dental Institute is launching a new paediatric dentistry programme. Due to start in October, the course will consist of 26 days running over one year and will lead to a UCL Certificate in Paediatric Dentistry.

Delivered through seminars and practical sessions at the Eastman, the programme will cover oral disease, restorative management, trauma, behaviour management and planning treatment in the developing child.

WIN £7,000 FOR PRIMARY CARE RESEARCH

Do you have at least four years' experience in primary care and a research question you are keen to investigate? The Faculty of General Dental Practice and the British Society for General Dental Surgery are inviting applications for the 2008 scholarship for research in primary care.

The scholarship, awarded every two years, is for a single research project

and the winner will be awarded up to £7,000. The deadline for applications, which should be in the form of research protocols, is June 9. The winning protocol will be selected by a panel of members from the FGDP and BSGDS. The successful applicant will be expected to provide a written report to the faculty's research committee three times a year during the duration of their project. Details on applying are available on http://www.fgdp.org.uk/research/financial_html.