

Ciara Gallagher, Julie Etchingam and Peter Mullan celebrate with practice staff.



OPENING DOORS IN IRELAND

Members of the dental community gathered recently to welcome a new practice that hopes to balance private and NHS dental care. The Mullan Gallagher Dental practice in Downpatrick, County Down, Northern Ireland was officially opened by special guest Julie Etchingam, anchor on ITN's News at Ten. Partners Ciara Gallagher and Peter Mullan were also joined by Margaret Ritchie, Minister for Social Development, Mr Will Maxwell Director of Dental Services EHSSB and Claudette Christie Director of BDA Northern Ireland.

SUPPORT FOR BUSINESSES

More than 20 dental care professionals heard President of the British Association of Dental Nurses (BADN) and lead dental nurse tutor at Luton college Angie McBain, speak about Bedfordshire Barnfield College's £1.5 million knowledge transfer project to help businesses at a meeting in Houghton Regis recently.

REMINDER FOR DCPs

The deadline for all dental care professionals to pay their Annual Retention Fee (ARF) is 31 July 2009. This means a change for thousands of dental hygienists, dental therapists, clinical dental technicians and orthodontic therapists, who are used to paying in December each year.

The GDC has taken the decision not to increase the fee this year. It remains £96 for dental nurses, dental technicians, dental therapists, dental hygienists, clinical dental technicians and orthodontic therapists.

TAX DISPENSATION FOR DCP FEES

The National Association of Specialist Dental Accountants (NASDA) is encouraging dental practices to get a dispensation from HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) so they can pay the professional fees of DCP staff without being taxed.

The dispensation from HMRC recognises that payment of the GDC's annual retention fee on behalf of employees should be a benefit in kind.

This would normally require the dental practice to fill in the form P11D to report the benefit. However, because the DCP can claim this fee as an expense, there is no tax involved.

Bob Cummings, tax specialist for NASDA explained, "This amounts to a paper chase in which no tax is involved. The dispensation absolves the practice and the DCP from the unnecessary paperwork and is something NASDA accountants will be encouraging their dental practice clients to have in place." For more information on NASDA, see www.nasda.org.uk.

BDA PRACTICE MANAGEMENT BLOG

The BDA has launched a new resource to assist people with management responsibility in dental practice. The practice management blog features regular news and articles on the issues, big and small, which face practice owners and practice managers. Articles are written by expert advisers at the BDA who took over 20,000 calls and emails from BDA members on practice management topics last year. The blog can be viewed at <http://community.bda.org/blogs/advice/default.aspx> (a BDA log-in is required for access).