

The BDJ news page

The BDJ accepts all general news items that might interest our readers. Press releases or articles should not exceed 500 words and may be edited. Please include a colour photograph if possible. As space for photographs is limited, priority will be given to good quality and/or interesting pictures. Please send BDJ news items to Sarah Murnal.

BDA IIP award



The British Dental Association was awarded the prestigious Investors in People (IIP) accreditation on August 17, for its commitment to staff training and development. This is the first time the Association has received such an award, and it recognises the organisation's efforts to work to the highest professional and business standards.

The certificate was presented to the BDA's Chief Executive, John Hunt, by Dame Margaret Seward, former GDC President, on September 23.

Nuffield Trust

The Nuffield trust and the University of Durham have announced the launch of Britain's first National Co-ordinating Council and Centre for integrating the arts and humanities into the NHS, with the aim of creating a more humane, patient friendly and effective health service for the new millennium.

The new Co-ordinating Council will be chaired by Professor Michael Baum, Professor of Surgery at University College, London. The Council will be actively supported by a new Centre based at the University of Durham which will be led by Dr Jane Macnaughton who will be the Director of the new Centre. The centre's role will be to collate and disseminate research evi-

National lottery funds denture trial



Above from L to R back row: Drs. David Davies, Barry Gibson, and Peter Robinson. (front row from L to R) Ms Nicola Pearson and Professor Stanley Gelbier, in conjunction with The relative's and Resident's Association (represented by Ms. Jennifer Stiles, centre) have been awarded £229,814 by the National Lotteries Charities Board to conduct a randomised controlled trial of domiciliary denture care. Ms Nicola Pearson of Tower Hamlets Healthcare NHS Trust has been appointed as a part-time Clinical Research Fellow to work with the rest of the research team at King's College London for the project.

Drs. Peter Robinson and Caroline Pankhurst of King's College London have also been awarded £56,281 by Action Research to conduct a randomised controlled trial of a reservoir bite-guard in the management of xerostomia.

dence on the arts in healthcare, and their potential role, not only in the education and personal development of healthcare professionals, but also in the enhancement of the health and well-being of individuals and communities. In doing so, the new Council and Centre hope to challenge and moderate the heavy science and technology bias that has traditionally dominated health service culture, professional training and patient care.

Dental Law & Ethics Forum

Following the success of the Third International Dental Law and Ethics conference held at the end of last year; a group of dentally-qualified lawyers have established the Dental Law & Ethics Forum. The objective of the Dental Law & Ethics Forum is to provide a focus for discussion about legal and ethical issues in dentistry amongst lawyers, dentists, moral philosophers and others.

Further information may be obtained from Christopher Dean on 0181 959 0302. Membership details for the Dental Law Forum may be obtained from Helen Kaney on 01737 787918.

iMac winner

Mr Stark (left in photo), principal at the Baddow Road Dental Surgery in Chelms-

ford, was the winner in a recent prize draw for an iMac computer. The prize was offered as an incentive for dentists to return a questionnaire on behalf of LMS, who wanted to investigate the use of computers both inside and outside the surgery.



Despite the obvious advancement of computer technology in dentistry, the use of computers at home had yet to make a major impact. The research demonstrated that as few as 10% of dentists use a computer at home, and only one third of these have access to the Internet.

The main reason given for using the Internet was to search for information (58%), another popular use was to keep in touch with friends and colleagues (54%). As few as 2% said that they would purchase items for the practice via the Internet. This was not the case for private purchases with 24% of respondents stating that they used the Internet.

Meeting of the General Dental Council 9th November 1999

New GDC President sets the agenda

At the first General Dental Council meeting of his presidency on 9 November 1999, Professor Nairn Wilson described his vision for the development of dentistry and the GDC over the next five years.

After paying tribute to the outstanding contribution of his predecessor, Dame Margaret Seward, the new President:

- Stressed that the interests of patients are of paramount importance in all the Council's work
- Recommitted the Council and himself to the principles and highest standards of public service
- Placed professional self-regulation in the context of the national healthcare quality agenda, as the cornerstone of effective clinical governance in dentistry
- Looked forward to focussing his and the Council's energies on:
 - maintaining and strengthening the Council's uncompromising fitness to practise arrangements
 - excellence in dental education and training
 - the development of the dental team and the statutory registration of professionals complementary to dentistry
- Identified the Council's Recertification Scheme, to be launched in 2000, as the Council's top priority.

Lifelong learning: recertification for the dental profession

At its meeting on 9 November, the General Dental Council approved its Millennium Project — Lifelong Learning: Recertification for the Dental Profession.

The GDC's proposals received overwhelming support from the dental profession in the consultation exercise undertaken during 1997 and 1998 and the Council has now endorsed the

scheme which it intends to launch in April 2000 at Dentistry 2000.

In developing the scheme, the GDC has regarded this initiative as a collaborative venture with key stakeholders in the dental profession and has worked closely with a range of bodies to ensure that the scheme is fair, workable and recognises the commitment already made by the dental profession to continuing professional development.

The Government has expressed its support for the scheme and it is anticipated that the necessary change to the law for the introduction of the scheme will be forthcoming during the year 2000.

- The Scheme will apply to all registered dentists, currently around 30,000
- Dentists will be required to complete 250 hours of CPD over a five year period
- Dentists will be advised to complete 15 hours of Verifiable CPD and 35 hours of General CPD per year
- Verifiable activities are those for which dentists will be able to obtain some confirmation of participation. No such verification is required for General CPD
- The Scheme will be launched in April 2000 at Dentistry 2000 — a major national dental conference which will be held at the NEC in Birmingham
- A preparatory scheme in which all dentists will be encouraged to participate will commence on 1 October 2000
- The Mandatory Scheme is expected to start in January 2002 and will be phased in over three years
- Dentists will be required to make an annual declaration of participation in the Scheme
- The GDC will audit the scheme by requiring an annual sample of dentists to provide documentary evidence of participation
- At the end of the five year cycle dentists will be required to provide a written summary of CPD activity over the five years and may then be

asked for documentary evidence

- Dentists who fail to complete the CPD requirement risk being removed from the Dentists Register.

Professionals complementary to dentistry

At its meeting on 9 November 1999, the Council approved a strategy for implementing the decisions taken at its May meeting in relation to the statutory registration of professionals complementary to dentistry.

The plan has been drawn up following a series of meetings in the Summer with representatives of PCD groups in order to identify key tasks and set the timetable for implementation. In particular, the following issues have been explored and are considered in detail in the Council's implementation strategy:

- Legislative change
- The educational requirement
- The development of ethical guidance
- Representation and constitutional issues.

The Council adopted key principles in relation to the statutory registration of PCDs and commissioned further work to ensure that an ambitious timetable for the implementation of these important public protection changes is achieved.

The Council agreed:

- To seek changes to the Dentists Act 1984, through the Order-making power in the Health Act 1999, to permit registration of new classes of PCDs
- To determine standards of education and training for entry to PCD registers
- To continue to consult with Government and the providers of education and training
- To develop arrangements for the accreditation of education and training
- To prepare ethical guidance for new classes of PCDs
- To maintain and promote dialogue with PCD and other groups as work progresses towards the establishment of new PCD registers.