

# Focus Awards 2001



L Voisey

In the second of a series of five articles in which we look at each of the practice finalists from the Focus Awards 2001, we visit The Melbourne Dental Practice in Derbyshire.

As one of the finalists in the Focus Awards, The Melbourne Dental Practice stood out for its patient-focused innovations, in particular, for offering oral cancer screening and providing child-care facilities. As far as The Melbourne Dental Practice is concerned, no babysitter, no problem! The practice will make an appointment for mum when they know a team member is available to mind children. Meanwhile, children are introduced to a friendly environment where they are given personal attention and toys. Practice Manager, Patricia Smith says that it means that mum can relax during treatment and often children don't want to go home as they are having such a good time!



Fig. 1. The dental team from Melbourne Dental Practice (left to right): Patricia Smith, Ben Davies (Practice Principal), Naomi Fry, Rachel Cavey, Margaret Wright and Clare Ryles.

The Focus Awards are a joint initiative sponsored by the Department of Health and the BDA which recognise and reward patient-focused innovations that have taken place in the last two years. Any single or group of providers of NHS dental care within GDS, CDS or PDS can be nominated. To apply for this year's Focus Awards or request further information please call the BDA on 020 7563 4563.

### As pain-free as possible...

If there is one thing Melbourne Dental Practice have found, it is that nervous patients like to talk. To relax the patient and avoid discussion between patients on past bad experiences with previous dentists, a team member will join nervous patients in the waiting room, chatting to them and keeping the conversation light and positive. The dentist will then have a more relaxed patient to treat!

Pain-free treatment is always the aim,



Fig. 2. The local anaesthetic will have been warmed in a cartridge warmer beforehand.

therefore a topical anaesthetic is applied to the area before local anaesthetic is administered. The local anaesthetic will have been warmed in a cartridge warmer beforehand (see Fig. 2 below). Patients can be unaware that the 'needle' has been inserted thanks to the 'magic cream'.

The Melbourne Dental Practice hold yearly free oral cancer screening sessions during 'Oral Cancer Awareness Week'. They advertise the screening sessions in the local press in Melbourne, and stress that these are available to anyone in the area and not just regular patients. During the Week, the practice aims to provide as welcoming an environment as possible and they serve refreshments. Two dentists are kept busy during the Week, making referrals to a hospital specialist when necessary. The practice have found that there is a real need for the screening service and it is a much appreciated service by unregistered patients who are prepared to travel from quite far away.

### Educating the patient

A welcome booklet is given to patients to acquaint them with the way the practice works and its philosophy. Patient leaflets

include useful information about topics such as the effects of acidic drinks on teeth, tooth-brushing and healthy diets.

Melbourne Dental Practice hold regular competitions and prepare window and waiting room displays which emphasise their verbal communications on oral health education. The dedicated staff have received oral health training from the local health authority and take it in turns to do their own oral health promotion projects to help educate patients. The practice are obviously doing something right, according to Patricia Smith, some patients have been coming back for 30 years.



Fig. 3. Children are kept occupied.