

Focus Awards 2001



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In the last of a series of five articles in which we look at each of the practice finalists from the Focus Awards 2001, we visit 68 The Dental Practice in Leeds, West Yorkshire.

Based in Crossgates, Leeds, 68 The Dental Practice stood out for its interactive web-page and judges were also impressed with the way the surgery offers the opportunity for patients to contact the dentist via-email with questions or to request appointments via the web. A dentist will respond to web enquiries every day.

The website also includes patient education on website too. It was an idea that resulted from one of the patient surveys they regularly carry out. A survey of 350+ patients about the practice website discovered that 45% had access to the web and felt a practice web-site was a good idea.

Educating about smoking

Practice dentist Dr Jeff Sherer went on a 2-day course, funded by Leeds Health Authority, to become a smoking cessation adviser. Dr Sherer learnt about different forms of nicotine replacements and how to monitor carbon monoxide levels. As a result, he now uses such equipment to show patients their CO levels before, during and after giving up smoking. The practice offers free out-of-hours smoking counselling and information to patients, as well as to those who are unregistered.

The main surgeries of the practice are situated on the first and second floors of



Fig. 1. The team from Leeds-based 68 The Dental Practice.

The Focus Awards are a joint initiative sponsored by the Department of Health and the BDA which recognises and rewards 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. The deadline for applications is 30 June 2002. To apply or request information please call the BDA on 020 7563 4563.

the building so they have built an extra surgery downstairs next to reception on the ground floor especially to see patients who cannot get up stairs easily.

Care - before, during and after a visit

Like many others, the practice often make telephone calls to remind patients the day before an important appointment. They also make follow-up calls to patients after difficult procedures like tooth extraction or

after domiciliary visits to check. If an emergency appointment is required, such as for toothache, patients are seen the same day.

Care is also taken by the practice to enhance the patient's experiences in the waiting area. There is a variety of reading material for adults and children, a daily newspaper is provided and there is even a fish tank with tropical fish to create a relaxing environment. There are leaflets to explain about overall health and there are anti-smoking posters on the walls too. There are leaflets on dental treatments such as bleaching.

Patients are given a full explanation of the proposed treatment, offering them the opportunity to ask questions. There are pictures/paintings on the wall and music in the surgery to help relax patients. Free sample products are given to patients too.

The thank you letters and pictures displayed on the waiting room walls are testament to this surgery's success with its patients. But for those who have something to say a full complaint protocol is in place with patients given the opportunity to complete surveys.



Fig. 1. Dr Sherer helped design the surgery's very own website.



Fig. 2. Patients are fully informed about the treatment they are about to receive.