

# FOCUS AWARDS 2003



The Focus Awards 2003 recognised continuing excellence in dental patient care across the UK, Wales and Northern Ireland. The award for excellence in children's dental care went to The Area Community Dental Service for Armagh and Dungannon Health and Social Services. Naomi Davis finds out why.

This community dental service had two projects running, which between them showed the commitment of the team to their school-age patients both in and out of the dental surgery. The first project intended to educate primary school children about oral health and educate their teachers to deal with dental traumas. The second project aimed to increase the awareness of post primary school new entrants and their parents in the prevention of dental injuries in sport.

## PREVENTION AND FIRST AID TRAINING FOR MOUTH INJURIES IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

In 2002, the CDS carried out an audit of mouth injuries in primary schools in their area. This audit showed that half of the schools had pupils who experienced a mouth injury, and that 81% of schools had no staff trained in the treatment of mouth injuries. Almost all (92%) of the schools were interested in training and



Some of the team from The Area Community Dental Service for Armagh and Dungannon Health and Social Services (l-r) Pauline Jackson, Oral Health Promotion Facilitator, Dympna McLoughlin, Oral Health Promotion Co-ordinator, Anita Kavanagh, Dental Nurse and Fionnuala Smith, Dental Nurse, with some of the props they use to promote oral health



Fionnuala Smith and Dympna McLoughlin with some of their props

99% showed an interest in receiving a first aid kit.

In response to these results, the CDS implemented a training programme with all primary schools in the Southern Board Area.

The training programme included material for both the teachers and the pupils at the school. All staff at the schools were given training and the health promotion teacher in each primary school was supplied with a dental trauma kit and a wall chart. Special training was given in the use of the dental trauma kit, covering advice on what to do if a dental trauma occurs during school hours.

The teachers were also given resources to help to deliver oral health programmes to fit in with Key Stage One and Two of the National Curriculum. These included stories, games and worksheets with a dental theme. They also have leaflets and

quizzes to give their dental advice a bit of an interesting twist. Information sessions were held for new entrants and their parents and resource packs were provided too.

## DENTAL INJURIES IN SPORT: PREVENTION AND FIRST AID

This initiative aimed to increase the awareness of post-primary school new entrants and their parents to the prevention of dental injuries in sport. The community dental team provided workshops for physical education and games teachers and year 8 students. All post-primary schools in the Southern Health and Social Services Board were provided with a first aid kit for mouth injuries. These kits contained information and resources on dealing with dental emergencies. The idea was to help reduce the dental traumas that students were experiencing during sports in school and to help teachers



The Focus Awards is a joint initiative between the Department of Health for England, the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety of Northern Ireland, Welsh Assembly Government and the British Dental Association.

A team briefing discussing the materials and how best to communicate the messages of oral health

to deal with them appropriately when they happened. Working in partnership with the Southern Health and Social Services Board and general dental practitioners, the community dental team also promoted a reduced price made-to-measure mouthguard for year 8 students to

use while playing sports. Local dentists produced these custom-made mouthguards at a reduced price for a limited period. The mouthguard is now recognised as an important part of the sports kit and in some schools it is included on the list of required equipment.

This was truly a team-based initiative which involved dentists, dental nurses and oral health promotion facilitators working with schools, raising awareness of the prevention of mouth injuries and creating a positive attitude towards the wearing of customised mouth guards.



Fionnuala Smith and one of the props they use to illustrate the importance of customised mouthguards for sports. It helps to show how the jaws relate to each other, what happens when a blow to the head occurs and how this is different when a customised mouthguard is in use.

## How the teams got involved

To participate, each entrant submitted a nomination form with documentation supporting their claims of excellence in dental patient care, specifying which category or categories they wanted to be entered for:

- Excellence in children's dental care
- Excellence in treating those with special healthcare needs
- Excellence in patient information and involvement
- Excellence in creating a patient friendly environment
- Excellence in the development of good practice