

The BDJ News section accepts items that include general news, latest research and diary events that interest our readers. Press releases or articles may be edited, and should include a colour photograph if possible.

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## Vote welcomed

The Legal Affairs Committee of the European Parliament has voted in favour of amendments which require a healthcare professional to register in the host Member State prior to being granted authorisation to practise.

Without the changes, under the proposed draft Directive on the Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications (COM (2002) 119 final of 07.03.2002), healthcare professionals from any EU country would have been allowed to work for up to four months per year every year, in the UK without being registered with a UK regulator. If there was a problem with the care a person received, the UK regulators would have had no powers to take action against the individual. There would also be no means of preventing the same problem from happening again with another patient. The Legal Affairs Committee decision was welcomed by the GDC and the Alliance of UK Health Regulators on Europe (AURE).

## GDC announce fees

The GDC's annual retention fees for 2004 will be £388 for dentists and £68 for dental hygienists and dental therapists. The Council claims that the fees have been increased to help it continue to reduce the backlog in dealing with cases referred to the Professional Conduct Committee and to fund its ongoing modernisation programme.

Fees paid by two classes of specialists (oral surgeons and orthodontists) to be retained on the Specialist Lists have been abolished and the GDC will decide in the future whether all specialists should pay a fee and, if so, what amount. This can only be decided when the law is amended to allow the Council to charge all categories of specialist.

The GDC has written to all registrants to explain the reasons for the increase. Any registrants with queries about paying the ARF can call the GDC payment help-line on +44 (0) 20 8888 1235 or e-mail [arf@electoralreform.co.uk](mailto:arf@electoralreform.co.uk).

## Dental team celebrates



A dental team from St Luke's Hospital, Bradford and Pinderfields Hospital, Wakefield was one of three teams shortlisted in the Oncology category for the Hospital Doctor Awards 2003. The Restorative Dentistry Oncology Initiative were chosen as they had shown excellence through outstanding leadership, teamwork and innovation. They were presented with a finalist's certificate and a bottle of champagne at the awards ceremony held at the Hotel Intercontinental at Hyde Park Corner in London last month. (Pictured from left to right: Jenny Behrendt, dental hygienist, Debbie Malik dental nurse, Vinod K Joshi, consultant in restorative dentistry, Maxine Lockyer, dental nurse, Vicky Leach, maxillofacial prosthetist and Richard Hardcastle, maxillofacial prosthetist.)

## Oral health for the homeless

A seven-point plan to tackle the poor oral health of homeless people has been launched by the British Dental Association. *Dental Care for Homeless People*, published on the last day of The Big Issue Foundation's Vendor Health Week, calls for improvements that will give homeless people the chance to enjoy good dental health.

The report argues for a flexible dental service that responds to the particular needs of homeless people by employing a combination of surgery and outreach locations to deliver care. It also says that, wherever possible, the service should be delivered in a way that enables homeless people to use mainstream dental services. The report further calls for training and funding issues to be properly addressed so that all sectors of dentistry can play their part in delivering the dental care that homeless people need.

In readiness of the implementation of the Health and Social Care Bill in April 2005, *Dental Care for Homeless People* calls on Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) in England to take a realistic look at how general dental practitioners and the Community Dental Service will be involved in delivering care.

The report also says that PCTs should see through the promising work being done by the Personal Dental Services pilots by ensuring the continuation of ring-fenced funding.

