

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Seeking clarification – a response

Sir, I write in response to the letter entitled 'seeking clarification'.

The article addresses the practicalities of associates obtaining their own locum cover. In most cases, dental practice owners and associates agree that the practice owner will arrange cover for associates.

That allows practice owners to retain control and associates to take time off without having to worry about their contractual obligations. Nevertheless, there

may be cases where associates wish to obtain their own locum cover; even in NHS practices. This is possible in the current regulatory landscape. Of course, any dentist engaged to provide temporary cover must do work under their own performer number and must be included in the provider contract's list of performers.

I hope this helps.

N Morgan, London.

New programme for PLVE candidates

Led by Leicestershire LDC, the East Midlands Local Dental Committees are piloting a study day programme for Performer List Validation by Experience (PLVE) candidates. This will be open to dentists working in the East Midlands who qualified outside the UK, including EU and non-EU graduates.

All dentists, working within the NHS, are required to be on the national performers' list. The usual route to this is by completing Foundation Training (FT), formerly vocational training, immediately post-qualification.

Dentists qualifying outside the UK may not be eligible for Foundation Training and need to obtain a performer number, through the PLVE programme. The applying dentist has to be assessed by NHS England in consultation with Health Education England (HEE) to decide whether they can be admitted to the list.

In many respects PLVE mirrors the FD process.

Both FT and PLVE require the dentist seeking the performer number to work under the supervision of an approved trainer/mentor in an approved training practice. They also require the dentist to have weekly tutorials and complete a portfolio of experience. Foundation dentists attend 30 external study days during their 12-month long training programme. This is not a requirement for PLVE dentists, and it is widely perceived as a gap in the programme.

Starting in January 2020, the LDCs will provide a monthly study day which will include lectures and workshops, covering key elements of the portfolio, case discussion, peer review, audit, case presentation and support with portfolios.

For further information contact Philip Martin or Branán Sivanantha at LDCLeicester@aol.com

Charity announces launch of annual campaign

The Oral Health Foundation is calling on dental professionals to help the general public become more 'mouthaware' as it launches its annual campaign, Mouth Cancer Action Month.

The charity campaign, which takes place throughout November, is looking for dental and health professionals to lead the way in the fight against mouth cancer by educating patients about the risk factors and common signs and symptoms.

Cases of mouth cancer have increased by 49% in the last decade, which claims almost 3,000 lives a year. Many of those who lose their battle with mouth cancer do so because the disease is caught too late.

Dr Nigel Carter OBE, Chief Executive of the Oral Health Foundation, said: 'Awareness of mouth cancer remains extremely poor. This includes knowledge about what causes the disease, what it looks like in the early stages, where it can appear and where members of the public should go if they notice something out of the ordinary.'

'Mouth Cancer Action Month is all about saving lives by improving the nation's knowledge of mouth cancer. To do this, we are asking you to speak with patients and head out into local community groups.'

'By having a conversation about mouth cancer we can help people reduce their risk and increase the numbers who are diagnosed early.'

Dental professionals can also access a guide about the campaign designed to kickstart ideas and events to hold throughout the month.

Several events and fundraising activities will be taking place across the month, with the Blue Ribbon Appeal and the popular #BlueLipSelfie and Blue Wednesday also making a return.

The charity, along with campaign sponsors Denplan, part of Simplyhealth, are encouraging as much participation from dental and health professionals as possible.

For more information about ways to fundraise visit www.mouthcancer.org.

