

Peninsula Dental School inspires Ireland's first community-based dental programme

The University of Plymouth's Peninsula Dental School prides itself on its award-winning community-based model – the first in the UK. Now its impact is set to extend to Ireland, with a long-term collaborative agreement signed with the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI) University of Medicine and Health Sciences.

The partnership will support RCSI in delivering a new undergraduate Bachelor of Dental Surgery (BDS) degree programme. This will be the first community-based undergraduate dentistry degree programme in Ireland.

Peninsula Dental School's award-winning programme, established over many years, offers an innovative approach to dentistry education, combining first-rate dental training with outstanding community dental care.

Focusing training solely in primary care, Peninsula was the first dental school to bring meaningful NHS patient contact to students from the earliest months of their course, as well as embedding community engagement within the curriculum. It was also the first to train a variety of dental professionals side by side, reflecting the reality of dental practice.

The partnership will enable RCSI to adopt a community-based approach to dental education. The partnership's modern, comprehensive and bespoke curriculum is designed to equip graduates to deliver excellence in dental care for patients in a primary care setting, improving their oral

and general health near where they live.

This community-based approach has particular benefits for people in underprivileged communities who often struggle to access dental care. It provides a holistic and rich learning experience for students and perhaps instil a desire to practise in the community following their graduation.

The five-year programme will increase the number of dentists that qualify in Ireland each year. RCSI will welcome the first student intake in September 2025 (subject to regulatory approvals) and will qualify the first cohort of dentists in the summer of 2030.

Professor Ewen McColl, Head of Peninsula Dental School, said: 'Since Peninsula Dental School was established, more than 600 graduates have taken their learning and applied it to their careers, making enormous differences to patients and dental care delivery where they work. The creation of Peninsula Dental Social Enterprise, which sees students treat NHS patients under supervision and address oral health inequalities, has seen over half a million treatments delivered to people who might not otherwise have been able to access them.'

'Access to dental care is a huge issue in the UK and Ireland, so to be able to work with and support RCSI to have an impact in their community is a huge next step, and we look forward to accompanying them on their journey.'

Ross Brooke Dental relaunches discounted fee campaign for young dentists

A campaign alerting young dentists to the importance of starting their dental career on a good financial footing is being repeated in 2024. Launched in the autumn of 2023, the award resulted in four young associate dentists joining Ross Brooke Dental (RBD) at a discounted fee and a £1,000 donation being made to the BDA Benevolent Fund.

This year, the first five qualifying dentists to be signed up to RBD for their first-year accounts and tax return will pay only half the £700 standard fee plus VAT. For each of these five, RBD will make a £50 donation to the BDA Benevolent Fund as well as a £100 donation for each additional associate sign-up before 30 September 2024. They have chosen to work with the charity for a second year because of its inspiring role in supporting dental students, dentists, and their families through hard times.

RBD notes that the dentists who joined because of last year's campaign are experiencing the supportive style of consultancy that they like to offer, including detailed briefings and a tutorial in an online accounts system. This enables them to track their income and outgoings.

James Wootton, one of the fortunate four, said: 'I am the sort of person who doesn't like leaving things outstanding. It's still over a year before I will have to pay any tax but getting this sorted early was definitely better. Some people seem to think that delaying appointing an accountant will save them money, but the reverse is true.'

'The team at RBD know exactly what I should claim for and have been very helpful. The reduced-price entry point was very helpful at a time when I had only just started working in practice.'

Applicants should apply by emailing: dental@ross-brooke.co.uk.

