

DENTAL NURSES WELCOMED INTO COMMUNITY UNION

In the midst of a crisis within the UK's dental sector, on 8 March Community Union formally announced that it will be creating a dental nurses' section of its union.

The union, which represents workers across a range of different sectors, welcomed dental nurses into their ranks at a national dentistry convention held in Manchester on Saturday 9 March.

The dental sector has faced a wide range of challenges over the past few years and Community Union is looking to become a new voice to stand up for the interests of dental nurses across the UK. Community Union was approached by a group of self-organised dental nurses called Dental Nurse Connect who wanted a new union for dental nurses to join in order to better tackle the workplace issues they face.

Community General Secretary Roy Rickhuss CBE said: 'We are very proud to welcome the dental nursing sector into our union. At a time when nationwide access to

dental services is in crisis, there is a growing awareness of the vital work dental nurses do both in supporting dentists to care for patients, helping to streamline procedures, and delivering critical safety practices within the surgery.

'We also know there are increased pressures on dental nurses, so it's really important that they have as many people fighting in their corner as possible. We are delighted to have been approached by dental nurses, having seen our track record of supporting and getting results for our members, to create a dental nurses' sector within Community. We look forward to standing with dental nurses across the UK and becoming a strong voice for the sector – something these workers need and deserve.'

Dental Nurse and Community Member Celie Brookes said: 'Dental nurses have been facing significant issues for some time. There is often a lack of respect, recognition and reward for the vital part that they play

in the dental team. All of this compounded by the immense pressure that the sector has been placed under. It's impossible not to see these challenges laid bare when people are pulling their teeth out with pliers because they cannot get into an NHS dentist. We formed as Dental Nurses Community (DNC) because there's a real feeling in the profession that dental nurses just haven't had a strong enough voice from the floor, fighting for them.

'We have made fantastic strides so far and are really proud to be working with Community Union to represent nurses in the dental sector. We need support for our members in workplaces and someone to stand up for their interests nationally. That's what Community Union offers for dental nurses: support to challenge employment issues and a collective voice to champion them nationally. I'd encourage all dental nurses that want to see a better tomorrow for our profession to join Community today.'

ORAL HEALTH IMPROVEMENT SERVICE LAUNCHED IN NOTTINGHAM

Nottingham City Council is working with Community Dental Services CIC (CDS) to launch a new oral health improvement service. The Nottingham City Oral Health Improvement Team will focus on improving oral health and reducing health inequalities across the city.

The team will deliver the oral health programmes, based on local need, working with partners to target where they can have the greatest impact, including:

- Supervised tooth brushing programmes in schools and early years settings
- Delivering training to health/non health professionals for both child related and vulnerable adult/older people services
- Supporting care homes to implement NICE and CQC guidelines
- Distributing oral health resources.

Helen Paisley, Chief Executive, is delighted at the opportunity to deliver a new oral health improvement service for Nottingham City: 'Maintaining good oral health is so important to overall health and wellbeing and quality of life. We are really looking forward to promoting positive oral health messages directly to children through supervised toothbrushing and to people



Centre: Cllr Woodings and Helen Paisley, CDS CEO, with the new Nottingham City Oral Health Improvement Team

working in care who support groups such as vulnerable elderly in care homes and people with complex needs. The opportunity to work in Nottingham City complements the work of our Nottinghamshire County oral health team and our Nottinghamshire clinical community dental service teams and will really allow us to reach right into the heart of communities across Nottingham.

'Our oral health teams have great experience in building partnerships and

working through established networks to make lasting improvements in oral health where it is needed most, and we are really looking forward to working here in Nottingham.'

To find out more about the service or to book supervised toothbrushing programmes for your setting, visit: <https://www.communitydentalservices.co.uk/oral-health-improvement/nottinghamshire-oral-health-page/nottingham-city>.