



## FREE MOUTH MAINTENANCE CLASSES OFFERED TO PATIENTS

Queensway Dental Clinic in Billingham is running a free oral health



education class once a week for patients wishing to learn about mouth maintenance. The class is part of the clinic's campaign to improve the oral health of the North East, a region with the lowest proportion of adults with 21 teeth or more when compared to the rest of the country.

Claire Robinson, dental nurse at Queensway Dental Clinic, is currently attending the National Examining Board for Dental Nurses' (NEBDN's) six-month oral health education course at Queensway's Education Centre – a recognised teaching centre for dental professionals.

'Most children are now educated at school about healthy mouths and how to maintain their dental hygiene,' said Claire. 'But, some older patients lead busy lives and may forget or not have the time to go through the entire procedure to maintain a healthy mouth, or they may be unsure as to the signs of unhealthy teeth or are reluctant to visit the dentist when they have a problem.'

During one-on-one lessons at Queensway, the patient is talked through the entire oral health process from the basic essentials to practising their technique.

## NEW RURAL PRACTICE AIMS TO EMPOWER PATIENTS

A rural dental practice with a focus on patient empowerment was officially opened by Ms Anne McIntosh MP on 20 April. The purpose-built Howardian Dental Practice is on the Sheriff Hutton Industrial Estate, North-East of the city of York.

Dr Christine Parker has opened the practice to provide quality dental care for local people who would usually have to travel some distance. The rural location belies the practice's use of the latest in digital radiography and IT systems, ensuring the technical back-up behind the personal service delivered.

'We prioritise patient care and comfort with traditional service values. Our aim is to treat patients' immediate dental requirements then provide them with the correct tools to maintain their dental health and reduce their future dental need,' said Dr Parker. 'We believe that by clearly communicating this message to patients it can really encourage them to take control of their dental future.'

The launch event was well attended by local dignitaries and villagers and a champagne draw raised £30 for the Yorkshire Air Ambulance.

## SHARPS MANAGEMENT SERVICE LAUNCHED

Leading healthcare service SRCL has launched a new sharps management service to make disposal of the thousands of needles used in healthcare safer and greener. The service will see sharps boxes emptied, cleaned and re-circulated, helping to reduce the thousands of tonnes of plastic being incinerated each year.

The service also helps to reduce the risk of needlestick injuries to healthcare staff. SRCL, who own the web portals First Practice Management and Dental Practice Management, will undertake complete management of sharps waste to reduce risk, using their own technicians to assemble, distribute and collect bins from their point of use.

Once collected, sharps boxes are then opened, emptied and disinfected at SRCL's

new sharps recycling plant in Leeds. The process uses automated robotics to remove all infectious material, which is incinerated, while the boxes are sent through a high temperature wash process. The robust boxes have a lifecycle of around 200 uses, compared to the traditional single use approach. This will make far better use of what is an expensive and energy-intensive product to manufacture and will save thousands of tonnes of plastic from being incinerated each year.

Ensuring effective infection control is one of the main issues for healthcare staff when it comes to reusable sharps containers. Once SRCL's sharps recycling plant is fully operational this summer, an hourly testing regime will confirm that the process is sanitising bins to the correct

standard. The system will operate to relevant quality standards and at a temperature far in excess of what it required. The process is independently validated.

To find out more about the sharps management service from SRCL, visit [www.srcl.com](http://www.srcl.com) or telephone 0333 240 4400.

