

NHS LANARKSHIRE WIN 'DENTAL OSCAR'

The NHS Lanarkshire Oral Health Team were announced winners at the Dental Awards 2008, the tenth anniversary of the event, during a gala dinner at the Royal Lancaster Hotel in London.

The team took the title of Overall Team of the Year 2008 in the awards, which are regarded among industry professionals as the 'Dental Oscars'.

The Oral Health Team worked with North Lanarkshire Council and the NHS Lanarkshire Health Promotion unit to produce an innovative animated DVD called 'Harry at the Zoo'.

The DVD has also been chosen as an educational resource in the British Dental Health Foundation Product Catalogue.

The story was written by the Oral Health Team, and ten primary schools from North Lanarkshire were involved in providing the animation and even the voices for some of the characters in the DVD.

It was this working partnership that really impressed the judges of the Dental Awards.

Elaine Sharp, senior oral health educator, said: 'The DVD has been a really successful project, demonstrating everyone's ability to work together to promote National Smile Month.'

As oral health is one of the most challenging messages to convey to children, the team

decided that the best way to do so was by making a DVD and putting some fun into the message.

Albert Yeung, consultant in dental public health, said: 'Not only does this DVD make an effective tool for oral health education, the whole process has been most creative, having involved school children from ten primary schools in the production.'

Albert had an additional reason to celebrate, as he also



From left, Comper Fred MacAuley, Senior Oral Health Educator of NHS Lanarkshire Elaine Sharp, Chairman of Denplan David Phillips OBE, Consultant in Dental Public Health of NHS Lanarkshire Albert Yeung, and Quality Improvement Officer of North Lanarkshire Council Education Department Paul McKendrick.

won the Star Prize that evening – £1,000 holiday vouchers.

The prize money was used to partially fund his trip in July 2008 to attend the Annual Conference of the International Association for Dental Research held in Toronto, where he presented the findings of another innovative project that had been developed by the NHS Lanarkshire Oral Health Team.

ENSURING SAFE PRACTICE

Angie McBain, president of the British Association of Dental Nurses, will speak on professionalism in the dental team at a conference on legal and ethical issues in dentistry in London on 9 October. Other speakers at the conference, organised by Action Against Medical Accidents (AVMA), include Hugh Smith, head of the dental complaints service and Janet Fiske, senior lecturer in sedation and special care dentistry at King's Dental Institute. Derek Prentice, lay member of the GDC, will talk on quality assuring the dental team of tomorrow.

Sally Taber, of the Independent Health-care Advisory Service, will explore the issues raised by cosmetic treatments.

Details on www.avma.org.uk.

DCPs IN SPECIAL CARE DENTISTRY

The Irish Society for Disability and Oral Health is keen to set up a network for dental nurses, hygienists and therapists who work in special care dentistry.

Details are available from Tina Gorman, director of nursing Dublin Dental School. Email: tina.gorman@dental.tcd.ie

Want to feature in Vital?

Get in touch with your article ideas or volunteer yourself as an interviewee. Email vital@nature.com.



She now owns two private practices in Morpeth and Cramlington, and a six-surgery NHS practice in Blyth, where she had to work with the PCT to reapply for the contract. She is now looking at acquiring a fourth practice. 'Not bad for a 34-year-old,' said Louise.

HYGIENIST BUYS PRACTICES

Louise Parker has always wanted to own her own business. So after 13 years working as a dental hygienist she has bought three practices in Northumberland, where she employs nine dentists, four practice managers and a therapist. And she still works four days a week as a hygienist. Louise, who qualified in Newcastle in 1995 and was BDA hygienist of the year, graduated with first class honours in Health Studies from Sunderland

University in 2000, and has worked as a community health promotion officer and lectured to transplant patients on oral health.

'I have always been interested in owning my own practice and when the Dentists Act changed in 2006 this became achievable. My father is a businessman and mentor and has supported me 101%', she said.

'But it was a lot of hard work drawing up business plans and having only my father for guidance as I seem to be the first hygienist to have bought practices. There was no one to ask for advice. I just had to do it.'