Funding boost for vocational training

Vocational training continues to flourish in South Central following successful bids by 32 dental training practices for NESC capital grants.

In December 2008, 20 surgeries were awarded maintenance grants of up to £30,000 to increase training capacity.

“The money helps support training practices to continue to provide vocational training for dentists who have just graduated,” said Branwen Thomas, Project Assistant. “These bids were a first for NESC and we are delighted that we received such a positive response.”

“Your grant has helped our practice immensely,” said Navdip Sandhu of Winnersh Dental Practice in Wokingham. “I don’t think I could ever have got a new staff room without your help. The staff are so happy with the facilities. They’ve got broadband access and new library facilities for access to all study material. It’s brought up the morale of the practice.”

Staff at Winnersh check out their new facilities, which are nearing completion with the facilities. They’ve got broadband access and new library facilities for access to all study material. It’s brought up the morale of the practice.”

Make a date for John Rayne Memorial Lectures

Dental practitioners and their teams are urged to book smartly for the John Rayne Memorial Lectures and Dinner when bookings become available in June.

Hosted by the NESC Dental School on 10 September from 1pm at Lady Margaret Hall in Oxford. The event is always popular.

It’s held in memory of the late John Rayne, Postgraduate Dental Dean at Oxford Deanery and a former President of the British Dental Association.

This year’s invited speakers include Professor Farida Fortune from Barts and the London School of Dentistry, and University College London’s Professor Andrew Steptoe and Dr Andy McEwen. The topics covered are oral ulceration, depression and physical illness, smoking as an addiction and diabetes.

“It’s an opportunity for members of the profession, from all spheres of dentistry, to join together in a prestigious conference at an attractive venue,” said Graham Smart, Associate Dental Dean.

“We anticipate the event will prove popular and expect the lecture room will be full, so please book the date in your diaries now.”

If you plan to attend as an individual or a dental team you can book your places online from June at www.nesc.nhs.uk
Interested in vocational training?

The dental therapist vocational training scheme is currently accepting applications from general dental practitioners and dental therapists to participate as trainers.

Based around the vocational training model for dentists, the therapist trainees spend three days a week in an approved practice supported by their trainer. Features of the scheme include a monthly day release programme, a learning portfolio and educational assessments. The aim of the scheme is to consolidate the newly qualified dental therapists’ clinical skills in the workplace, and to improve and enhance their knowledge and experience post qualification.

In order to apply to be a therapist vocational (TVT) trainer you must have been qualified for a minimum of three years, be available to supervise the trainee and have a spare surgery for three days a week for the full academic year, and have personally completed 1,500 Units of Dental Activity (UDA’s) each year.

“Trainers will benefit in a number of ways,” said Kira Hammond, Dental Therapist Vocational Training Advisor. “Dental therapists can carry out a range of treatments on all patient groups, this can assist in developing a team approach to care in practice, as well as allowing the dentist to focus on the more complex treatments. Vocational trainers take part in a number of educational and training courses throughout the year which are provided by NESC, and enjoy the opportunity to meet with colleagues and network within the local dental community.”

TVT trainer Vivak Shah said: “I have thoroughly enjoyed training this year. Dental therapists are able to carry out a number of different restorative treatments and periodontal therapy, and most importantly they add a preventive dimension to an general practice which is beneficial to long term care.

The therapist and I have learnt a lot from each other and have developed a preventative regime for patients that will ensure long-term stability. Patients have not had to wait as long for treatment and have been motivated by the therapist’s care and manner. “

If you are interested in applying to be a trainer you can find more information on www.nesc.nhs.uk or contact the TVT administrator, Angela Evans on 01865 740616 (Tues/Thurs) or aevans@oxford-pgmde.co.uk Final application deadline is Monday 11th May 2009.

Isle of Wight gains accreditation

Full accreditation by the National Examining Board for Dental Nurses has been awarded to the NESC Training Programme for Dental Nurses at the Riverside Centre in Newport on the Isle of Wight.

Vicky Goode, who has been a dental nurse since 1970, was appointed NESC’s Dental Nurse Tutor on the Island five years ago and teaches the National Certificate for Dental Nurses at the centre.

The rolling programme funded by NESC at the centre means dental nurses can enrol any time, which allows employers to comply with the law with regard to student dental nurses.

Vicky achieves more than a 95 per cent pass rate on the course compared to a national average of 60 per cent.

“With accreditation we can continue to teach to high standards and people can have confidence that students are learning in a centre that’s accredited and quality assured.”

Vicky Goode, Dental Nurse Tutor

Around 45 of the Island’s dental nurses were trained through Vicky and NESC at the Riverside Centre.

Dental Nurse Tutors’ network group grows in Thames Valley

The Thames Valley Network Tutor Group is growing in popularity, attracting more members every time it meets.

“We often work in isolation and the members are drawn to the group by the chance to support one another,” said DCP Development Tutor Hazel Coey, who coordinates the group, which is facilitated through NESC.

At the third meeting in March, 13 tutors and training providers from a wide variety of backgrounds met in Oxford to discuss their roles and issues such as entry criteria, learning support, quality assurance and the NVQ and National Certificate assessment processes.

The group, which has a sister network in the south of the region, meets three times a year and welcomes new members.

For more information, please contact Hazel Coey on 07826 890 830 or email hazel.coey@nesc.nhs.uk

For Hampshire/IOW, contact Leanne Covey on 07753 884317 or email leanne.covey@nesc.nhs.uk for details.

New tutors meet in March
Are students missing out?

Students and trainees on an education or training programme run by the NESC Dental School are in danger of missing out on a free resource.

“There’s an enormous amount of literature available in local NHS libraries but this tremendous resource is being underused,” said Dental Tutor Kevin Atkinson.

NHS libraries are based in hospital postgraduate centres and offer free and unique support for students studying all aspects of dentistry, especially when used with a combination of resources such as Amazon and Google Scholar.

“After registering as a member, students can use a library for free and unlike buying online, there are librarians with the expertise to find you what you want straight away,” added Kevin.

It’s no longer even necessary to visit a library to borrow books or get photocopies as they are now contactable by phone or email. However, students then miss out on a quiet study space, computers and staff who can help.

An online catalogue of books and journals is also available on the South & West Information Management System (SWIMS).

“If you can’t find what you’re looking for, students can always ask a librarian or send their suggestions to me at helen.bingham@nesc.nhs.uk,” said Helen Bingham, Library and E-Learning Resources Manager. “We are always looking for ideas to boost library resources for dental care professionals and students.”

Registered dental practitioners or those who provide care to NHS patients also have free access to databases and e-journals purchased by the NHS via a NHS Athens account. Registration can be done online or ask a local NHS library for help and advice.

Useful websites

Local library locations and to register for membership – www.hlisd.org
Online catalogue of books and journals – www.swims.nhs.uk
To register for a NHS Athens account – www.library.nhs.uk/athens

LDC team day promotes Three E’s

A Local Dental Committee (LDC) team day has armed 85 dentists and team members in Northamptonshire with an action plan to put Ethics, Efficiency and Effectiveness into practice.

The team day at Kettering Conference Centre in February was the first to be sponsored by Northamptonshire LDC and the NESC.

“It went very well,” said Dental Tutor Kevin Atkinson. “A mix of dentists, nurses and administrative staff turned up to discuss the Three E's, which are essential to building a first-class NHS service.”

The evaluation of the course was good, with delegates praising the chance to network and meet others from around the county.

“It was such a success that I think there’s a good chance that it could become an annual conference sponsored by the LDC and NESC,” added Kevin.

Courses offer chance to network with technicians

The chance to exchange views during training courses is proving to be an unforeseen benefit of registration for all dental care professionals.

Courses are just one way that technicians, dentists and nurses are now able to meet face-to-face and exchange views. Previously the main contact with a technician was probably via the telephone or a scribbled lab note.

“As a tutor I found it quite satisfying at a recent basic life support course in Reading to see the whole team able to interact in a relaxed atmosphere over a cup of coffee at the breaks between lectures”

Ann Davidson, Postgraduate Dental Tutor for East Berkshire.

The technicians present agreed that they now felt more involved and part of the dental team and welcomed the joint courses.

Mentoring Workshops for Lead Dental Nurses

The first mentoring workshop took place in Oxford in February. The workshops are for mentors and supervisors of trainee dental nurses in practice. With introduction of the Record of Experience for students to complete, the evaluations were positive.

DCP vacancies

NESC are searching for DCPs to become practice facilitators and DCP tutors in the near future. Check the NESC website for details of these exciting new posts. Or contact Hazel Coey on 07826 890 830 or email hazel.coey@nesc.nhs.uk
You know when you’ve been Mango Tangoed!

Anyone who thinks it’s too hot to tango should try driving in India in a rickety three-wheeled 150cc rickshaw that continually breaks down!

Last winter Ann Davidson, Postgraduate Dental Tutor for East Berkshire, was persuaded by her friend Sarah Carrington to take part in the Rickshaw Run – a two-week drive for charity in an auto-rickshaw across the Subcontinent - a 2,000-mile trek from Pondicherry to Shillong.

“I was extremely nervous and could not even start it, let alone drive it” said Ann. “But by the end of the journey I think I knew everything about a two-stroke engine and could probably build one from scratch. We named the Mango Tango Tour Bus.”

The Rickshaw Run route is so tough that the trek’s organisers call it an ‘un-route’. Once the journey starts, participants receive no support and have to find their own way, stopping wherever they can to find shelter.

The bus could only manage 25mph. At one point its exhaust fell off, the lights failed to work and more importantly the horn stopped working, but the intrepid pair stopped in a village where a mechanic soon had them back on the road.

“We were impressive by the generosity and friendliness of the Indian people,” said Ann. “They will do all they can to help and we were never broken down for long before we had a crowd of would-be mechanics surrounding us.”

After a journey involving fear of kidnap by separatists in Assam, where they were given a hotel guard, and the near-confiscation of their cameras at the Gandhi Bridge, Ann and Sarah finished 24th out of 58 entrants – the first all-female team to cross the finishing line.

They raised £2,800 for two charities that help disadvantaged people in India – the Mercy Corps and Frank Water project – and are still collecting.

If you’d like to contribute, please visit www.justgiving.co.uk/mangotango

Berkshire VT scheme to go live

The new Berkshire Vocational Training Scheme will start in August 2009 with VT trainees working in the 12 training practices on the scheme.

It’s the first time that Berkshire has had a specific VT programme and its addition to NESC reflects the rising number of dentists completing their undergraduate courses.

“It’s been an amazing year with a lot of preparation needed to get to this point,” said Carlos Clark, VT Adviser for Berkshire VT scheme. “The vocational trainees will face a lot of hard work but fun too throughout the year. It can be daunting going in to general practice but our trainers and all those connected with the Deanery hope to make this transition enjoyable and trouble free.”

The trainers on the new scheme are a mix of experienced and established trainers from the Oxford and Wessex VT scheme and a group of new trainers with a huge enthusiasm for their roles.

Carlos is now organising a programme of lectures using adult learning theories and matching to the competencies in the F1 and F2 Dental Curriculum. The year will also include a trip to Chicago for the annual conference and team building exercises in the New Forest.

Carlos will soon be recruiting an administrator at Wexham Park. In the interim he had invaluable support from Brenda Leach at Oxford Deanery and Barbara Pearce in Wessex Deanery as well as all the existing advisors in all three of the existing schemes in NESC.

NESC Dental Website changes make an impact

Course bookings have increased since changes were made to the Dental School website as a result of user feedback.

Improvements to the site saw a new shopping cart facility installed in March. It gives people the chance to book lots of courses at the same time, as well as booking on behalf of many other people.

Searching for courses is simpler too.

“We made the changes in response to customer demand,” said Course Coordinator Liz Hennessy. “We’re sure it must be liked because bookings are already up. It’s important to us to continue responding to our users’ needs.”

Phase 1 saw the online credit card payment facility go live in June last year.

If anyone has any comments or would like to suggest other improvements, email liz.hennessy@nesc.nhs.uk

We want to hear from you!

If you would like to contribute or comment on this newsletter please email liz.hennessy@nesc.nhs.uk

This newsletter will be produced three times a year, the next copy deadline is: 31 July 2009
Scope for development

New guidance from the General Dental Council provides dental teams with information on the supplementary skills needed to further the scope of their practice.

Entitled Scope of Practice – who can do what in the dental team, the guidance was sent to all GDC registrants in January, including dentists and dental care professional groups.

It describes what each group is trained and competent to do and covers knowledge, skills and experience. For dental nurses, it explains the clinical work their post requires and details additional skills they could develop during their career, such as oral health education.

Also included are skills that could only be developed on a dentist’s prescription such as taking dental radiographs.

“It’s an exciting time for all DCPs, as career pathways can now be considered, especially when considering Personal Development Plans (PDPs) and Continuing Professional Development (CPD),” said Hazel Coey, NESC DCP Development Tutor.

For more information please visit www.gdc-urg.org

More ways to add to your skills

The NESC Dental School team is discussing ways to offer further training and developing courses to enhance skills and competencies.

Plans are already under way for extended application of fluoride varnish and oral health education.

All courses can be accessed through the NESC Dental School website. Visit www.nesc.nhs.uk, click on Dental School and then courses.