Guidance clarifies developing DCP roles

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.

It describes what each group is trained and competent to do on qualification 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 and fluoride varnish application.

Also included are skills that could be developed and put into practice on a dentist’s prescription, such as taking dental radiographs.

So you want to be a trainer?

NESC is looking for 24 new Dental Foundation places (Vocational Training in General Dental Practice).

If you are interested, please come along to one of our courses:

Aims and objectives:
• Explain the obligations and the role of trainers in practice
• Describe the organisation of the DFT schemes
• Inform regarding the financial benefits of training in practice
• Discuss with existing trainers their VT experience
• Help to prepare for a successful application as a trainer

Applications for training open on 1 September, with a closing date of 30 September.

Hands-on infection control training

New washer-disinfectors are to be included in decontamination units installed at three dental skill centres.

NESC has funded the purchase and installation of automated washer disinfectors at postgraduate centres in Wexham Park Hospital in Slough, Winchester Hospital and Stoke Mandeville Hospital in Buckinghamshire.

Dental Care Professionals attending our courses will be able to try out the equipment, which will give them a taste of what it’s like to work in a real clinical setting.

Making sure instruments are thoroughly cleaned using a washer disinfector before sterilisation reduces the risk of inoculation injury to dental teams compared to manual cleaning in a sink or bowl.

“The driving force behind the guidance is to reduce the risk of blood borne viruses and prion transmission through protein contamination,” said Mike Norton, Associate Dental Dean.

The aim is to help everyone in primary care dental services to work to the same standards of decontamination as outlined by the Department of Health’s Health Technical Memorandum 01-05.

The Memo recommends washer-disinfectors because they ‘offer the best option for the control and reproducibility of cleaning, in addition, the cleaning process can be validated’.

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 30 November 2009.
Another successful year for Vocational Training

NESC Dental Vocational Dental Practitioners (VDPs) and their Advisers celebrated the end of year recently.

All VDPs completed at least two of the Faculty of General Dental Practice’s key skills, with several finishing all five.

Prizes were awarded for best case presentations and critical reviews of new dental equipment and materials. Winners were: Elizabeth Harris and Christopher Trickett from Winchester, Michael Clark and Ruth Williams from Northampton and Jonathan Roberts and Katrina Griffin from Oxford.

Valeinder Singh Basie and Usha Shah chose to carry out voluntary work in Cambodia after being selected from all NESC VDPs to make use of Steve Brookes’ Trainer of the Year prize money for a dental charity project.

Foundation training for dentistry – NESC schemes

From this year, VDPs are to be called Foundation Dentists and a structured two-year training programme will be introduced with new graduates encouraged to take part in a second year to broaden knowledge and build on their first year in general practice.

NESC schemes more popular than ever

“We had 288 applicants for 49 Year 1 (VT) places this year,” said Nick Prest.

NESC has four Year 1 Foundation schemes based in Northamptonshire, Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Hampshire and two Year 2 schemes based in Oxford and Southampton/Portsmouth.

Smile-On and NESC launch e-learning course

NESC Dental School has teamed up with publisher Smile-On to produce an e-learning programme called Prevention in Practice.

The course supports dentists and teams to put in practice evidence-based preventative care as described in the toolkit: ‘Delivering Better Oral Health’.

“It shows how the toolkit can be applied for real in a practice setting and within the current NHS contact,” said Helen Falcon, Postgraduate Dean.

Each programme provides two hours of verifiable CPD for up to 10 dental team members and will be updated regularly as new versions of the toolkit are published.

“Preventing disease and improving health are the most important actions we can take with, and for, our patients and all the dental team can engage with it,” added Helen. “Helping to develop this practical educational material was very special and we were delighted to get involved.”

The package is being sold through smile-on.com.

Last year’s UK Dental Vocational Teacher of the Year, Steve Brookes, has stepped back into a VT Adviser role four years after leaving the Oxford scheme.

Steve worked for Oxford for five years, finishing in 2005. “I loved it but I felt I had taken the scheme as far as I could,” said Steve, who’s also been a trainer in Northampton for 19 years.

“Then I realised I missed working with young dentists and wanted to give something back.”

NESC’s Associate Dean Shalin Mehra has run the Northamptonshire scheme since 1990. He had wanted to reduce his workload but didn’t wish to give up vocational training.

“The role was advertised nationally and I went through the recruitment process along with the other hopeful and was offered the job,” said Steve.

Shalin Mehra Steve Brookes

The pair will take it in turns to be in attendance and have split the four VT domains between them, Steve taking on Clinical Skills and Communications, while Shalin focuses on Leadership and Management, and Professionalism.

He and Shalin began their joint role in June and took on a new group on 1 August.

‘Simulating’ start to new dental nurse degree

A fully functional, state-of-the-art new dental suite opens in September at the University of Northamptonshire.

With its replica dental surgery, the suite will give students on the foundation degree (RGN) in dental nursing the ability to link theory with practical application.

“The facility will very improve development, confidence and competence,” said Dental Tutor Kevin Atkinson. “Students can practice on a simulator and the suite has the potential to be a teaching surgery.”

The foundation degree is new and includes 20 students in the first intake. It offers a blend of theory based modules and work placements over a two-year period.

“It’s a more academic qualification for dental nurses than we have had before, and will complement the other qualifications such as the National Certificate and the NQO. Practices that are considering taking on a trainee can apply.

The student will be able to use the practice in their work placement,” added Kevin, who was on the steering committee advising the university on setting up the course.

The course includes an opportunity for placement in the second year in a specialised dental practice or clinic.

New VT by Assessment Adviser in post

VT by Assessment is the way that non UK qualified dentists can achieve a VT certificate to practice in the NHS.

Dental Tutor Kevin Atkinson has taken over as VT by Assessment Adviser for NESC. Nick Prest had previously been supporting practices as well as lecturing on VT across the country.

Kevin and Mike Norton, Associate Dental Dean, have already looked at the support they can give the trainers and trainees and how the system is administered to ensure no delays in the process.

The role is not entirely new to Kevin as he was involved in the early days of VT by Equivalence, when the idea of giving training to overseas dentists first came about. He enjoyed it so much that he jumped at the chance of getting involved in the present scheme when the role was advertised.

Kevin said: “Providing educational support for graduates from outside the UK who haven’t gone through a VT scheme is really exciting for me.

I look forward to improving and inspiring the continual stream of our colleagues looking to get a performer number.”

If anyone has a query about VT by Assessment, please contact: Kevin Atkinson KAtkinson57@aol.com or Mike Norton mike.norton@nesc.nhs.uk

Steve Review author answers dentists’ questions

Dentists will get the chance to quiz Professor Jimmy Steele about his independent review of NHS dental services in England at a NESC-organised event in August.

Professor Steele from Newcastle University, who was the reviewers leading author, will visit the University of Portsmouth to discuss the proposals.

They include paying NHS dentists according to the number of patients registered, removing perverse incentives for poor treatment or unnecessary repeat visits, and incentivising them for taking on new patients and building good relationships with current ones and improving quality.

The Government accepted the proposals, which aim to end the ‘drip and fill’ culture, in principle in June. A series of pilot trials will now begin.

The meeting will take place on the afternoon of the 28th August at the Portland Building, University of Portsmouth.

To book your place, please go to www.nesc.nhs.uk. Follow the links to Dental School/Dental Courses.

Success for student quintet

Five Dental Nurse Blended Learning Scheme students passed their National Exam Board for Dental Nurses (NEBDN) National Certificate Exams in May.

The students were Vicky Cooke, Sarah Crawford, Charlotte Harris, Olivia de Banks and Stevie Edwards. There were 1,701 candidates in the UK in May – just five received Distinctions with only 39 given Merits. One of them was Steve.

“Dr Miles means Steve’s answers were nigh on perfect’’

Hazel Coey, DCP Development Tutor.

The five students will now be able to register with the General Dental Council.

New DNBLS courses are starting this summer. Contact Hazel at hazel.coey@nesc.nhs.uk or telephone 07826 890 830 for information.

Set a date for CPD courses

New CPD courses are being developed, and we want to know what you would like to see on the course calendar.

Contact Hazel Coey at hazel.coey@nesc.nhs.uk or telephone 07826 890 830 with any suggestions you may have.