

New technicians eye prize

Newly trained and student technicians could have the chance to win a cheque for £250 plus a free weekend at the Orthodontic Technicians Association (OTA) Annual Conference in Cardiff if they win the 5th British Orthodontic Society Technicians Award.

The OTA, in conjunction with the British Orthodontic Society, has announced details of the annual award, which aims to encourage student technicians and recently qualified technicians to take up a career in orthodontic technology.

Entry is open to any UK student dental technicians on a recognised first level dental technology course and to technicians qualified for less than two years at the time of the competition closing date.

The award will take the form of a competition and will include a set-piece appliance on a model supplied and a free choice appliance on a model chosen by the entrant. The closing date for applications is 1st December 2003.

For more information contact www.orthota.freereserve.co.uk



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Hospital ship begins new voyage

The world's largest private hospital ship Mercy Ships M/V Anastasis has recently set off for Sierra Leone after docking in Sunderland in the UK to pick up volunteers and supplies for its next voyage.

The Anastasis is one of three vessels belonging to Mercy Ships, an international charity founded on a Christian ethos, now in its 25th year, which takes medical aid and development assistance to poor and developing nations.

The fleet consists of the M/V Caribbean Mercy, the M/V Africa Mercy and the flagship, M/V Anastasis. With a dental team on board all the time, the Anastasis is staffed with an all-volunteer crew of 350 including doctors, nurses, surgeons as well as back up teams of ancillary staff – some who have spent years on board the vessel.

On its most recent trip, also to Sierra Leone, the ships' dental team set up dental clinics in villages and treated 1403 patients in 3447 appointments, over a three month period.

Dental nurses, therapists and hygienists from all over the world volunteer to work on the ship from periods ranging from two weeks to two months. Members of the whole dental team from Canada, Brazil, America, Europe, India, and Malaysia have all volunteered to work on the hospital ship during its stays in many different countries. During its current trip, the dental team will set up a clinic at the Princess Christian Maternity Hospital in downtown Freetown, and will work together with local staff to treat patients and educate on oral health issues.

New volunteers are always needed to support the outreach expeditions. For more information contact Mercy Ships on 01438 727 800 or www.mercyships.org.uk.

Day for winners



Rowen White Photographic

The British Orthodontic Conference in Bournemouth was awash with winners this year. Lucie Watkins (above), an orthodontic dental nurse from the Orthodontic Centre in Cardiff, won the title of Orthodontic Dental Nurse of 2003.

Margaret Mason from Sutton Coldfield won the Dental Nurse Prize Award 2003 competition. Richard Newington of Canterbury was awarded the Distinguished Technician Award for giving exceptional service to the profession during a long career which started in 1954.

NVQ success in Leicester

Dental Nurse Lindsey Baker, from the IDH Clarendon Road Dental Practice in Hinckley, was one of the first dental nurses in Leicestershire to receive an Oral Healthcare NVQ for dental nursing this year.

Lindsey gained her NVQ from the examining board for dental nurses after 15 months of training. This qualification is not yet available in Leicestershire, so for Lindsey to achieve her NVQ a tutor came from Coventry to take her through the 14 units.

The Level 3 NVQ in Oral Healthcare is to become the main registrable qualification for dental nurses. For further information on NVQs, see our feature story on page 24.



Mouth cancer update on-line



With Mouth Cancer Awareness Week just around the corner, the BDA is inviting all members of the dental team to access a comprehensive guide to screening of the disease via its website.

The occasional paper on screening for oral cancer in general dental practice entitled *Opportunistic screening for oral cancer – A management strategy for dental practice* is now available as a downloadable information resource at www.bda.org.

The paper, first published in April 2000, examines all steps necessary to set up an effective screening programme in practice. Oral Cancer week is from 9-15 November 2003.

Top of the class



The first graduates of BSc Oral Health Science at the University Dental Hospital of Manchester recorded a 100 per cent success rate and the new graduates will be employed as both hygienists and therapists.

Professor Blinkhorn and Dr Mackie, joint programme directors, were fulsome in their praise of the new graduates who they believe will become leaders in their chosen professions.

Class of 2003. **Back Row:** Deirdre Harper, Samantha Wright, Carolyne Short and Lee-Anne Griesel **Middle Row:** Charlotte Alkemade, Danielle Goodall-Keen, Catherine Hunt, Frances Sands **Front Row:** Shelley Coates, Rebecca Aston, Justine Carver and Claire Trobridge



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