Dental practice wins National Loo Award



Aimee Driscoll (receptionist, TRUSTDental) with James Main (principal dentist and owner, TRUSTDental) and their awards

At the 2024 National Loo of the Year Awards held on 15 January 2025, TRUSTDental, a private dental practice in Somerset, was awarded the best loo nationally in the Healthcare sector, runner-up in the washroom technician for England and the prestigious Chairman's Trophy for having one of the best loos nationally overall. TRUSTDental is the first and only dental practice to have ever won this national award.

James Main, principal dentist and owner of TRUSTDental, said: 'The dental practice loo is one of the most important rooms in a dental practice as it is often the first place that patients will go, and for many patients who are anxious about coming to the dentist it is the one room in the practice where they have their own space and can feel less anxious if it is a nice environment. Unfortunately, whilst dental practices may invest in their surgeries or waiting areas the practice loo is often given lip service.'

By winning the National Loo of the Year Award, TRUSTDental hopes to raise the profile of the dental practice toilet and how this important space can be an important part of making dental patients feel less anxious.

The awards, established more than 35 years ago, are the culmination of a search to find the best 'away from home' loos in the UK. Inspectors travel the country to find the best loos and each is assessed against 101 judging criteria – including fixtures, accessibility, and overall standards of cleanliness. Each loo is awarded a grade ranging from Bronze to Diamond. TRUSTDental was awarded Diamond grade, the highest grade possible. ✧

North London Dental Health Lead appointed to national post

Dr Rakhee Patel has been appointed as a Deputy Chief Dental Officer for England.

The Office of the Chief Dental Officer England represents the head of the dental profession in England, providing system wide professional and clinical leadership, by setting the strategic vision for England's oral health.

Dr Patel will bring her professional knowledge and understanding of NHS dental care systems to her new role, maintaining momentum in the transformation of NHS dental services at a local and national level.

Dr Patel said: 'Oral health is a central part of a person's overall health and wellbeing. I'm excited to be taking up this national role so that we can bring further improvements to people.'

Dr Patel has worked across Barnet, Enfield, Haringey, Camden and Islington as a Consultant in Dental Public Health since 2016, with a focus on health protection, ageing well and supporting North Central London Integrated Care Board (ICB), and is the Dental Clinical Lead. In that position, she led the setting up of Dental Transformation and Collaboration networks, which bring together dental commissioners, teams and wider partners to shape collaborative, evidence-based and impact-focused programmes for patients in north London.

These have been developed with local authority public health and dental teams to take a whole-life approach with a variety of



Dr Rakhee Patel

different approaches, including increasing oral care training in care homes, developing a dental care pathway with GPs for diabetic patients, and partnering with the Tottenham Hotspur Foundation to pilot an oral health and physical activity programme in primary schools.

Dr Patel said she felt her new national role was complementary to her other work, including locally within North Central London: 'The proactive and innovative approaches taken by the North Central London ICB towards oral health are exemplary. I have had the privilege of working with forward-thinking commissioners, clinicians and academics across London who have come together to drive improvements for our local communities.

'I'm proud to be part of developing and delivering our vision for dental care, which support patients to prevent oral diseases and improves their oral health as part of their overall health.'

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GDC seeks new Chair and Council Members

The General Dental Council (GDC) has launched recruitment campaigns for a new Chair of Council and two Council Member positions.

The GDC hopes to identify a successor to Lord Toby Harris as its Chair, who can be either lay or registrant, and two new lay Council Members. An additional lay Council Member position may become available if a dental professional is appointed as Chair.

Applications are open until 24 February for candidates with an interest in dental regulation who share the GDC's vision for a system of regulation that supports the provision of safe, effective oral health care.

For further information about the roles, including details about how to apply, visit https://www.saxbam.com/candidate-opportunities/. Alternatively, email Belinda.beck@saxbam.com.

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