

Success All Round for Northern Ireland's GP's

The Royal College of General Practitioners Northern Ireland celebrated its eighth Annual Awards Evening in the Dunadry Hotel in Antrim on the 28th November 2009. The event was attended by over 200 guests who ventured out on a cold night as the run up to the festive season commenced. Described by many as "A great night!" "A pleasure to attend!" and "Truly rewarding!" the night could only be described as a resounding success and undoubtedly captured the Christmas Party atmosphere.

The evening provides general practice with one of the few opportunities to celebrate the good work that is done in this area on a daily basis, and the contribution it makes to society. Several Awards were presented on the night the first of which was the RCGP Northern Ireland **Practice Accreditation Award** won by the Campbell Surgery from Dungannon, Co Tyrone.



From L to R: Campbell Surgery team from Dungannon, who were awarded Practice Accreditation by Tim Lowry from GlaxoSmithKline

Following this was the **Patient Nomination Award** which allows patients to nominate their GP for outstanding care over and above the normal expectations. RCGP Northern Ireland value this award as so little opportunity is given to allow the recognition of excellent care, and is proud to say that this award has grown each year with the numbers of patients nominating their GPs increasing. This in itself can only be a good sign for primary care in Northern Ireland. The Winner of this award in 2008 was Dr Gerard O'Flaherty who kindly presented it to the winner this year, Dr Raman Murty from Dr Murty's surgery in Dungannon. Dr Murty was nominated by patient Catherine Montgomery who said, "The quality that makes Dr Murty special is his genuine concern for all his patients; it is more than a job to him. He tries every day to make a difference, and he does."

First runner up in the category was Dr Emmylou Large of Connswater Family Practice, Hollywood Arches Belfast and second runner up was Dr Enda Cullen of the Botanic Medical Centre in Belfast.

The evening also saw the presentation of the **Practice Administration Team of the Year Award**, (sponsored by GlaxoSmithKline Northern Ireland), which recognises



From L to R: Dr Raman Murty (From Dr Murty's Surgery in Dungannon), winner of the Patient Nomination Award 2009 presented by Dr Gerard O'Flaherty (Winner 2008)

the hard work done by the practice team behind the scenes, who provide the back bone of the GP surgery. The winner in this category was the Templepatrick Surgery in Templepatrick who were delighted to receive the award.

First runner up for this award was the Hillhead Medical Practice in Belfast followed by 2nd runner up, the Maple Group Surgery in Lisnaskea (Co Fermanagh).



From L to R: The Templepatrick Surgery team from Templepatrick, who were awarded the Practice Administration Team of the Year Award 2009 by Tim Lowry from GlaxoSmithKline

Campbell Medical Practice in Dungannon were also finalists

Organised by the College each year, the **Practice Manager of the Year Award** acknowledges the work of practice managers in keeping their practices running smoothly. This year in particular, has been a very busy year for practice managers with Swine flu adding to the already pressurised environment in which they have to work and so to be nominated for this award was in itself a marvellous achievement. The accolade of Practice Manager of the year 2009 went to Sharon McGinley from the Oakleaf Medical Practice in Londonderry who was described by the judges as ‘Superwoman.’ Sharon was said to be ‘cool and calm under pressure and inspired confidence and enthusiasm within her team.’

First runner up was Christina Breen, Orchard Family Practice, Londonderry and second runner up was Janice Russell of Templepatrick Surgery, Templepatrick who was described by her colleagues as “A friend to her team and one of the girls.” Anne Frances Byers of Cuan Surgery in Portaferry, was also a finalist.

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From L to R: Dr David Johnston (Chairman, RCGP Northern Ireland) presenting Practice Manager of the Year Award 2009 to Sharon McGinley of the Oakleaf Medical Practice in Londonderry.

Finding A Cure...for Compulsive Doom & Gloom

I recently read that a new disease has been discovered. It is called OCD. Now this is not the Obsessive Compulsive Disorder that you may have heard of, but rather a new condition known as obsessive compulsive doom and gloom.

Apparently it can be quite contagious and it effects some professional groups more than others. Indeed, I am told that it has reached pandemic proportions among journalists and those who work in the media and worse still they have a form of the disease that is not sensitive to the usual treatments and no vaccine has yet been developed!

While it is easy to joke about the current climate, I would not want to underestimate the challenges that face us. There will be personal challenges for GPs as we think about what the new revalidation and regulatory processes will mean for each of us. There will be challenges for our profession as a whole as we plan the role and part general practice might play in the future health service and specifically, here in Northern Ireland, the impact of the review of public administration changes. Clearly our politicians and policymakers also face huge challenges as they work in the shadow of an unprecedented financial crisis.

I have an interest in architectural heritage, and recently reading about perhaps one of the most famous architects ever, Robert Adam, I was intrigued to discover that his family building firm were nearly bankrupted in the 1700s by, guess what, a credit crunch! Infact they turned the situation to their advantage, developed niche markets, prospered and as they say, the rest is history.

I once heard someone say that having spent a lot of money to attend Harvard Business School, their entire course could be summed up by saying there are only two ways to succeed – you either do things cheaper or you do them better. If we translate this into health service language, we are saying that to succeed we need to provide high quality care in a cost effective manner.

The well known work of Starfield, amongst others, demonstrates the cost effective nature of general practice, but I was particularly pleased to attend the 25th Anniversary celebrations of the ICGP in Dublin



Above: Dr David Johnston (Chairman, RCGP Northern Ireland) presenting his speech at the Awards Evening

several weeks ago when Prof Chris van Well from Holland, gave an eloquent presentation demonstrating the high quality outcomes for many conditions that are now being achieved in general practice.

So much of what we do in practice is intangible but nonetheless essential to the success of the health service and highly valued by patients.

The vision should be general practice led primary care working in partnership with Trusts to deliver the most effective, efficient and appropriate high quality service that every patient in Northern Ireland deserves.

I regularly see examples of high quality general practice, enthusiastic and innovative practice teams and satisfied patients day and daily GPs deal with uncertainty, we are flexible and dynamic and I believe these are the core skills that will ensure the future health service succeeds and that every patient has access to high quality care that really makes a difference.

Tonight is a celebration which I hope will serve as an effective vaccine against obsessive compulsive doom and gloom.

Thank you,

Dr David Johnston
RCGP Northern Ireland Chairman

The Night in Pictures



Top Left L to R: Staff from RCGP Russell Marriott, Angela McLaughlin, Jill Wilton, Diane Rich, Bronagh Monaghan and Lindsay Wallace along with Dr David Johnston (Chairman of RCGP Northern Ireland)



Top Right L to R: Dr Shirley Forshaw (Clanrye Surgery) who was awarded the Special Commendation Award by Mr Lonerghan

Middle Right L to R: Dr John O'Kelly presenting a certificate to Elaine Bungard of The Campbell Surgery in Dungannon who received Practice Accreditation



Bottom Left: Staff from Clanrye Surgery, Newry including Dr Shirley Forshaw a finalist for the Patient Nomination Award. (Also included are members of the Lonerghan Family)

Bottom Right: Dr David Johnston presenting a certificate to Janice Russell from the Templepatrick Surgery in Templepatrick who was 2nd runner up in the Practice Manager of the Year Award





Above, Front Row: Mrs Sally Ann Johnston, Mrs Dorothy Dunn, Dr Brian Dunn (Chairman of the General Practitioner Committee of the BMA), Mrs Christine Jendoubi (Director of Primary and Community Care at the Department of Health) and Ms Brieghe Donaghy

Back Row: Mr Tim Lowry (GlaxoSmithKline), Dr David Johnston (RCGP NI Chair), Mr Jim Wells (MLA) and Mr John Compton (Chief Executive of the Regional Health and Social Care Board)



Above: 1st Runner Up for Patient Nomination Award Dr Emmylou Large being presented with her certificate by Dr Gerard O'Flaherty

Below Middle: Staff from the Campbell Surgery, Dungannon who received the Practice Accreditation Award

Bottom Right, L to R: Dr Gerard O' Flaherty, Dr Siobhan Keery & Lindsay Wallace



Above: Dr Murty from Dr Murty's Surgery Dungannon, winner of the Patient Nomination Award being presented by his patient nominee Catherine Montgomery



Practice Managers Forum goes from strength to strength!

The Practice Managers Forum was set up in February 2009 to provide a network of support to practice managers giving them a platform to share information, ideas and views on the smooth running of practice life.

The Forum also provides practice managers with the opportunity to identify training needs within their own team. Based on this information (and demand throughout the province), RCGP Northern Ireland hope to run events tailored to meet those needs.

In response those requests and needs identified from the Forum, RCGP Northern Ireland recently organised two Quality and Outcomes Framework (QoF) training days in Antrim and Londonderry. The training was provided by Insight Solutions and the post event evaluation forms reflected how impressed everyone was with the content of the training they received.

The Forum currently has over 90 members and due to the positive feedback from practice managers using the Forum, numbers are increasing every day.

Please follow the link below to sign up.

<http://groups.google.com/group/practice-managers-forum-ni>

As a result of its success, we are now developing a practice managers website which we hope to launch in early spring.

Lord Patel seeks views from Northern Ireland GPs

A major review of the regulation of doctors' education and training has published its draft report, setting out 27 proposed recommendations for reform and calling for views from GPs in Northern Ireland.

Commissioned by the General Medical Council (GMC) and the Postgraduate Medical Education and Training Board, the independent review, chaired by Lord Naren Patel, spans the entire career of a doctor, from the first day at medical school to the last day in practice and covers issues specific to GP education and training.

The consultation on the draft report will run until 9th March 2010. Lord Patel is expected deliver his final report to the GMC at the end of March. To share your views, please visit: <https://gmc.e-consultation.net/econsult/default.aspx>.

Charitable Donation

NSPCC
NORTHERN IRELAND
Cruelty to children must stop. FULL STOP.

At the Annual Awards Gala in November, RCGP Northern Ireland held a raffle in aid of this years chosen charity the NSPCC. In total, over £1600 was raised on the evening by guests who attended.

NSPCC Northern Ireland works to protect local children and young people from abuse through counselling in schools, support for young witnesses, the NSPCC helpline for adults who have concerns about a child, and ChildLine, the free 24-hour confidential helpline for children in need of advice. The NSPCC aims to protect the most vulnerable children and young people in our community. To find out more about NSPCC visit www.nspcc.org.uk (Registered charity numbers 216401 and SC037717)

Once again, RCGP Northern Ireland would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who donated on the night for their kind generosity.



Above: Angela McLaughlin & Bronagh Monaghan presenting the cheque to Karen Walker at the NSPCC

QoF Update

In November 2009, RCGP Northern Ireland held two Qualities & Outcomes Frameworks (QoF) Training days in the Derry City Hotel and the Holiday Inn Express in Antrim. Each half day seminar was well attended with training provided by Matthew Diamond from Insight Solutions. The day provided a general update on QoF Business Rule Sets, QoF Software Updates, Disease Registers and much more including the main changes to disease areas. Sponsored by Pfizer, Stiefal, Merck Sharp Dohme and Bristol-Myers Squibb, both seminars were highly successful and it is anticipated that a similar event will be held in September 2010.

For further information, please contact the office on
T: 028 9023 0055



The Future of General Practice: A 10-year strategy

The Royal College of General Practitioners, Northern Ireland, in partnership with the British Medical Association, has taken the first unique step forward in mapping out a 10 year strategy for general practice.

The document entitled 'The Future of General Practice: A 10 Year Strategy' was launched at Stormont on the 20th of January and provides a strategic vision into how general practice can tackle future challenges within our health care system, whilst remaining focused on the future development of the profession. The strategy is the first attempt to highlight the issues to all concerned and offer solutions that will assist general practice and therefore the whole health service to thrive rather than just survive.

Commenting on the need for such a strategy Dr David Johnston, Chairman of the Northern Ireland Council, advocated that, "the strategy we are launching today is timely. Against the backdrop of new political structures and institutions, the review of public administration, professional regulation and governance changes, GPs, more than ever, need a strategy which will make sense of all the issues effecting general practice."



From L to R: Dr David Johnston (Chairman RCGP Northern Ireland), Dr Andrew McCormick, (Permanent Secretary to the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety) and Dr Brian Dunn (Chairman Northern Ireland General Practitioners Council)

The document was officially launched at Stormont by Dr Andrew McCormick, Permanent Secretary to the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety. Members, MLA's and Trusts of the legislative Assembly, GPs and patients from the voluntary sector, were represented at the event.

Speaking at the launch, Dr David Johnston put forward the view that general practice has reached a crossroads.



Above: Dr Andrew McCormick, (Permanent Secretary to the Department of Health, Social Services and Public

"We can empower general practice, GPs can rise to the challenges ahead and together we can build on all that has already been achieved or we can retreat, each ploughing our own little furrow, busy doing worthy things, no doubt, but never actually achieving our full potential either individually or as a service. We would be surviving but not thriving!"

Also launched was an information leaflet for patients, outlining the role of a GP, the services they may offer and how GPs coordinate patient care. 'You and Your GP' strongly conveys the message to patients that GPs deliver a very high quality service, provide great value for money and overall provide patients with an excellent experience. Guests in attendance left Stormont with the strong message that 'if we are all to move forward and genuinely improve patient care in Northern Ireland we must recognise that general practice is not the stumbling block but the solution.'



Above: Mr Steve McBride (Arthritis Care NI) and Mr Alan Braiden (Chairman, RCGP Northern Ireland Patients In Practice Group)

GPs within Northern Ireland will receive a copy of both documents including a number of information leaflets to display in their practices.

For further information please contact Edward Hanna on ehanna@rcgp.org.uk or visit our website.

Winners at the Awards Gala

Practice Accreditation Award

Campbell Surgery, Dungannon

Patient Nomination Award

Winner: Dr Ramen Murty
Dr Murtys Surgery, Dungannon

1st Runner Up: Dr Emmylou Large
Connswater Family Practice
Hollywood Arches, Belfast

2nd Runner Up: Dr Enda Cullen
Botanic Medical Centre, Belfast

Practice Manager of the Year Award

Winner: Sharon McGinley
Oakleaf Medical Practice
Londonderry

1st Runner Up: Christina Breen
Orchard Family Practice,
Portadown

2nd Runner Up: Janice Russell
Templepatrick Surgery
Templepatrick

Practice Administration Team of the Year

Winner: Templepatrick Surgery,
Templepatrick

1st Runner Up: Hillhead Medical Practice
Belfast

2nd Runner Up: Maple Surgery, Lisnaskea

Christmas card donation

This year, RCGP Northern Ireland donated £85 to the Salvation Army Christmas Appeal. Instead of purchasing Christmas cards and paying for postage, the College sent e-cards to all our members and associates which not only raised money to help the charity but was also more environmentally friendly.

Dates for the Diary



Meetings

RCGP Northern Ireland Council Meeting	22nd February 2010
Patients in Practice Meeting	25th March 2010

Events

Associates in Training Event on 'Life as a Locum'	20th March 2010
Symposium on Deep Vein Thrombosis	28th April 2010

For further information please contact the office:
RCGP Northern Ireland
4 Cromac Place
Belfast
BT7 2JB
T: 028 9023 0055

Staff & Members Update

RCGP Northern Ireland would like to express their sincere sympathies to the Porteous Family, after the loss of Dr Patrick Porteous who sadly passed away last May. Dr Porteous, was a past Provost of the college in the late 1980s and was blessed with a long and very full life until his final years. Dr Porteous began work as a GP in Derrygonnelly in 1947 and was there in 1948 when the NHS began. He retired from practice in Lisnaskea in 1990 although worked a few days as a locum GP in the early nineties. It would be safe to say that medicine was, for him, a vocation and a way of life. He was a true servant to his patients and to the profession. We are deeply saddened by the news of his death and our thoughts and best wishes are with the Porteous Family.

Congratulations!

RCGP Northern Ireland would like to extend its many congratulations to Mrs Lindsay Wallace and her husband Andrew on the birth of their baby boy Matthew, born on the 11th of January 2010. We wish them every happiness and best wishes for the future.



Royal College of
General Practitioners