

A survey of undergraduate orthodontic training and orthodontic practices by general dental practitioners

Purpose of the study: to assess satisfaction with undergraduate orthodontic training, the variety of treatments undertaken in general practice, practitioners' perceived competence in orthodontics and the level of interest in continuing education in orthodontics.

Design: cross-sectional questionnaire-based study.

Materials and methods: a questionnaire was mailed to 520 general practitioners in Dublin, Kildare and Wicklow as listed in Irish Dental Council Register of Dentists 2003.

Results: forty-six per cent of dentists responded. More than half (54 per cent) of the respondents were satisfied with both academic and clinical aspects of undergraduate training. Twenty-nine per cent regularly perform orthodontic treatment. Only 60 per cent feel comfortable treating orthodontic emergencies. Over 70 per cent have either already attended or aspire to attend further training in orthodontic diagnosis and interceptive orthodontics.

Conclusions: our study indicates that in the greater Dublin area, graduates (those qualified less than 10 years) are increasingly satisfied with undergraduate teaching.

Orthodontic treatment is performed regularly in general dental practice with interceptive procedures most often carried out. While ability to deal with orthodontic emergencies is not universal, practitioners do appear confident to perform a variety of orthodontic procedures. Interest in continuing education in orthodontics is very high. Our study indicates that participation in continuing education in orthodontics appears to translate into greater provision of orthodontic care in general practice.

Authors:

P.S. Fleming B.A., B.Dent.Sc., MFD

RCS, MFDS RCS

The Park Clinic, Cabinteely, Dublin 18,
Ireland.

P.A. Dowling, B.A. B.Dent.Sc.,

D.Orth.(Edin), M.Dent.Sc.,

M.Orth(Edin), F.D.S.(Orth). Department
of Public and Child Dental Health,
Dublin Dental School and Hospital,
Lincoln Place, Dublin 2, Ireland

Address for correspondence:

Padhraig Fleming

The Park Clinic

Cabinteely

Dublin 18

Ireland

Tel: 00353-1-2853666

Fax: 00353-1-2840740