

Career choices on graduation – a study of recent graduates from University College Cork

Gerald McKenna BDS MFDS RCSEd
Clinical Fellow in Restorative Dentistry
School of Dentistry
University College Cork

Francis Burke BDentSc MSc PhD FDS RCSEd
FFDRCSI
Senior Lecturer/Consultant in
Restorative Dentistry
School of Dentistry
University College Cork

Corresponding author:
Dr Gerald McKenna
Clinical Fellow in Restorative Dentistry
School of Dentistry
University College Cork
Email: g.mckenna@ucc.ie
Tel: 021-490 1100 ext. 5033
Fax: 021-454 1193

Précis

Increasing numbers of new graduates from University College Cork (UCC) are choosing to take part in vocational training. In addition, many graduates initially move away from Ireland.

Abstract

Introduction

Irish dental graduates are eligible to enter general dental practice immediately after qualification. Unlike their United Kingdom counterparts, there is no requirement to undertake vocational training (VT) or any pre-registration training. VT is a mandatory 12-month period for all UK dental graduates who wish to work within the National Health Service. It provides structured, supervised experience in training practices and through organised study days.

Aims

This study aimed to profile the career choices made by recent dental graduates from UCC. It aimed to record the uptake of VT and associate posts, and where the graduates gained employment.

Methodology

A self-completion questionnaire was developed and circulated electronically to recent graduates from UCC. An existing database of email addresses was used and responses were returned by post or by email. A copy of the questionnaire used is included as

Appendix 1.

Results

Questionnaires were distributed over an eight-week period and 142 were returned, giving a response rate of 68.9%. Responses were gathered from those who graduated between 2001 and 2007; however, the majority came from more recent classes. Overall, the majority of graduates took up associate positions after qualification (71.8%) with smaller numbers undertaking VT (28.2%). Increasing numbers have entered VT in recent years, including 54.3% from the class of 2007. Overall, the majority of graduates initially took up positions in England (43%); however, in recent times more have been employed in Scotland. Subsequent work profiles of the graduates illustrate that the majority are now working as associates in general practice (51.4%) and in Ireland (54.2%).

Conclusions

- There has been an increase in the proportion of UCC graduates undertaking VT.
- Graduates tended to move away from Ireland initially to gain employment.
- There has been a shift away from employment in England towards Scotland where the majority of new UCC graduates are now initially employed.
- The majority of graduates returned to Ireland for employment after the initial move away.

The demographic and academic profile of Irish dental school faculty members

Précis: This study provides a detailed profile of Irish dental school faculty members, considers future challenges and explores staff perceptions of faculty duties.

Abstract

Aim: This paper reviews the demographic, academic and professional profile of Irish dental school faculty members. Faculty duties are explored.

Methods and materials: Custom-designed questionnaires were distributed to faculty members for self-completion, adopting a 'mixed-method' approach with quantitative and qualitative components. Response rate was 64.6%.

Results: Demographic profile reveals a male-dominated regime (64%). Males also occupy a disproportionate number of senior academic positions. The age profile mirrors international trends with 75% of staff over 40 and c.33% over 50, including 78% of professorial staff ($p < 0.001$).

Dental school faculties are comprised of highly educated professionals with the following qualifications: 89% BDS, 43% FDS, 39% Masters, 16% Doctorates. Most (77%) have 10+ years of clinical experience, while 47% have over 20 years' experience. Clinical experience varied by age, rank ($p < 0.001$) and gender ($p < 0.05$). A review of contractual agreements and duties confirms the major role of part-time clinical staff in dental education, comprising the largest single group (48%) delivering the bulk of the clinical teaching. However, 54% of part-time clinical staff have less than five years teaching experience. This study also explores staff views of various faculty roles.

Conclusions: This report provides a benchmark profile of Irish dental school faculty members. It reflects on the heavily skewed age groups of our current dental educators and the impending retirement of many senior academics. Educational organisations need to explore ways to make a career in dental education financially and sociologically attractive and provide adequate support for existing faculty to ensure their development during these challenging times.

Dr Eleanor M. O'Sullivan BDS PhD MA (H.Ed)
Cork University Dental School and Hospital
Wilton, Cork
Email: eleanor.osullivan@ucc.ie

Supernumerary pre-molar teeth in the mandible

Introduction

Supernumerary pre-molar teeth may be defined as extra teeth occurring within the dental arch. The prevalence of supernumerary teeth in the permanent dentition varies from 0.45%¹ to 4.5%.² In Ireland the levels vary between 2.2%³ and 3.7%.⁴ However, the prevalence of supernumerary teeth occurring in the mandibular premolar region is quite low. Prevalence rates vary from 0.14%-0.9% (Piattelli & Piattelli,⁵ Saini et al⁷). In a recent study of supernumerary teeth among Irish schoolchildren⁵ only 7% of all supernumerary teeth occurred in the mandibular pre-molar/canine region.

Individual case reports have been described by Piattelli & Piattelli,⁶ Saini et al,⁷ Lesan and Wandenya,⁸ Gibson,⁹ Cochrane et al,¹⁰ Scanlon and Hodges,¹¹ and Arigbede.¹² This paper examines the records of 10 patients who attended the Regional Orthodontic Unit for the Public Health Orthodontic Services in the counties of Cork and Kerry.

Dr Ian O'Dowling BDS FDS FFD DORTH

Dr Ian O'Dowling passed away suddenly in October 2009. The *Journal of the Irish Dental Association* would like to extend sincere condolences to his family, friends and colleagues at this time.