

RCS Edinburgh launches Membership in Implant Dentistry in Edinburgh, Dubai and Malaysia

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The Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh, the oldest Royal College, is proud to announce additional diets of the new Membership in Implant Dentistry (M Imp Dent RCS Ed). The exam was launched in 2024 with successful and oversubscribed diets in Edinburgh and Dubai in 2024. In 2025 the exam will be extended to cover the Far East region with diets being held in Edinburgh, Dubai and Malaysia. The aim is to raise the standard of implant dentistry globally. This article outlines further details about the examination.



Fig. 1 Examiners for Membership in Implant Dentistry (RCS Ed) Dubai 2024

What is M Imp Dent?

M Imp Dent is an independent examination that aims to provide external validation of a dentist's implant training against standards set by the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh (RCS Ed). The exam is aimed at the level of a minimally competent general dental practitioner undertaking implant dentistry and therefore it is applicable to all dentists involved in placing and/or restoring implants. The exam is pitched at a straightforward entry level of implant dentistry.

The learning outcomes and the scope of the exam is aligned to the College of General Dentistry (CG Dent) UK's Training Standards in Implant Dentistry (TSID).¹ These standards were developed in 2005 and have been revised periodically to ensure patient safety and protection. These training standards outline the training that should be undertaken to carry out implant dentistry safely but also the standards which should be met by training course providers. In the UK they serve as a reference point for the General Dental Council (GDC) in the consideration of patient complaints against dentists who have allegedly practised implant dentistry in the UK without the necessary competence.

In the last ten years there are many implant training programmes ranging from short courses through to Diplomas and MSc programmes that have become available for general dentists to develop their knowledge and skills in implant dentistry. Unfortunately,

they do vary in their quality with some being face to face, others online and some taking a hybrid approach. On completion of these programmes and taking an internal assessment a dentist is awarded the qualification but often without any formal external validation. Kim and Stagnell² showed that whilst development of TSID guidelines has led to a significant improvement in the quality of postgraduate education in dental implantology in the UK, not all courses are fully compliant with these guidelines and this is something the dentist undertaking training programmes may not be aware of. The M Imp Dent RCS Ed allows dentists to demonstrate autonomously to a group of peer experts that they have met the minimum required standard for patient safety and good clinical practice set out by TSID and in turn provides reassurance to dentist and any other interested parties that their training has met a minimum standard deemed necessary for the safe practice of implant dentistry in the UK and internationally. It also offers enrolment with the world recognised and prestigious RCS Ed at a Membership level and the successful candidate will be entitled to use the post nominals M Imp Dent RCS Ed.

What is the exam format?

The exam is a summative assessment of the knowledge base, planning, clinical judgement, communication and practical skills that underpin independent dental implant practice. It tests the candidate's ability to apply the above skills at a level expected of a safe, well informed general dental practitioner with a particular interest in implant dentistry. It is set at a basic level including aspects of minor augmentation but does not intend to assess competency or the detailed knowledge of the more advanced procedures eg major bone grafting and external sinus lift surgery, full arch reconstructions and treatment planning with computerised software.

The exam comprises two written papers with single best answer questions, usually taking place on day 1. This is followed by two ten-station OSCE circuits on day 2. Ten stations focus on practical skills related to implant dentistry and the other ten stations are on communication skills. Finally, there is a structured oral examination based on eight unseen cases for which the candidate will have some time to read over the material and gather their thoughts before being examined. The structured oral takes place on days 3 and 4 with four cases on each day.

How can candidates best prepare for the examination?

It is important to emphasise that the exam is not the endpoint of any particular training programme. There are also no courses that are formally affiliated to this exam. It is not essential to have done any particular course and candidates may have acquired



Fig. 2 Candidates who sat the M Imp Dent exam in Dubai

their training through multiple CPD courses, self-directed learning and the use of a mentor. If the candidate has completed a modular course and obtained a diploma or an MSc then they should be well prepared for the exam.

The RCS Ed has an accreditation programme for courses where the advisory board in implant dentistry for RCS Ed will look at the curriculum of the course and verify if it meets the learning outcomes for the M Imp Dent examination. Undertaking any such accredited courses does not guarantee the candidate will be successful in the exam but should reassure the dentist that the course will cover material that will help prepare them for the exam.

The candidate should start by reading the self-declaration form. On this form there is an outline of what the advisory board feel is important for the candidate to have completed prior to sitting this exam. They should then download the learning outcomes document and work through each component to ensure they are comfortable with each of the descriptors. Both of these documents are available to download from the RCS Ed website. Once both of these elements have been fulfilled the candidate should be in a good position to consider applying for the examination.

Further details regarding the exam are on the RCS Ed website or the candidate can join one of the upcoming Exam Information Sessions on Zoom. Details of these sessions are also available on the college website. If the candidate still has any further questions, they can email dental.exams@rcsed.ac.uk.

Figures 1 and 2 show the examiners and candidates from the recent Dubai diet of the exam. Candidates who attended came from Hong Kong, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, India, Pakistan and Thailand. We also had a combination of examiners from the UK and Middle East.

We look forward to welcoming more dentists at the upcoming diets of the exam and hope to raise the standard in implant dentistry both nationally and internationally.

For more information, visit <https://www.rcsed.ac.uk/exams/exam-details-membership-in-implant-dentistry>.

References

1. CGDent. Training standards in implant dentistry. Updated 2016. Available at: <https://cgdent.uk/training-standards-in-implant-dentistry/> (accessed November 2024).
2. Kim N Y, Stagnell S. Postgraduate education in dental implantology in the United Kingdom: a review. *Int J Implant Dent* 2018; DOI: 10.1186/s40729-017-0115-1.

New mouth cancer charter launched at House of Commons

A new Mouth Cancer Charter has been launched by the Oral Health Foundation at the House of Commons. Created as part of November's Mouth Cancer Action Month, the charter aims to show the necessary steps to reduce cases of mouth cancer and its mortality in the UK.

The charter recommends seven measures aimed at raising awareness, improving early detection, and enhancing patient care. This includes a government-funded mouth cancer campaign, improving access to routine dentistry and improving training for non-dental healthcare staff to recognise signs of mouth cancer.

Professor Tim Newton, President of the Oral Health Foundation, said: 'As we strive to reduce the number of people affected by this devastating disease, we require coordinated action at many levels. Our charter is a call to action for everyone from the government to healthcare providers to the public at large.'

'Early recognition of the signs and symptoms will be crucial when identifying mouth cancer at a point where intervention is most effective. Once individuals with signs that suggest possible mouth cancer wish to discuss their symptoms, there are a range of healthcare professionals that they may approach their concerns. Supporting all healthcare professionals to recognise symptoms and make appropriate referral will be key.'

The Oral Health Foundation believes that improving education on the signs and symptoms of mouth cancer, as well as enhancing training for non-dental healthcare providers, can ensure more cases are detected earlier. The charity says this will not only improve the chances of survival, but also significantly enhances the quality of life for those affected.

Other steps included highlighted in the charter include improving referral pathways, supporting the development of better technology, and introducing free dental check-ups and treatment for mouth cancer patients.

Professor Newton said: 'Streamlining referral pathways can only benefit mouth cancer care. By enabling faster access to specialists through direct referrals and one-stop clinics, we can reduce delays and ensure timely treatment, which is vital for improving survival rates.'

'We also believe advancing diagnostic technologies such as AI and biosensors could play a significant role in helping detect cancer earlier, providing faster, more accurate results and improving patient outcomes.'

'Introducing free dental check-ups for mouth cancer patients, who often require more extensive oral care as part of their recovery, will alleviate the unnecessary and unjust financial burdens they face.'

Earlier in November, the Oral Health Foundation released its new State of Mouth Cancer Report that laid bare the rise in mouth cancer cases.¹

The Oral Health Foundation is now inviting people to sign the charter as a show of support.

For more information and to sign the Mouth Cancer Charter, visit www.dentalhealth.org/mouthcancercharter.

References

1. Oral Health Foundation. State of Mouth Cancer Report 2024. Available at: <https://www.dentalhealth.org/thestateofmouthcancer> (accessed November 2024).