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**The UK’s first new dental school and hospital for 40 years opens today**

**Media launch of new £78 million dental school and hospital**

**Time:** Thursday 12 June 2014, 9.30am for 10am start

**Location:** Royal London Dental Hospital, Turner Street, Whitechapel, London E1 2AD

**Content:** Tour of new dental school including interview and photo opportunities with Queen Mary University of London’s Dean for Dentistry; Professor Mike Curtis, and Clinical Director Dr Phil Taylor, plus consultants, students and patients in various departments.

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Patients and students in London’s East End are set to benefit as the UK’s first new dental school and hospital in nearly 40 years – the £78 million Royal London Dental Hospital – officially opens its doors today.

Queen Mary University of London’s (QMUL) new dental school, embedded within the new Barts Health NHS Trust dental hospital in Whitechapel, houses the most modern and technologically advanced dental facilities in the UK following more than a decade of planning and work.

The brand-new surroundings will mean a vastly improved patient experience for the local population, with increased privacy and dignity for those being treated and enhanced infection control.

Nearly half (46%\*) of 5-year-old children in Tower Hamlets experience tooth decay – the highest rate of all the London boroughs. Rates of oral, head and neck cancer in adults are also higher in Tower Hamlets than national averages.

Recently ranked the top dental school in the UK\*\*, QMUL will train around 400 dental students in the new facilities each year, making up an active part of the hospital’s clinical workforce. The new facilities aim to significantly improve the educational experience for dental students, providing access to cutting edge technology and training.

The move to the new five-storey premises took place over a six-week period in spring 2014, ready to provide care for the 70,000 patient appointments which will take place at the hospital each year.

Clinical functionality and innovative technology are at the very heart of the new surroundings. The new design stemmed from collaboration with dentists and dental nurses, enabling staff to lead the way in patient care, education and clinical research.

The new dental hospital and school will conduct world-leading treatment and research in areas such as maxillofacial surgery, facial trauma, haemophilia and Bechet's syndrome. Staff are also pioneering new and unique monitoring of eating disorders using advanced and rare facial and body scanning equipment.

**Professor Mike Curtis, Dean for Dentistry, Queen Mary University of London, Barts and The London School of Medicine and Dentistry, comments:** *“Today is an exciting day for our dental school. Not only will the new facilities hugely improve the student learning experience, it will also enable us build on our existing reputation for world-class research and innovation and excellence in patient care.”*

**Dr Philip Taylor, Clinical Director for Dentistry, Queen Mary University of London and Barts Health NHS Trust, comments:***“Dentistry involves far more than simply fillings, crowns and braces. Procedures such as oral rehabilitation and facial reconstruction are complex and it’s crucial for us to continue training new dentists with the most up-to-date technology and techniques to ensure our patients get the best care now and into the future. We hope the opening of the new dental school will soon pave the way for us to expand our educational offering for the next generation of dentists.”*

Occupying an area equivalent to almost three football pitches, the new dental hospital includes:

* 111 dental operatories with high tech digital operation and lighting
* 22 self-contained rooms for complex consultations and treatments
* State-of-the-art facial scanning equipment
* Cutting-edge digital imaging technology
* Sophisticated interactive teaching equipment including 72 technologically advanced patient simulation centres
* 32 operating microscopes to enhance operative capability
* Superb laboratory facilities with CAD (Computer Aided Design) and CAM (Computer Aided Manufacturing) technology

Improving dental health of the local community of Whitechapel and beyond is also central to the aims of the new dental school and hospital.

***Professor Mike Curtis concludes:*** *“We are extremely proud to be situated in Whitechapel, teaching and providing clinical care to the thriving and diverse populations of East London. Our local communities face some of the most challenging health needs of anywhere in the UK, and the new dental hospital has a key role to play in benefiting our community, as part of Queen Mary’s continued investment in local surroundings and patient-focussed research.”*

**NHS England's Chief Dental Officer, Barry Cockcroft, comments:** *"It is really important for dental facilities to have a high quality and effective infrastructure as well as the most up-to-date equipment. However, nothing is more important than the people delivering patient care. Dentists need to be open, friendly communicators in order to deliver the best care for their patients and this really came across in the staff and students I had the pleasure of meeting. I really enjoyed my visit to Queen Mary University of London and Barts Health's new dental school and hospital, and believe it to be a fine example of how modern dentistry should be practiced, providing a great learning environment for the students."*

**Welcoming the opening of Queen Mary University of London and Barts Health’s new dental hospital and school, Deputy Mayor for Business and Enterprise and Chair of MedCity Kit Malthouse, comments:** *“This is terrific news for people in East London, who will have a world-leading centre for dental healthcare on their doorsteps. It’s also a hugely important addition to the vibrant biomedical ecosystem of London and the southeast, and another piece of the mix that is making this region increasingly attractive for industry, investors and entrepreneurs alike. MedCity is joining up the London-Oxford-Cambridge golden triangle of medical science, so that our combined expertise is open for business, resulting in new therapies and better healthcare for us all\*\*\*.”*

**– Ends –**

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**Notes to the editor**

\* London Oral Health Profile: Tower Hamlets

\*\* Complete University Guide 2015 <http://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk/league-tables/rankings?s=Dentistry>

\*\*\* As part of UCL Partners academic health science centre, QMUL is one of the founders of MedCity, launched by Mayor of London Boris Johnson in April this year to join up the London-Oxford-Cambridge life sciences sector into a world-leading, collaborative cluster for biomedical research, development, manufacturing and commercialisation.

**About Queen Mary University of London**

Queen Mary University of London is among the UK's leading research-intensive higher education institutions, with five campuses in the capital: Mile End, Whitechapel, Charterhouse Square, West Smithfield and Lincoln’s Inn Fields.

A member of the Russell Group, Queen Mary is also one of the largest of the colleges of the University of London, with 17,800 students - 20 per cent of whom are from more than 150 countries.

Some 4,000 staff deliver world-class degrees and research across 21 departments, within three Faculties: Science and Engineering; Humanities and Social Sciences; and the School of Medicine and Dentistry.

Queen Mary has an annual turnover of £350m, research income worth £100m, and generates employment and output worth £700m to the UK economy each year.

Unique for London universities, Queen Mary has an integrated residential campus in Mile End - a 2,000-bed award-winning Student Village overlooking the scenic Regents Canal.

**About Barts Health NHS Trust**

With a turnover of £1.25 billion and a workforce of 14,000, Barts Health NHS Trust is the largest NHS trust in the country, and one of Britain’s leading healthcare providers. The trust’s six hospitals – St Bartholomew’s (Barts) Hospital in the City, The Royal London Hospital in Whitechapel, The London Chest Hospital in Bethnal Green, Newham University Hospital in Plaistow, Mile End Hospital and Whipps Cross University Hospital in Leytonstone – deliver high quality compassionate care to the 2.5 million people of east London and beyond.