

HRI Ltd Newsletter

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Best year for NHS?

We mentioned in the Autumn newsletter that certain aspects of the National Health Service (NHS) were not brilliant at the moment. Although the Health Secretary Patricia Hewitt is busy telling everyone who will listen that the NHS has had its best year yet, and this message being echoed loud and long by Tony Blair, those who work on the frontline are telling a very different tale. The government are primarily interested in targets therefore the news that A&E waiting times are down, cardiac and cancer services are dramatically improved, general waiting lists are shorter than they've ever been and that there are record numbers of extra doctors and nurses in employment in 2006 means they are fulfilling their election promises.

However to achieve these targets, hospitals have had to go into a large amount of debt and there are large financial deficits throughout the country. Because of other government reforms that have come into effect at the same time, unless hospitals achieve these targets and others that are primarily concerned with balancing the books, their budgets are restricted significantly the following year with the result that patient-focused targets like shortened waiting times for A&E are put in jeopardy all over again. It is a catch-22 situation and it seems that the only way hospitals can see to recoup the money is to lay staff off.

However, after all the doom & gloom of recent headlines it seems that in actual fact, less than 1% of the total NHS budget is represented by this deficit although this does equate to 1 in 4 hospital trusts that could potentially be in financially precarious positions. There are redundancies being made but predominantly in temporary positions. The HRI Ltd advantage in all this is that we only put forward our applicants for permanent positions which goes along with what hospitals are trying to do to help reduce overspend. And don't forget that the NHS is the largest employer in Europe and the fourth biggest in the world so there will never be a lack of jobs to be had. If your qualifications and experience are good enough you will find a job and HRI Ltd is here to help you to achieve this aim.

London marathon 2006

On a lighter note, the London marathon was run on Sunday. It's a highlight of the year in London and even if you're a confirmed couch potato you couldn't help but be impressed by the efforts of the 33,000 people that turned up on the day. It was pouring with rain but the runners weren't going to let that dampen their enthusiasm for the event. As usual, there were some great costumes in evidence: Elvis, complete with white jumpsuit and black quiff, a bride and groom who actually got married halfway round the course, a Dalek, a giant millipede and a man in a 45kg suit of armour commemorating St George's day with the flag he was carrying and the 90kg green dragon he dragged behind him. In fact St George, as we speak is still en route; he holds the record for being the slowest 'runner' in 2002 (when he was clothed in an old-fashioned deep-sea diver's costume), and is set to beat it in about 4 days' time. Most of these people are supporting various good causes and this year it is estimated that around £3 million will be made for charities around the country. Everyone remarked on the enthusiasm and support of

the London crowd especially around the East End section of the course, traditionally the most warmhearted area of London, although you could be forgiven for thinking otherwise if you're a regular watcher of the BBC's soap opera Eastenders!

HPC Continuing Professional Development requirements

The HPC (Health Professions Council) who regulate allied health professionals has set a date from which all registrants must undertake and record their CPD (continuing professional development) activities. Their website describes CPD as "A range of learning activities through which health professionals maintain and develop throughout their career to ensure that they retain their capacity to practice safely, effectively and legally within their evolving scope of practice." This comes into effect from July 01, 2006 and means that all registrants must ensure that they engage in regular continuing professional development and keep a portfolio documenting this. At any time, a registrant could be selected for audit and if so, will be assessed by a CPD assessor who if not satisfied with the levels of CPD reported, could revoke registration. The HPC will be sending more information about this to all registrants in May 2006 but in the meantime, if you would like to know more, go to their website on:

<http://www.hpc-uk.org/registrants/cpd/>

Wales

Some of you may have seen The Weakest Link, a TV show where people are insulted for their shortcomings in general knowledge and gradually whittled down until only the strongest link is left who wins all the money. The presenter of this show is a thoroughly unpleasant woman called Anne Robinson who once insulted the entire Welsh nation on another TV show for being boring and irritating. She has since apologised but will never live down showing herself in fact to be the weakest link. Wales and the Welsh are never boring and far from irritating as you will discover for yourself if you get the chance to visit or work in this fascinating country.

Wales is the home of the leek and, rather appropriately in this Spring newsletter, the daffodil. The leek is the national symbol, worn as a badge for many centuries due to ancient associations with St David, the patron saint, and the word 'daffodil' means leek in the Welsh language. Wales has a long and proud history of mining and song and boasts beautiful green valleys, 400 castles, spectacular mountains, lakes and beaches and very friendly, hospitable people. Like Yorkshire, the Industrial revolution made a huge impact here and the scars of the coal and ironmaking industries can still be seen today. Famous Welsh songbirds include Shirley Bassey, Charlotte Church and of course, the inimitable Tom Jones, who is still going strong at 65 and attracting the underpants of women, young and old unable to control themselves under the influence of his seductive tones. A national obsession is rugby and the Welsh are as passionate about it as their rivals in the Southern hemisphere and even more so when it comes to a fixture with their old enemies, the English! At this moment, there are almost 500 NHS jobs going in Wales – why don't you think about experiencing life in this often neglected but thoroughly rewarding part of the United Kingdom?

Next featured area: Hampshire in the Summer issue

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