

Dental practice steps up to the plate on pay

A HUNTLY dental practice's commitment to paying all its staff more than the minimum wage has led to recognition by the Living Wage Foundation.

Everyone working at Deveron Dental Centre receives a minimum hourly wage of £8.25, well above the current national minimum of £6.70.

The practice, run by Morven Gordon-Duff, has the distinction of being the first in Scotland to sign up to the living wage. It rose in November last year to £8.25 from its previous level of £7.85 for areas outside London.

Mrs Gordon-Duff said she had decided to adopt the scheme because she believed her staff were worthy of more than the minimum wage.

She said: "I wanted my staff to be recognised for the effort they make. They give their jobs their all and always go that extra mile. They need to feel valued for that. Being a dental nurse is not an easy job but they are always smiling. Now I feel my girls get the wage they deserve for doing a difficult job."

"I have a great team here. They ensure patients receive a first-class service and I really value their

contribution to the practice." Chloe Maver from Keith, who recently joined the staff, said the extra cash at the end of each month would allow her to change the way she lived. And another team member, Kelly Geddes, also from Keith, said: "Having extra money in my salary each month will enable me to start saving a bit towards a mortgage."

The living wage is an hourly rate set independently and updated annually. It is calculated according to the basic cost of living using the "minimum income standard" for the UK. Decisions about what

to include in the standard are set by the public, based on social consensus about what people need to make ends meet.

Poverty Alliance director Peter Kelly said: "The best employers are voluntarily signing up to pay the living wage now. It is a robust calculation that reflects the real cost of living, rewarding a hard day's work with a fair day's pay."

The government's national minimum wage will be replaced in April by a new national living wage of £7.20 for those aged over 25.



Morven Gordon-Duff (centre) and the Deveron Dental Centre team who are now all paid the living wage.
Picture: Lyn MacDonald. Image No. 032132