

## Shiatsu and Rheumatism

Newcastle Medical School has been involved in, and funded, an innovative scheme which attaches fourth year medical students, as an optional part of their training, to a Gosforth based NHS GP surgery that works closely with complementary therapies including Shiatsu practitioner Dominic Cleary, MRSS.

Based at the surgery, Health 2000 works to educate and promote the use of complementary therapies in General Practice. The scheme originated from a medical student attending a meeting at the surgery, which prompted Drs Anand and Jackson to get in touch with a tutor at the medical school. Such has been the popularity of this option, usually two months in duration, that the scheme has been extended from once a year to three times a year. Dr Louise Robinson, who runs the option, says the school is keen to allow students to explore all aspects of medicine. "All this followed guidelines from the GMC designed to ease the factual burden on students and help individuals develop and open up to new ideas." The increasing public demand for complementary therapies also prompted the school to consider such an option. Students attend lectures, workshops, therapists clinics and receive treatments themselves, to become more familiar with the concepts of Shiatsu and other holistic therapies. Following participants feedback, more time has been given for students to discuss with their clients the benefits of the therapy they are currently receiving. Feedback from recent students who have been involved in shadowing Dominic has included:

'It was brilliant. I was sceptical at the start but by the end we had changed our views. There is stuff we don't know about, and there is definitely something in it'.

"It seems to help with chronic complaints such as **rheumatism**."

"If they work for some people it could reduce the bill for people with long-standing problems who go back to the doctor again and again."