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Man mixes his two loves: dentistry, hockey

Real people

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A hockey rink and dental care are two terms that bear some relation. After all, the contact sport has yielded some players making wishes to Santa for a few replacements in the front of the mouth.

L. Eric Pulver, D.D.S., F.R.C.D. who specializes in oral maxillofacial and dental implant care, grew up with a love of hockey and the dental field. He was born and raised in Canada, where his father was a pediatric dentist and his uncle was an endodontist. Pulver graduated from the University of Toronto Dental School, where he played on the hockey team until he suffered fractured bones in his right leg after an injury on the ice.

Pulver's career has included serving as an assistant professor at Northwestern University Dental School, serving as a director of oral and maxillofacial surgery at Michael Reese Hospital where he was responsible for resident education, and working as a clinical associate professor and chief of oral and maxillofacial surgery at the University of Chicago Hospitals and Medical Centers. He also was the oral and maxillofacial surgeon for the Chicago Blackhawks for 10 years. While on the U of C staff, Pulver also practiced part time in Dyer.

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Pulver's recent move to his permanent full-time office at 2629 45th St. in Highland also means that he will likely have to leave his position with the Blackhawks. "Obviously I will miss working with the organization, however, I am very excited about expanding my current practice," Pulver said.

When he joined the medical-dental staff for the Blackhawks, Pulver was surprised at how few major facial injuries there actually were and also how tough the athletes were. "The majority of facial injuries are superficial lacerations that are sewn up quickly, in the dressing room, so the player can go back out to play," Pulver said. "I have enjoyed getting to know the players and seeing the behind-the-scenes game."

Pulver has enjoyed being part of the Northwest Indiana Dental Association for the past two years, which he describes as "a group of dentists in the area who are really interested in bringing dentistry to the next level." He said his involvement in the group drew him to the area to practice full time.

Pulver is a resident of Chicago and is married with three children. He enjoys jogging, skiing and making trips to Toronto to visit family.

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