

FDI closes Annual World Dental Congress in Singapore

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Singapore has a long and successful relationship with the dental profession. Not only does the city state host the oldest running dental school in Asia; first implants were placed here by Dr Henry Lee almost 20 years ago. Nowadays, the island boasts a workforce of over 1,000 dentists that are both educated internationally and make use of the latest state-of-the-art equipment.

Large international manufacturers such as 3M ESPE and Straumann have taken advantage of Singapore's position as a trading hub and serve most of their customers in the Asia Pacific region from here. With IDEM Singapore, the city also hosts a dental trade show every two years that not only attracts dental professionals from Singapore but also from other countries in South East Asia.

It was no surprise that the FDI World Dental Federation, who represents the interests of dentists globally, decided to organise yet another one of their Annual World Dental Congresses (AWDC) in Singapore. An AWDC was held here before in 1990 and the FDI has been cooperating with the Singapore Dental Association (SDA) in organising IDEM Singapore's scientific programme for almost four years.

This year's congress was held in conjunction with Singapore's Oral Health Month, an annual campaign that aims to improve oral health by offering free dental screenings to every Singaporean. According to the latest Adult Oral Health Survey conducted island-wide in 2003, almost half (46 per cent) of the respondents indicated that they visit the dentist at least once a year; the average mean DMFT was 8.1 and about 10 per cent of the respondents were caries free. A SDA spokesperson said that more than 200 private dentists will be participating in the screenings that will take place during weekends over the course of September.

Visitors were spoilt by this year's scientific programme, which did not only feature popular topics like implants, aesthetics, and periodontics, but also gave insight into new challenges and developments in dentistry. Among others, the prevalence of oral cancer, salivary biomarkers as well as the therapeutic potential of dental stem cells and tissue engineering were discussed. Limited Attendee Courses were expanded to give participants the chance to learn in a more intensive and intimate environment. Auxiliaries and office personnel had the chance to get their hands on the New Patient Experience in a special full day programme. As one participant put it: "What strikes me about this congress is how it brings together so many different specialist areas in dentistry, all under the same roof."



Though official numbers have not yet been released, exhibitors speaking to Dental Tribune Asia Pacific said that visitor's numbers clearly did not meet their expectations. In spite of this, most exhibitors also reported increased numbers in sales and business deals. Plenty of new products and processes were introduced, for example, surgical instruments and handpieces that now come with built-in and long-lasting LED lights. Nobel Biocare introduced their newest product NobelProcera for the first time to Singaporean dentists during an official launch dinner held at the Charlton Hotel on Bras Basah Road. The system aims to combine industrialised production processes with versatile and individualised aesthetics for dental restorations.

In addition, continuing education was offered to trade show visitors through Dental Tribune in collaboration with the DT Study Club, who held their first online symposia outside the United States.

Members of the 2010 Local Organising Committee invited to next year's congress in Salvador da Bahia in Brazil, home country of the newly appointed FDI president Dr Roberto Vianna. Dr Vianna, who took over the presidency from Dr Burton Conrod, Canada, received his DDS from the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro in 1965. Since then, he has been serving for many national and international health organisations, including the World Health Organization and the Latin America Association of Dental Schools.

"I am very happy to lead the FDI as president over the next two years. The organisation is, of course, the voice of dentistry, but more so, it is a means of empowering dentists to think about oral health on another level, for the benefit of the greater population," Dr Vianna said. "I would like to contribute and help spread the FDI message; to accomplish the ob-

jectives expressed in our mission. The FDI is a strong organisation that continues to improve. I'd like to see us focus on developing our relationships and networks, both across the organisation and outside. I am very happy with the direction we are moving in. Since I became part of the Executive Committee there have been a lot of positive changes—new staff members, the relocation of head office, our Executive Director—and important projects, like the Global Caries Initiative (GCI)," he added.

The GCI is a collaborative project led by the FDI with the long-term goal of eradicating dental caries. In July 2009, the Rio Caries Conference was held in Brazil to launch the initiative and a series of follow-up events are expected over the next ten years. Dr Vianna also announced that he will support the GCI throughout his term as president.

Another important advocacy tool during his term will be the new Oral Health Atlas, which was launched at the FDI Pavilion in Singapore and will be available at Amazon UK after the FDI congress. According to Dr Vianna, this will be a landmark publication that will strengthen the FDI's position as a world leader for the promotion of oral health information by demonstrating the state of world oral health in easy language, for everybody (from dentists to government delegates to the general public).

Speaking about the 2010 FDI Annual World Dental Congress in his home country Brazil, Dr Vianna borrowed a phrase from France's national anthem, "le jour de gloire est arrivé" (now is here our glorious day): "I am very excited to see the AWDC come back to South America, for only the third time in FDI's history. There has been a lot of breakthrough research and development in Brazil in recent years. Hosting the annual congress will further strengthen oral health promotion across the region."



Source: FDI

