The 55th IDS will again exhibit a comprehensive range of modern dental products and technologies. Visitors will have the opportunity to experience an abundance of new products and service innovations. Technological developments in the medical field and our industry’s investment in research and development continue to spur the creation of new and improved systems for dental practices and laboratories. It is of great interest to dentists and technician alike.

IDS has always been a driving force behind the dental market and will remain in this role in the future. The expert panel of dentists, dental technicians, dental hygienists, and prophylaxis assistants — to be able to convince patients that investing in their health is the best way to secure their own well-being and quality of life. Investments in future-oriented health care is a trend in one’s own future. I am confident that despite the current economic fluctuations patients will not neglect their oral health or decide not to make use of necessary care and treatment. Rising prices for energy, the commuter tax relief fund, and private savings assets of around €1 trillion in Germany ensure the liquidity of a large portion of the population. Moreover, patients’ demands for health-related services are mostly governed by acute health problems and the desire for a return to health and recuperating quality of life.

Dental implants and automated fabrication of dental restorations are currently the fastest growing sectors in dentistry. Is this boom reflected in the products and services that are going to be presented at IDS?

Implant restorations are in fact one of the fastest growing sectors, with more than 700,000 dental implants sold in Germany last year and an annual growth rate of around 10 to 15 per cent. These high-quality restorations will continue to be in demand by many patients in the future because they are one of the most progressive and long-lasting restorations available. Incidentally, the growth in dental implants in Germany can largely be attributed to the fact that the statutory health insurance scheme has subsidised this treatment since the introduction of a nationwide coverage system in 2005, IDS will exhibit the entire range of modern implantology systems, presenting both innovations and developments in tried-and-tested systems.

What other sectors do you view as having potential for growth?

Apart from implantology, I see the most potential in the all-porcelain sector. Around 25 million restorations worldwide were fabricated using CAD/CAM technology. Modern laser scanners are able to record around 100,000 reflecting points a second, and image-capturing has become quicker and more precise. Modern high-performance materials provide the best possible stability for a wide range of indications and are able to guarantee biocompatibility at the same time.

The latest digital fabrication technology using laser metal sintering of, mostly precious metal-free, alloy powders can now also be considered for prospective restorations. These dentures stand out because of their incredibly precise fit and durability.

German dental industry export activities are currently increased by approximately two percent in 2007, which comprises 31 percent of the total turnover in the domestic market or its losses impacting German dental companies prepared to face the case in Germany because of the US. This will definitely not be the same in Germany and in most of the developed markets. For most companies the shift of sales is a result of the introduction of the national average.

The shift of sales is a result of an expansion of our market position overseas disproportionately to growth in the domestic market. It is important to guarantee dentists and dental technicians in the German market acceptable remuneration for their services. This is the only way to ensure that young people find the way into the health service, to prevent professional migration, and to ensure patients gain access to the best systems in general dentistry and dental technology.

German patients have to carry more medical expenses due to the introduction of the national health fund. Is this having an effect on dentists as well?

I expect not too much of an impact on dentists, our council of experts for the national health fund predict a shortfall of €440 million in 2009 alone!

I think notable negative effects are to be expected due to the reduction in the national health fund, for example a council of experts for the national health fund predict a shortfall of €440 million in 2009 alone!

In which markets has the German dental industry gained shares in 2008, and which markets do you regard as difficult to gain access to?

The results of our latest member questionnaire underline the fact that expert figures in Eastern Europe, Russia, Asia, and Asian markets have shown a positive trend. Furthermore, the economic outlook for Latin American countries remains markedly improved in the last few months; however, it must be noted that growth development in these markets was at a lower level. As a result, weakening in the outlook for European markets stands out because of their incredibly precise fit and durability.

Investments in health are investments in the future.

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