Message from the president

One of the unique features of the FDI Annual World Dental Congress (AWDC) is the forums that are held on issues of science and dental practice. Designed as gatherings of people whose aims are to promote the interchange of ideas, usually on a defined theme, these forums include short presentations by world renowned researchers, clinicians, educators and practitioners and the opportunity to ask questions and make comments. A relaxed atmosphere encourages the various participants in the audience to share their experiences and ideas.

I urge everyone, who will attend our AWDC in Stockholm in September, to attend and participate in some of these forums, so we can include your concerns, advice and experience when dealing with these issues. The FDI is the nexus for oral health professionals, facilitating information transfer and promoting optimal oral health for all people. Each year our interactive forums are staged as a valued means to achieve this knowledge access and the common understanding that result from discussions among dentists from many different countries, functioning in various facets of our profession.

Some forums focus on current scientific or clinical issues, such as this year’s session on “Prevention and Control of Periodontal Disease for Oral and General Health”. The presentations in this forum will provide enhanced understanding of periodontal and systemic inflammation as well as the relationship between oral and systemic health. Most patients have questions about these issues and the latest information will prepare us to provide appropriate answers. We recommend that you consult the experts at our forum and not the unfiltered media reports on the issues.

Other forums will address controversial topics and developments in dental practice such as “Non Professional Investment in Dental Practice”. In many countries, commercial enterprises are acquiring dental practices and exerting varying influences on dentists and the provision of patient care. Is this a positive development that increases access to care or a potential negative influence on the quality of treatment that might encourage consideration of profit over quality or financial gain over minimal intervention and prevention? This forum promises to be a lively discussion of the issues of third party control of dental practice. Hopefully the experience of various national associations in dealing with the changing environment of oral health care will give insight on how best to manage these changes to ensure we are able to provide safe, affordable and affordable care to the public.

“Promoting Excellence in Dental Education” will appeal to those interested in hearing the latest developments in dental education and trends for the future. How effectively are we educating the next generation of dentists to deal with the growing oral health needs of the world’s population? How important is it for needed changes to treatment and prevention modalities to be firmly entrenched in the dental curriculum? How can or should the education system influence shifting demographics and the global mobility that is becoming more common in our profession? Encouraging a positive future for the delivery of oral health care involves understanding the needs of dental educators and their programmes.

“Health Diplomacy – Oral Health In Support Of Peace around the World” is a forum that will take advantage of the amazing ethnic diversity represented by the dentists attending our AWDC, to discuss the possibility of nurturing a more peaceful world through transborder pursuit of excellence in science and health. You will hear about case studies with a shared vision that have been implemented in faculties, facilities and clinical services. The more we recognize the burden of oral disease in many parts of the world, the more important it becomes to develop networks for sharing best practices, technology and other resources to assist the improvements in health that are so desperately needed. The FDI believes that good oral health is the right of all and not simply the privilege of a few. We need the support of each of the more than one million dentists worldwide, who are FDI members to help us realize our vision of “Leading the world to optimal oral health.” Attending some of the FDI forums at the AWDC in Stockholm this September would be a good place to start.

Honouring FDI past president, Dr Yoon, for his contributions to oral health development

FDI Past President, Dr Heung-Ryul Yoon, passed away in Seoul, Korea, at the age of 67, after fighting a terminal illness

New executive director to begin 21 August

Dr David Alexander to join the FDI

A specialist in dental public health and a former general dentist, Dr Alexander has extensive commercial and administrative experiences from various settings, most recently with GlaxoSmithKline, where he was responsible for developing oral health strategy and building key partnerships with major dental organisations in leading dental schools throughout the world. Having graduated in dentistry from the University of Liverpool, gained a masters degree in Community Dental Health from the University of London and undertaken a residency in dental public health at the National Institutes of Dental Research in Bethesda, USA, Dr Alexander has lectured around the world at major dental congresses and has published and presented many abstracts and peer-reviewed papers. He is well-recognized by his peers in industry and the leadership of organised dentistry, only recently having led a working group of world leaders from industry and dental education to draft consensus recommendations for industry-academic partnerships at the 1st Global Congress on Dental Education.

“The FDI Council looks forward to working with Dr Alexander, who has many years of experience in dentistry and the area of global oral health. His track record and expertise will be a great asset to the FDI as the federation continues to strive for its vision of leading the world to optimal oral health. We are confident that his proven leadership will be instrumental in helping the FDI reach its strategic aims,” said Dr Burton Conrad, FDI President.

“Lack of good oral health has severe consequences for general health and quality of life for the majority of the world’s population who have little or no access to dental care or preventive services,” added Dr Alexander.

Dr Alexander was selected among candidates from around the world. An international executive recruitment agency was employed for the search and selection of an Executive Director. His appointment was unanimously endorsed by Council at the mid-year meeting in May.

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Dr Pensavalle, a dental market intelligence giant, is no longer with us

Dr Victor Pensavalle co-founder of Suvison, died Sunday, 22 June

Dr Pensavalle, born 16 October 1946, held two degrees in philosophy and journalism. He was a popular and prominent personality of the worldwide dental scene in his 40 years at the helm of Suvison. He extensively covered the globe to collect dental market data and to write about dental markets and company profiles. Since 1975, Suvison has provided global oral healthcare information online and offline on professional, technical, human, commercial and industrial resources as well as informative, promotional, advertising and marketing services to the world dental community.

In his country of Korea, through the influence of Dr Yoon, the Korean Dental Association and the Seoul Dental Association, a significant meeting between the mayor of Seoul and an FDI delegation was organised in 2005. “Dr Pensavalle was a passionate and diplomatic leader of our profession, who had the ability to reach out across political and cultural borders,” said Dr Cho Young Wook, President of the Korean Dental Association. “He has been one of the main forces who have contributed to the recognition of the Korean Dental Association in the world.”

Dr Pensavalle was convinced that illness and death are one category of life. He did not want any funeral flowers or obituaries, but to leave as simply as possible and as much in silence as possible. He wished only his work to continue to speak.

“We all should how our heads to Dr Victor Pensavalle and his outstanding achievements in life, wish the family all the best and that the pain at the bottom of their hearts will fade away with time. He truly was a great human being, we will miss Victor,” said Mr Friedrich A. Herbst, Executive Director of International Dental Manufacturers. ■

Pre-registration coming to a close

Take advantage of reduced congress pre-registration rates by registering before 15 August. After which, registration will only be available on-site. For more information, please visit the FDI website at: www.fdiworldental.org/microsites/Stockholm/congress2.html.

World Dental Parliament

FDI World Dental Parliament meetings begin Friday, 19 September. Meetings include forums that are open to all interested parties and also the annual general assembly, committee, council, regional organisation and other business meetings that are only open to invited individuals. The World Dental Parliament schedule is available on the FDI website for viewing and can be downloaded at: www.fdiworldental.org/microsites/Stockholm/congress5.html.

World Dental Exhibition

This year’s exhibition promises to be one of the larger held in the region. The dental industry will bring their latest and greatest products and services to be showcased and a visit to the exhibition will provide the opportunity to see, sample and try new equipment and the latest products. To date, more than 250 companies have signed up to exhibit from over 55 countries, including a strong participation from the Swedish dental industry.

Scientific Programme

The FDI will offer a full and diverse scientific programme at the 2008 FDI Annual World Dental Congress. World-class speakers have been invited from all over the world to present to delegates over the four-day period on a wide-range of subjects.

A number of special interest forums will be available to all delegates that have been put together by various FDI Committees and associated organisations. A selection of sessions will be available in Russian for the first time this year. Full details of the scientific programme are also available at: www.fdiworldental.org/microsites/Stockholm/congress5.html.

Gala Dinner

The annual congress gala dinner will be held the evening of Friday, 26 September. For more information, please visit: www.fdiworldental.org/microsites/Stockholm/congress5.html.