By DTI
DAEGU, South Korea: Although equivalent alternatives have become available over the past decade, dental amalgam remains in use as a restorative material for dental caries in children in many countries. The safety of dental amalgam, however, is still a controversial issue among experts, as it has been associated with developmental disorders and systemic conditions. A Korean study has recently provided evidence that dental amalgam exposure can affect systemic mercury concentration in children.

In order to assess chronic exposure to elemental mercury, researchers at Kyungpook National University in South Korea evaluated mercury concentrations in urine samples from more than 1,000 children aged 8-11, who also underwent oral examination. They found that children with more than one amalgam-filled tooth surface exhibited significantly higher urinary mercury concentrations than those with none. The researchers thus concluded that dental amalgam exposure could affect systemic mercury concentration in children.

A number of studies have indicated that mercury exposure could be involved in problems in early brain development. Mercury has also been associated with adverse health effects relating to the digestive and immune systems, as well as the lungs, kidneys, skin and eyes. Awareness and recognition of these health and environmental implications have led to a ban on the use of dental amalgam in some high-income countries. However, dental amalgam restorations are still taught in the dental curriculum in South-East Asia. In Myanmar, for example, about 50 per cent of fillings placed are of amalgam.

The study, titled “Dental amalgam exposure can elevate urinary mercury concentrations in children”, was published online on 1 February in the International Dental Journal.
Indian dental patients in favour of chairside medical screening

By DTI

MUMBAI, India: A number of international studies have already indicated that oral health professionals could play a greater role in detecting chronic disease. Given the high prevalence of cardiovascular disease, diabetes mellitus, tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS and hepatitis B in India, researchers have now assessed patient attitudes towards and willingness to participate in medical screenings in dental settings in the country.

In the study, adult patients visiting five university-based dental clinics and one private practice were asked about their attitude and about 95 per cent in the private practice group reported willingness to undergo HIV/AIDS screenings in a dental setting.

In addition, the researchers found that the majority of patients were willing to pay 150 Indian rupees (36 per cent in the clinical group and 92 per cent in the private practice group). US$ 2.25 for medical screenings. According to the World Bank statistics, the gross national income per capita in the country is 1,570 Indian rupees (US$ 23.47).

According to a US study published in the American Journal of Public Health in 2014, chairside screenings in dental practices for the most common chronic diseases could save the health care system more than US$100 million annually.

Roland DG announces changes in leadership

By DTI

HAMA MATSU, Japan: Roland DG, which offers a range of milling machines for dental laboratories and commercial printers worldwide, announced on 23 March that Masahiro Tomioka, current vice president, will be resigning as president of the company. His successor and board of directors’ representative director and chairman will be Daisuke Fujioka, who joined the company in 1994.

The change is subject to the resolution at the upcoming shareholders’ meeting at the end of March.

The leadership change will be implemented as part of the mid-term business plan for 2016–2020 and a new organisational structure to facilitate new business development.

Tomioka has been the President of Roland DG for 25 years. Among other important projects, he spearheaded the transformation of the company from manufacturer of inkjet printers to producing 3D desktop fabrication tools, vinyl cutters and wide-format inkjet printers while achieving worldwide sales leadership with high profitability. Only recently, the company invested in inkjet and 3D technologies to expand into the on-demand digital printing and health care industries under his management.

Fujikoa, who joined the company in 2014, has broad experience in inkjet, inkjet print head, 3-D and UV technologies. His expertise will help the company quickly develop a variety of new products and solutions, Roland DG stated. Prior to his employment at Roland DG, Fujikoa was a director at Riso Kagaku, a manufacturer of copy and printing machines, and before that he spent 25 years at Seiko Instruments, where he oversaw the integration of profitable service components into core offerings.

“These are exciting times at Roland DG and I am honoured to serve as President,” Fujikoa said. “Roland DG offers a sophisticated product line with a passionate culture and family spirit. While upholding its corporate culture and spirit, I intend to turn the company into a more progressive and innovative organisation to achieve sustainable growth,” Fujikoa added.

“My goal is to shift our business to a new digital era model that will serve as a foundation for the next big leap in growth by capitalising on our GlobalOne business platform. Together, we will unlock the full potential of our employees worldwide in order to realise new market creation with products and services that exceed customer expectations,” Fujikoa added.

Roland DG offers a sophisticated product line with a passionate culture and family spirit. While upholding its corporate culture and spirit, I intend to turn the company into a more progressive and innovative organisation to achieve sustainable growth,” Fujikoa added.