Disagreement arises on dentist numbers in Australia

Uncapped higher education system contributes to oversupply, dental associations say

SYDNEY, Australia: Experts in Australia have questioned claims by the Australian Dental Association (ADA) and the Australian Dental Students Association in Sydney that the higher education system in the country is placing too many dental graduates on the market, thereby contributing significantly to an oversupply of dentists. Conor King, Executive Director of Innovative Research Universities, a network of seven universities with dental schools in the Gold Coast, Melbourne and Townsville, recently told the The Australian that the criticism is deficient and the current uncapped system has not led to a "wild breakout" in dental places. In a letter directed to Minister for Education Christopher Pyne, ADA President Dr Karin Alexander said that there are currently too many students graduating from dental programmes in Australia, which, according to her, would leave the entire industry over-supplied with dentists for at least another 12 years. She called for reducing the number of new graduates by removing dentistry from the university has a dentist-patient ratio of 1:1,500. (DTI/Photo Andres Rodriguez)

Higher imports

The value of imports of dental equipment from the United States to the Republic of Singapore has increased again. According to figures from the US Commercial Service, over 50 per cent more goods for dentistry were exported from North American manufacturers to the city state last year compared to 2012.

Eroded teeth

In a study involving 600 students across seven primary schools, researchers from the University of Hong Kong's Faculty of Dentistry found that 75 per cent of 12-year-olds suffered from early signs of dental erosion. Consumption of fruit juice and soft drinks were identified as main causes for the decay.

Dentist among MH370 victims

A list released by Malaysian authorities has revealed that a dentist was among the passengers of Malaysia Airlines Flight 370. Before he went missing, 27-year-old dental graduate of the University of Hong Kong's Faculty of Dentistry Biao Liang Ding was working in construction in Singapore to earn money to open his own dental practice in his home country, China. He leaves behind his wife and infant daughter, according to media reports.

International search and rescue efforts were still being conducted in parts of the Indian Ocean to find the remains of the airplane, which went off the radar in late March, when this newspaper went to print.

MegaGen receives large-scale investment

Straumann has recently purchased convertible bonds for a total of US$50 million from MegaGen, a South Korean manufacturer of dental implant solutions. The investment can be converted into shares in 2016 to obtain a majority stake in the company, according to reports. MegaGen will have an important role as a strong partner based in Asia, Straumann’s CEO Marco Gadola said. The Korean company stated that it will be investing the majority of the transaction proceeds in the expansion of its domestic and international implant business and the worldwide promotion of its digital platform.

MegaGen is a privately held company owned by about 150 shareholders, with the three founding shareholders holding 58 per cent of the shares. Based in Daegu and Seoul, the company offers a broad range of low-cost implant systems, digital dentistry solutions, regenerative tools and products to support implant procedures. In 2013, the company generated global revenue of more than US$550 million.