



# S U R G E O N d e n t a l

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### EXCLUSIVE

INSIGHT.....Interview with Dr Choo Teck Chuan

### MOH spotlight

Regulations and registration of Oral Health Therapists

FDI Dubai

### THE FLYING DENTIST

Ladakh  
Zambia  
Vietnam



## NOVEMBER ISSUE

A PUBLICATION OF SINGAPORE DENTAL ASSOCIATION MICA (P) 144/07/2007

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1. Versus brushing teeth alone with an ordinary manual toothbrush. Data on file. Colgate-Palmolive. 2. Data on file. Colgate-Palmolive.  
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## OUR CONTRIBUTORS FOR THIS ISSUE... THANK YOU!



Dr Lim Jie  
Council Member



Dr Kuan Chee Keong  
Council Member



Dr Bertrand Chew  
OMG in a government hospital,  
BES, Dip BN, FRACD, MEd, OMS



Dr Syed Farzaleigh Sharafi  
Has been a step in his lifetime after having just his  
teething of a music concert in early 2007.



Dr Chye Chuan Hee Kelvin  
"It is impossible to change, to be perfect is  
to change often" - Sir Winston Churchill



Dr Li Shanshan Angela  
is currently serving her board with NHCOP



Dr Denis Soh  
is currently a clinical officer with the School  
Dental Services

Last but not least... Dr Au Eong Kah Chuan (pictured below)

# Editor's note

**Welcome** to the latest issue of dentalSURGEON. Layouts have been revamped, contents have been tweaked and pages have been added, all for your reading pleasure.

An aim of this newsletter is to keep its readers in touch with changing policies and one of the foremost concerns on dentists' minds today is the latest regulation regarding dental therapists. Hopefully, this issue's MOH spotlight will make this murky subject a little clearer.

In this issue we also interview one of dentistry's leading men, Dr Choo Teck Chuan, on his achievements and advice for the profession. Inaugural mission trips to Vietnam and Zambia which will hopefully motivate and inspire are within these glossy pages together with updates on IDEM and NITEC courses.

In upcoming issues we hope to bring you more educational articles, discuss relevant issues and even include a few lifestyle articles, so please stay tuned, this is only the beginning.

Dr Charlene Goh

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Dr Teo How Hoong

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GC

# SOLUTION to Dry Mouth problem

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- x Mouthbreathing during sleep
- x Drug-induced dry mouth from prescription or over-the-counter products
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**Dr Raymond Ang** (Vice-President)  
Chairman, Ethics & Practice Management Committee;  
Member, Singapore Dental Council Ethics Committee;  
Member, NITEC Committee;  
Member, IDEM 08 Committee (Opening Ceremony);  
Chairperson, FDI 09 Local Organising Committee (Social Programme).

The once-a-month SDA Council meeting usually starts around 6:00pm and usually ends past 9:30pm.



**Dr Kelvin Chye** (Council Member)  
Chairman, Public Relations & Strategic Communications;  
IDEM 2008 Organizing Committee (Public Relations);  
SDA Webmaster;  
Member, Oral Health Awareness Committee.

**Dr Edwin Heng** (Council Member)  
Chairperson, Continuing Professional Education Committee;  
Co-Chairperson, IDEM 2008 Scientific Committee;  
FDI 2009 Committee Military Chairperson.

Economical catering, free mooncakes; to reduce expenses while maximize our time spent to work for SDA.

**Dr Benjamin Long**  
(THE President, enough said.)

**Dr Lim Lii** (Council Member)  
Convener, Ethics & Practice Management Committee;  
Member, Oral Health Awareness Committee;  
Member, Welfare Committee;  
Member, NITEC Committee;  
Member, Public Relations Committee;  
Treasurer, Registration Chair, IDEM 2008

**Dr Ng Chin Siau** (Council Member)  
Advisor & Convener, Oral Health Awareness Committee;  
Chairman, NITEC Committee;  
Treasurer, Business Development Manager, FDI Local Organising Committee;  
Member, Singapore Dental Council.

**Ms Mildred Ang**—one of our very hard-working Admin staff members.



*Not in picture:*

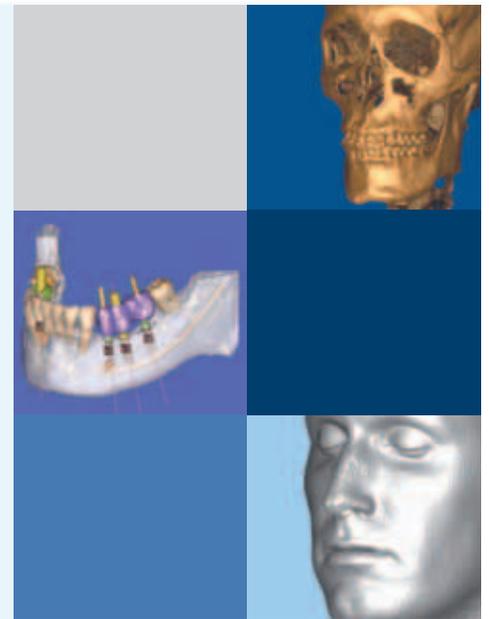
**Dr Kuan Chee Keong** (Council Member)  
Chairperson, Accreditation Committee;  
Convener, Editorial Board of dentalSurgeon;  
SDA representative, National Dentists' Survey;  
overseeing the SDA property at 1 Circular Road.

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## Regulation and Registration Of Oral Health Therapists

### Introduction

With the enactment of the Dental Registration Act on 1st of January 2008, Oral Health Therapists (OHTs) would be allowed to register with the Singapore Dental Council (SDC). Their names would appear on Division 3 of the Dental Register. The registration and regulation of OHTs heralds a new era of Dentistry in Singapore as the OHTs would now be able to seek employment and work in the private sector.

On July 4th 2007, The Straits Times ran an article concerning the introduction of Oral Health Therapists (OHTs) to the private sector. Following an examination by an Oral Health Therapist in Marsiling Primary School, Minister Khaw Boon Wan was quoted to have said, "private treatment bills here would be slashed if clinics get oral health therapists – rather than dentists – to carry out simple procedures; this would also allow dentists to focus on more complex treatment".

### A Brief History

The beginnings of the Oral Health Therapists date as far back as 1921. New Zealand had a population of 1.8 million, a large percentage of which were made up of young people. With the exception of major cities, the bulk of the population was spread across the country in small townships. The unique demographics compounded by the lack of skilled dentists led to the introduction and development of the New Zealand School Dental Nurse. They were responsible for the dental health of schoolchildren and their job scope included oral examinations, simple restorations and pulp capping. They could also extract deciduous teeth, provide oral health education, and refer children to dentists for more complex treatment.

Today, Oral Health Therapists i.e Dental Therapists and Hygienists are an integral part of the multifaceted oral health team in many developed countries such as the USA, Canada, Australia, Germany and the United Kingdom.

Singapore aims to join these countries by welcoming the OHTs to the dental team.

### Categories of Registrable OHTs

The OHTs to be considered for registration fall into 3 categories.

#### *(A) Dental Therapists*

Up until 2002, the Health Promotion Board conducted a 3-year programme in dental therapy. Students who successfully completed this programme were awarded a Certificate in Dental Therapy.

#### *(B) Dental Therapists/Hygienists*

Graduates of Nanyang Polytechnic (NYP) Diploma in Dental Hygiene and Therapy:  
In 2003, NYP started a 3 year dental therapy and hygiene diploma programme. Clinical training is conducted at both Health Promotion Board and the National Dental Centre. Graduates are dually qualified as Dental Therapists as well as Dental Hygienists.

### *(C) Dental Hygienists*

Foreign trained dental hygienists with SDC-recognised qualifications will be able to register as Dental Hygienists

## **Job Scope and Professional Practice**

All Oral Health Therapists (OHTs) must work under the direct supervision of a registered dentist for at least 5 years. Upon completion of 5 years of supervised practice, the OHTs may choose to provide services from their own premises. They however may only treat patients under the written prescription of a registered dentist and will not be allowed to treat patients on a walk-in basis.

The job scopes of the 3 categories of OHTs are listed below:

### *(A) Dental Therapists*

May perform the following on a person who is **18 years of age or younger**:

1. Cleaning and polishing of teeth.
2. Scaling of teeth.
3. Any application to the teeth of solutions of sodium or stannous fluoride or such other similar prophylactic solutions as the Council may from time to time determine.
4. Application of fissure sealants.
5. Application of rubber dam.
6. Extraction of primary teeth.
7. Restoration of teeth using direct restorative materials.
8. Exposure of radiographic films intraorally or extraorally for the investigation of lesions of the mouth, jaws, teeth and associated structures;
9. Usage of infiltration anaesthesia in procedures such as scaling or direct restorative procedure.
10. Taking alginate impressions of the upper and lower dentition.
11. Giving of advice on matters related to dental hygiene.

### *(B) Dental Therapists/Hygienists*

1. Cleaning and polishing of teeth.
2. Scaling of teeth.
3. Root planing of teeth.
4. Application to the teeth of solutions of sodium or stannous fluoride or such other similar prophylactic solutions as the Council may from time to time determine.
5. Application of fissure sealants.
6. Application of rubber dam.
7. Extraction of primary teeth of persons of 18 years of age or younger.
8. Restoration of teeth of persons of 18 years of age or younger using direct restorative materials.
9. Exposure of radiographic films intraorally or extraorally for the investigation of lesions of the mouth, jaws, teeth and associated structures.
10. Usage of infiltration anaesthesia in procedures such as scaling, root planing, direct restorative procedure and extraction.
11. Taking alginate impressions of the upper and lower dentition.
12. Giving of advice of matters related to dental hygiene.

*(C) Dental Hygienists*

1. Cleaning and polishing of teeth.
2. Scaling of teeth.
3. Root planing of teeth.
4. Application to the teeth of solutions of sodium or stannous fluoride or such other similar prophylactic solutions as the Council may from time to time determine.
5. Application of fissure sealants.
6. Application of rubber dam.
7. Exposure of radiographic films intraorally or extraorally for the investigation of lesions of the mouth, jaws, teeth and associated structures.
8. Usage of infiltration anaesthesia in procedures such as scaling or root planing.
9. Taking alginate impressions of the upper and lower dentition.
10. Giving of advice on matters related to dental hygiene.

### **Continuing Education**

Continuing Education is essential for the provision of up to date dental care.

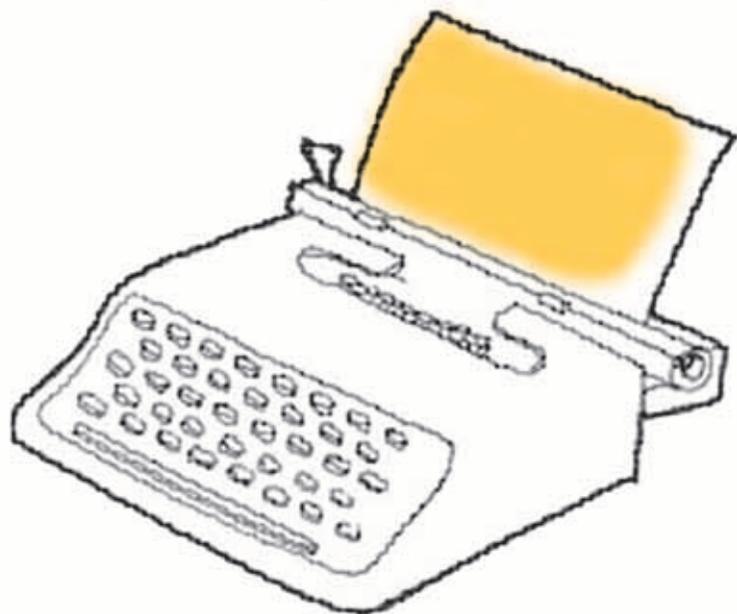
The Singapore Dental Council (SDC) will be implementing compulsory Continuing Professional Education (CPE) for OHTs in October 2008. OHTs would be required to accumulate at least 35 CPE point every 2 years in order to renew their practising certificates.

OHTs may attend relevant continuing education programmes organized by The Singapore Dental Association, the Health Promotion Board and the Nanyang Polytechnic.

## **WRITE TO US AND RECEIVE A BEN & JERRY'S\* VOUCHER IF YOUR LETTER IS SELECTED!**

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\* (or similar)

# FEATURE NITEC PROGRAMME FOR DSAs

By Dr Li Shan Shan Angela

**My career** in dentistry began working as a dental assistant. I had just finished my A' levels and was looking for a temporary job. A senior nurse gave me a few pointers and after one week of job shadowing, I was assigned to a Dr Tan as his assistant.

Having just one week of training meant that I was not a very good dental assistant. Poor Dr Tan had to endure my awkward movements and my blank looks of ignorance whenever he asked for something I had never heard of, much less seen. He soon started to mix his own alginate after one too many of my futile attempts and I suspect that he did not even dare to risk having me mix zinc phosphate cement. Pouring his own impressions also became a necessity after I ruined a cast by incorporating so many bubbles, no amount of Powerbond could salvage it. I imagine his blood pressure must have gone up quite a bit during my stint as his dental assistant.

My alginate mixing and cast pouring skills have improved much since dental school, but four years of dental school is hardly the way to train aspiring dental assistants. Fortunately for dentists and untrained dental assistants, MOH has just initiated a new programme for educating dental assistants.

The NITEC (National Institute of Technical Education Certificate) programme for Dental Surgery Assistants is a collaborative effort between ITE, NUH and SDA, which is the approved training centre. To facilitate this programme, SDA has established a NITEC committee chaired by Dr Ng Chin Siau. Members of this committee including Dr Betty Mok (who represents NUS) and many others have generously volunteered valuable time to help design the course structure and set up a curriculum suitable for the needs of local DSAs and their employers.

We spoke to a few members of the committee to understand more about this course. According to Dr Mok, a committee was appointed by the CDO to look into the development of a chairside dental assistant programme. A workgroup was then formed to work with ITE to set up a traineeship programme for Dental Assisting. To draw up the course structure, the workgroup looked at similar courses run overseas & locally and, at the same time, obtained feedback on duties of DSAs through a survey of 50 dentists working in various types of practices. The course structure was then presented to an expert panel set up by ITE and their advice was incorporated into the final course structure, ensuring that the programme would be tailored to the needs of local dentists.

The NITEC programme brings its students through a series of lectures, practical sessions and on-the-job training. Its syllabus covers a broad spectrum of topics ranging from basic anatomy to dental materials, communication with patients and even life skills. Different fields of specialty like prosthodontics and endodontics have also been incorporated and lessons are conducted by experienced specialists. Written and practical tests are held periodically at the end of each module, and these are set according to the ITE guidelines for examinations. NITEC will then award the certificate to students who pass all the modules at the end of the 1 year course.

Dr Ng also highlighted that employers can claim the full cost of this programme from the Skills Development Fund, and even up to S\$8000 to compensate for the absentee payroll, provided certain criteria laid out by SDF are fulfilled.

A dental assistant is indispensable to a dental practice and having a skilled DSA is an invaluable asset to the dentist and the clinic. So the next time your assistant hands you a mix of IRM looking like a sad blob of mashed potato or the Roth sealer seems more like full cream milk than condensed milk, do consider sending her for the NITEC course.

Details of the course can be found in the SDA circular and the new intake is now open for applicants.

# Colgate-SDA-SDHF PUBLIC SCREENING



**In conjunction** with Oral Health Awareness month this August, the Singapore Dental Association (SDA), Singapore Dental Health Foundation (SDHF) and Colgate jointly organized a series of road shows promoting oral hygiene and care for the public. The theme this year, "Towards Zero Cavities and Healthier Gums", aimed to promote the prevention of tooth decay while emphasising on the education and prevention of gum disease.

Road shows were held in 3 venues this year- Causeway Point in Woodlands, Toa Payoh HDB Hub, and finally Bukit Panjang Plaza. Participants were given insights into the reasons behind tooth decay, gum disease and tooth sensitivity. A test to determine if they had sensitive teeth was also given.

The participants, ranging from mere toddlers to the elderly, were then given a free dental checkup by dentists. Their problems and concerns were charted, and they were then advised if any course of action was necessary. Pertinent oral hygiene advice and practices were imparted, and goodie bags with oral hygiene supplies were given.

For members of the public, the screenings sought to change attitudes and mindsets. We not only brought to their attention their state of their dental health, but also the importance of regular dental checkups and how this may be more cost effective in the long run.

By Dr Dennis Soh



# Help your patients maintain a “Professional Clean” feeling everyday



## Encourage your patients to maintain their dental cleaning between visits

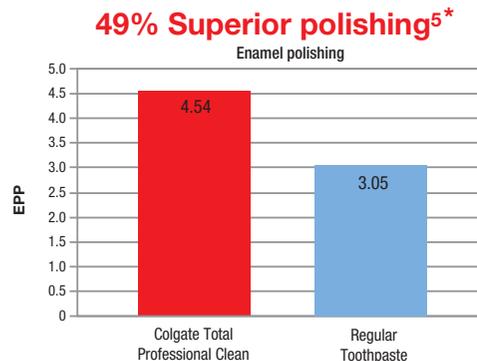
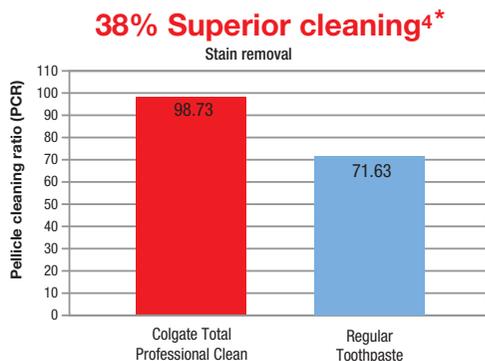
You spend time encouraging your patients to take better care of their oral health. During their professional cleaning you might also spend time improving the look and condition of their teeth, only to be faced with stained teeth and considerable plaque build-up six-months later. The cycle is repeated again and again.

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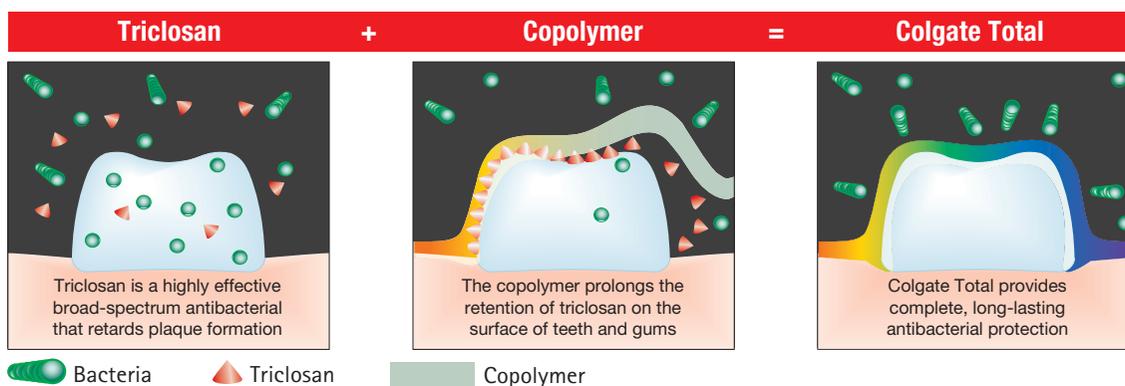
## The Benefits:

- Teeth feel smoother and polished
- Maintains a “professional clean” feeling between dental visits

## With 12 hours of complete protection

Colgate Total Professional Clean

- Unique triclosan + copolymer formula provides 12-hour antibacterial<sup>6</sup> plus anti-inflammatory protection<sup>7</sup>



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It helps to prevent:

- Up to 98% of Plaque build-up<sup>8</sup>
- Up to 88% of Gingivitis<sup>8</sup>
- 55% of Calculus build-up<sup>9</sup>
- Up to 53% of Malodor<sup>10</sup>
- Cavities<sup>11,12</sup>

\* vs. ordinary fluoride toothpaste with conventional silica.

References: 1. Data on file, Colgate-Palmolive. 2. Relative Dentin Abrasion (RDA) is below ISO standard for daily use toothpaste. 3,4,5. Versus ordinary fluoride toothpaste with conventional silica. Data On file, Colgate-Palmolive. 6. Amornchat C et al. *Mohidol Dent J*, 2004; 24: 103-11. 7. Modeer T et al. *J Clin Periodontol*, 1996; 23: 927-933. 8. Garcia-Godoy F et al. *Am J Dent*, 1990; 3: 15-26. 9. Banoczy J et al. *Am J Dent*, 2005; 8: 205-208. 10. Hu D et al. *Compend Contin Educ Dent*, 2003; 24(suppl 9): 34-41. 11. Marinho VCC et al. *The Cochrane Library* 2006; Issue 1 \* Fluoride toothpaste for Preventing Dental Caries in Children and Adolescents (Review)”. 12. Panagakos F et al. *J Clin Dent*, 2005; 16(Suppl): S1-S20.

# PROJECT LADAKH



**Ladakh** is a land like no other. Bounded by two of the world's mightiest mountain ranges, the Great Himalayas and the Karakoram, it lies athwart two other, the Ladakh range and the Zaskar range. In geological terms, this is a young land, formed only a few million years ago by the buckling and folding of the earth's crust as the Indian sub-continent pushed with irresistible force against the immovable mass of Asia. Its basic contours, uplifted by these unimaginable tectonic movements, have been modified over the millennia by the opposite process of erosion, sculpted into the form we see today by wind and water.

Today it is a high -altitude desert, sheltered from the rain-bearing clouds of the Indian monsoon by the barrier of the Great Himalayas. Occasionally, some stray monsoon clouds do find their way over the Himalayas, and lately this seems to be happening with increasing frequency. But the main source of water remains the winter snowfall. As the crops grow, the villagers pray not for rain, but for sun to melt the glaciers and liberate their water. Usually their prayers are answered, for the skies are clear and the sun shines for over 300 days in the year.

Summer temperatures rarely exceed about 27 degree Celsius in the shade, while in winter they may plummet to minus 20 degree celcius. The thin air makes the heat of the sun even more intense than at lower altitudes; it is said that only in Ladakh can a man sitting in the sun with his feet in the shade suffer from sun-stroke and frostbite at the same time!

## **Lamdon School Dental Clinic Project**

There is an urgent need for a dental health care facility at Lamdon School that can serve as an educational and treatment base for the 1,200 students who attend the school in the remote Himalayan region of Ladakh. The history of these ancient Indus Valley settlers reach back well over a thousand years and owe their cultural and genetic heritage to Mongolia. Thanks to the ironic good fortune of the Indian army who were posted to the high altitude, strategic location of Ladakh in order to defend its borders from Pakistan over the disputed region of Kashmir, this rich Buddhist heritage was saved from the ravages of the Chinese Cultural Revolution that decimated Tibet. In fact, thousands of Tibetans fled the Chinese army as it invaded their homeland to settle as permanent refugees in Ladakh.



The army brought many significant advantages besides political stability. Roads and airports were built that opened Ladakh up to the rest of the world and introduced many new elements into their daily life. One of these changes was the relatively sudden introduction of refined sugar into the Ladakhi diet and almost immediately caused an epidemic of tooth decay. Random examinations of the students and staff of the school by visiting dentists have confirmed a staggering 100% impact. The silent suffering of not only the students, but also the general population is unimaginable.

Adopted by the Singapore's expatriate community and international schools (namely United World College and Tanglin Trust School) since 17 years ago as the beneficiary of their charity drive, they have contributed much to the development and building of the Lamdon School. In the summer of 2007, over 90 international school students from Singapore visited Ladakh to donate a major contribution of dental supplies and oral health care training to the students of Lamdon School. The students of United World College and Tanglin Trust School received training in proper brushing technique from Singapore Dental Association, which also helped coordinate the canvassing of dental care supplies and instructional materials from dental product companies like Colgate, Sensodyne and Systema. The international students of UWC and TTS raised funds and secured donations of over 5,000 dental health care packs of excellent quality toothbrushes, toothpaste and dental floss for all the students and staff of Lamdon School.



*"There is an urgent need for a dental health care facility...the relatively sudden introduction of refined sugar into the Ladakhi diet and almost immediately caused an epidemic of tooth decay..."*

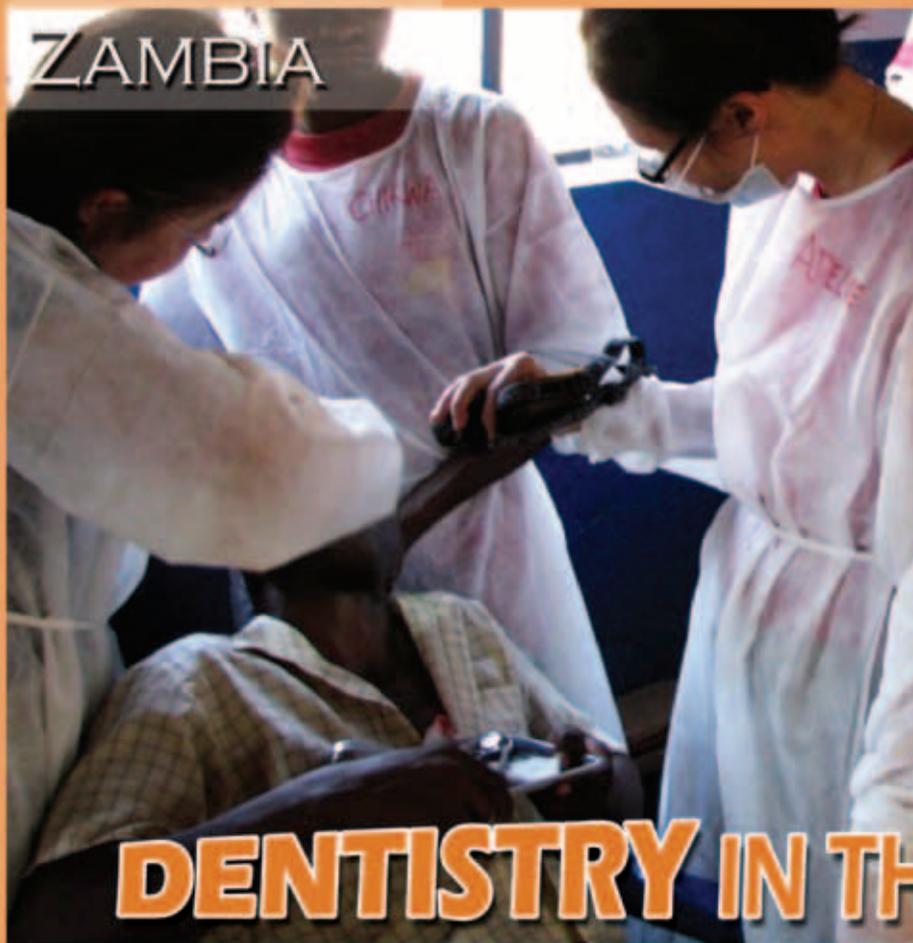
In an appeal to the dentists based here in Singapore, the organizer would like to extend an invitation to SDA members to help out in the Ladakh Dental Clinic project by providing primary dental care services to the students and staff of Lamdon School. In return for the kindness of our Singapore Dental Team, the host cum organizer (Mr Bill Kite) would be very glad to arrange for local Ladakhi homestay as well as a trekking expedition in the beautiful snow capped mountains at Ladakh.

Singapore Dental Association is very grateful to the companies, namely Colgate-Palmolive (Eastern) Pte Ltd, GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) and Lion Corporation (S) Pte Ltd, who responded generously to our call for donations of dental care products for this charitable project and would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge their spirit of social responsibility.

For more information on the Ladakh Dental Project, please kindly send your enquiries to [sda\\_prsc@yahoo.com](mailto:sda_prsc@yahoo.com).

By Mr Andy Cockburn, United World College and Dr Chye Chuan Hee Kelvin

ZAMBIA



After 23 hours of flying in 3 different planes from Singapore to Johannesburg (S.Africa), to Lusaka (Zambia), we finally landed in Mfuwe in the late afternoon. Ten of us, comprising of 4 dentists, 4 doctors, a nurse and a psychologist loaded up our medical and dental supplies and equipment on two 4x4 jeeps...

## DENTISTRY IN THE WILDERNESS

**We were headed** for the last lap in our journey to Luangwa Wilderness Lodge which was a 4 hours drive away, located in the Luambe National Park in Zambia. The long and bumpy ride on wheels was well compensated for by glimpses of wildlife like antelopes, zebras and leopards along the way, from sunset to nightfall. We were housed in the lodge in 5 safari-style tents built on wooden platforms overlooking the Luangwa river. The night was filled with the grunting sounds of large numbers of hippos wading in the river right in front of our tents!

The first daylight allowed us to appreciate how close we were to nature with hundreds of hippos sitting in the rivers making grunting sounds to protect their harems and territory. On the opposing side of the river bank, there were many crocodiles and numerous species of birds doing their daily chores. Different types of antelopes came to drink water and on one of the evenings, we even saw a herd of elephants feeding near the river.

**The main objective** of our trip was to provide basic dental and medical care to the villagers living outside the Luambe National Park. We set up our clinics in 2 rundown classrooms situated in the center of the Chitungulu village, treating patients for extractions, fillings, minor surgical removal of lumps and bumps, malaria, infections, skin problems and numerous other medical conditions. The 30 min drive to and from the lodge to the school was always refreshing and exciting because we were able to spot new species of mammals and birds. Driving to and from work never seemed so interesting in Singapore!

For the next five days, we toiled endlessly under the soaring temperature of 38 degrees Celsius from about 8am to 5pm. Oral conditions of the Zambians are similar to any of the poorer countries with caries as the main cause for tooth loss. The locals have no access to any dental care as the nearest dentist is about 120km (mainly by foot) and they are extremely fearful of going to the dentists because extraction are done without local anaesthesia! The news of our ability to provide painless extraction spread far and wide after the initial skepticism. The unfortunate combination of gross caries with very dense bone and root length that were much longer than our Asian teeth made extracting African teeth really a tough and back-breaking job and not to mention root-breaking too. The dental team managed to see about 300 patients and removed more than 600 teeth while the medical team saw over 1100 patients over 5 days!



Stitching up the victim of a crocodile attack

The highlight of the trip actually happened on the 2nd day of work in the late afternoon when a fisherman that was savagely attacked by a crocodile in the Luangwa river was brought to us. We managed to stabilise his condition and then spent the next 4 hours kneeling on the floor stitching up the multiple lacerations on both his arms, lower limbs, groin and abdomen. He was sent to recover in the nearby local clinic which would not have been able to help him because of a lack of proper facility and trained personnel. We visited him and changed the dressings for the next two days while we were there. Such

attacks by wild animals like crocodiles, lions, elephants and hippos are common and usually end in deaths. He was lucky to have survived this vicious attack. What an exciting 8 days mission in the African wilderness.



The villagers were so fascinated with our digital cameras as it was the first time they have seen such an equipment.



Patients waiting eagerly to be seen by us

It has been 10 years since we started this volunteer humanitarian effort and feel very proud that it has grown from strength to strength and we are travelling further and to more remote areas that need our help. I am looking forward to another trip somewhere in the world.

By Dr Au Eong Kah Chuan



A team of 12 volunteers, consisting of 10 clinical and 2 non-clinical staff, were invited to perform free dental treatment in Vietnam from 14th July to 22nd July 2007. This was the first dental mission to Vietnam and the team was fortunate to get support from the Department of Foreign Affairs, Health Department, Labour - War Invalids - Social Affairs Department, Friendship Organisations Union of Vietnam, and the General Consul of Singapore to Ho Chi Minh City.

Below is the letter of thanks from the Director of Department of Foreign Affairs of Ba-Ria Vung Tau province, Mr. Nguyen Ngoc Hung.

PEOPLE'S COMMITTEE  
OF BARIA- VUNG TAU PROVINCE  
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM  
Independence - Freedom- Happiness

Vung Tau, July 26, 2007

## LETTER OF THANKS

To: - Mr. Chua Tin Chew- General Consul of Singapore to Ho Chi Minh City  
- Singapore Dental Association  
- Mr. Khuu Tuong Cam- Head of Reachout Dental Team  
- Members of Reachout Dental Team participated into Tooth Treatment Charity Program in Ba Ria- Vung Tau province from 15-20/7/2007

The Department of Foreign Affairs of Ba Ria- Vung Tau province would like to express the sincere thanks to involved individuals and agencies who have arranged the charitable tooth treatment program for the poor people of Ba Ria- Vung Tau province from 15-20/7/2007.

Despite of the short time of program, members from Reachout Dental Team has created good impression and effective, necessary tooth treatment for local people, especially to the people in three locations that have received the treatment. After 06 days of hard working, the program has treated total 1,290 patients of Xuyen Moc, Long Dien and Chau Duc districts.

On this occasion, on behalf of Department of Health and other local involved agencies, the Department of Foreign Affairs like to express the sincere thanks to Mr. Chua Tin Chew, General Consul of Singapore to Ho Chi Minh city for his linking the passion of Reachout Dental Team with the people of Ba Ria- Vung Tau province as well as to Singapore Dentist Association and all members of Reachout Team for their worthy contribution to the success of the charitable program in three local districts.

We also hope that our cooperation relation will be further developed in the coming time. Especially, the people of Ba Ria- Vung Tau province wish to receive doctors and members of Reachout Team back again in the nearest future.

Regards, *TV*

DIRECTOR



Maintain gingival health  
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**Announcing the first published study of its kind to assess gingivitis prevention in power toothbrushing**

A new study on the efficacy of Oral-B Triumph showed that patients starting with improved gingival health succeeded in maintaining consistently low levels of plaque. Oral-B Triumph helped prevent gingivitis over 6 months of daily use.<sup>1</sup>

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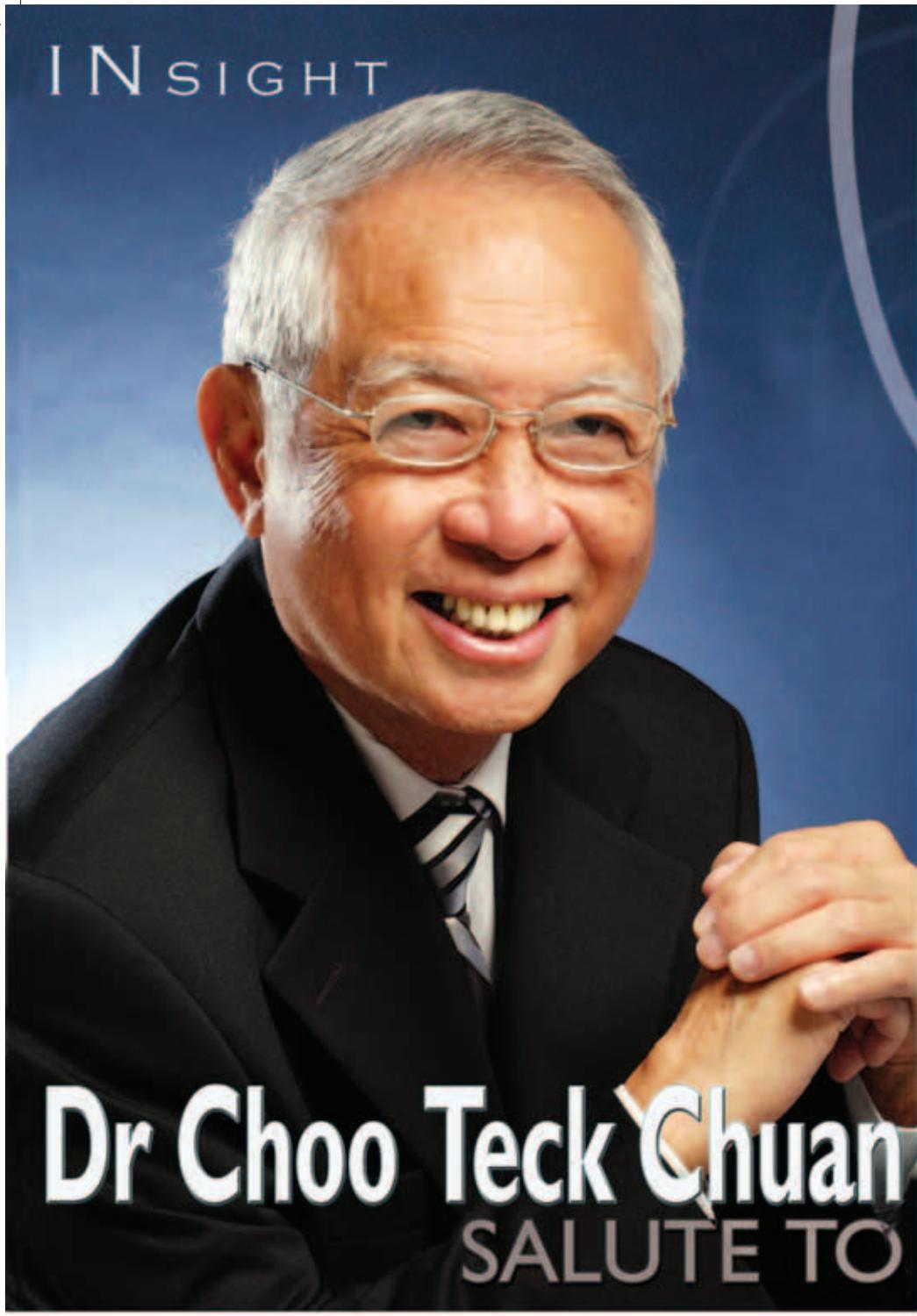
Reference: 1. van der Weijden GA, Rosema NAM, Versteeg PA, et al. Different modes of oral hygiene to prevent plaque and gingivitis. *J Dent Res.* 2006;85 (special issue B). Abstract 2266.

A handle that motivates patients to brush

Onboard computer tracks brushing time and provides positive feedback at 2 minutes.

Also tracks individual brush usage.

Replace  
Brushhead


 A portrait of Dr. Choo Teck Chuan, an elderly man with glasses, wearing a dark suit and tie, smiling warmly. He is positioned on the left side of the page, with his hands clasped in front of him. The background behind him is a dark blue gradient.
 

# Dr Choo Teck Chuan

## SALUTE TO

**A** tribute to Dr Choo Teck Chuan -the one and only "Teck" of world dentistry (an endearment by his colleagues in the international dental arena)

By Dr Bertrand Chew

## OUR 'TECK'

**Dr Choo** has been a prominent member of the world dental body since the successful FDI Congress held in Singapore in 1990 - serving first as FDI Programme Manager for some 15 years and subsequently as FDI Programme Director in 2001. These positions called for him to be in charge of the scientific programme of the World Congresses as well as bringing continuing education to underserved countries in the Asia Pacific Region. Such positions allowed him not only to serve the underserved countries but also to propagate the reality that Singapore can be a dental hub in the Asian region.

However Dr. Choo, the only Asian in the FDI World Dental Federation List of Honour, hopes to move on in the next year. The Executive Director in a recent bulletin of the Federation wrote that "Dr. Choo's retirement will be a great loss to the FDI ."

At the Singapore Business Events Awards 2007, organized by the Singapore Tourism Board and held at Ritz Carlton on the 2nd August, Dr Choo was nominated for the Individual Award - Business Event. He eventually won the award and is the only dental surgeon to win such a prestigious award.

In acknowledging the award Dr Choo mentioned that all this could not be accomplished alone. He cited both SDA and Dr Yip Wing Kong for providing him the support.

## Interview with Dr Choo

**Bert:** *What are your plans for now?*

**Dr Choo:** My immediate objective is IDEM 2008. The scientific program is crucial. Great considerations are placed into the selection of the lectures. IDEM 2008 will be a great success. IDEM is here to stay.

My other responsibility is FDI Continuing Education for 2008. Thereafter it would be handed over to Dr William Cheung from Hong Kong. Lots of work has yet to be done. This transition will take place over 1 year. I promised Dr William Cheung that I would support him all the way and will never allow the Asia Pacific Chapter to fail.

My main concern is IDEM. After 2010, the contract would complete its due course. Where would the Germans and FDI continue from here? They have many options. The fortunate thing is that Singapore is starting our Integrated Resorts. Singapore also has the hinterland of Asean and perhaps even Australia and New Zealand. Singapore must work hard to retain them here and continue IDEM, making it the Asia IDS.



**Bert:** *How much time do you spend on all these?*

**Dr Choo:** Well, FDI takes up at least 4 hours of my time daily. It is an accumulative amount of effort and networking. There are over 20 files in my office now! The administrative work and collections of database are vital to ensure that there are excellent lectures available for IDEM and FDI.

I also spend another 4 hours daily in my clinic. I love my clinical hours. The patient –dentist interactions are very enjoyable. After all these years I still enjoy practising dentistry very much.

# INSIGHT

**Bert:** *What drives you?*

**Dr Choo:** First, FDI have been established to a certain level. Also WDES which aims to serve the developing nations with world renowned speakers was founded in 1992. These two organisations form the rock foundation that motivates me.

---

**Bert:** *Do you have any advice for SDA and the dental profession?*

**Dr Choo:** Yes. It is of paramount importance that the dental fraternity stays positively bonded. As a united body, the dental fraternity could achieve greater tasks. There would also be more synergy among the profession. This is not easy, but it has to be achieved. Nothing can substitute the cooperation and



bond among the profession. Dentists should also contribute to the community.

Succession planning is also important in the leadership of dentistry.

It is important for members with children to lay off for some time as I did in 1965. I am glad that the SDA is having more young members who participate in committee work. This is evident in IDEM where there are many young faces.

**Bert:** What are your views on the future of Dentistry?

**Dr Choo:** I would love to see Singapore being the hub for dentistry where patients from all over come to for the high end work and even basic dental treatment. There are also world class educational seminars and conferences being held here. Singapore could be the Hub of Excellence for Dentistry.

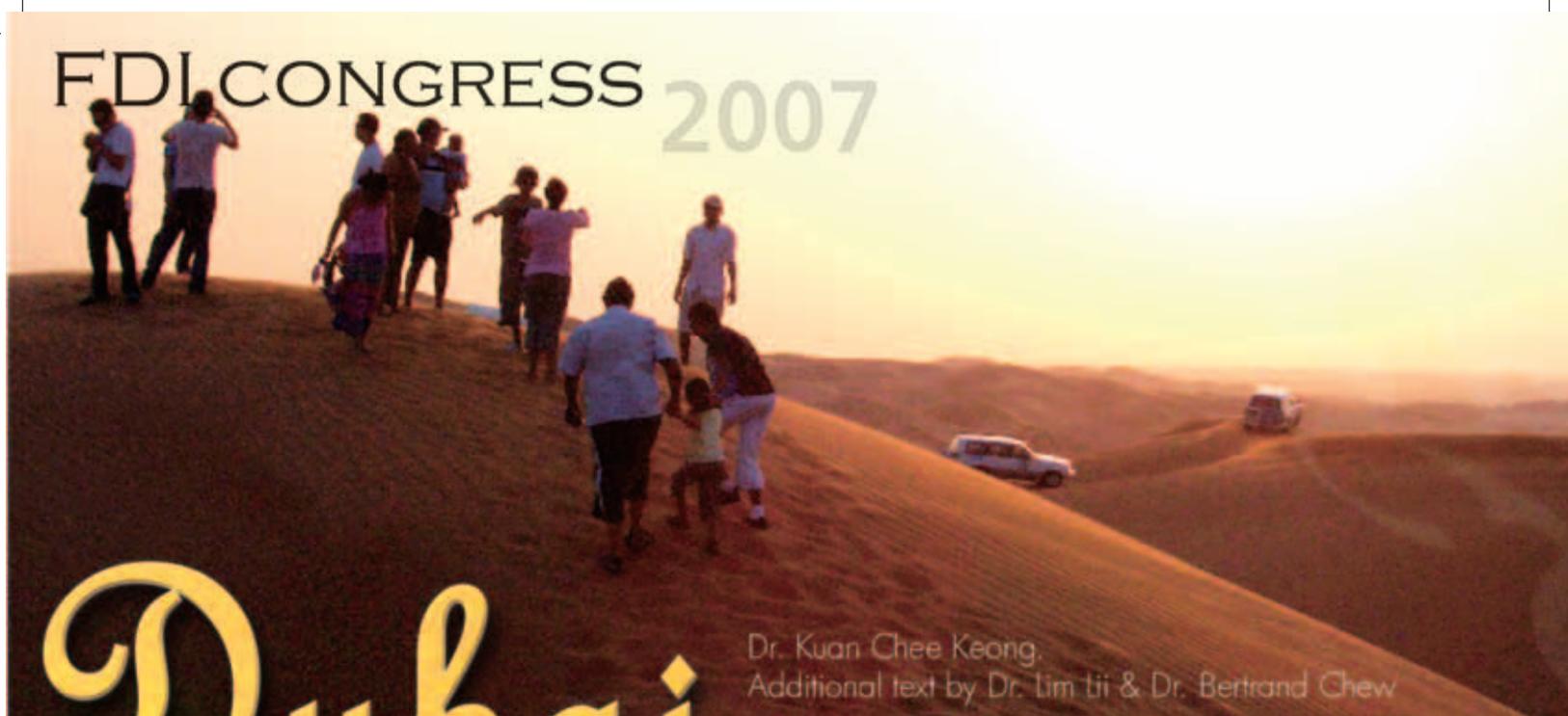
The future of Dentistry is definitely bright. However, to what extent will depend on how united we are. Dentistry is on the way up and is no longer about pulling teeth. Dentists have been nominated for awards and some of them are making headway in other aspects of society. Many have put Dentistry one up. I am sure it will be this way now. Long term wise, before my days are over, I would like to see Dentistry regarded on par with Medicine. Thank you.



### Singapore Business Events Awards Winner Citation by Dr Choo Teck Chuan, FDI Programme Director

"It is indeed an honour to receive the inaugural Singapore Business Events Award. My grateful thanks to all at STB. This effort of the STB is a landmark event. As one who has served the profession on various committees for last 20 odd years, I feel that all my efforts have been worthwhile - at last some recognition. This is not an important issue but it would serve to indicate to future younger 'volunteers' that their contributions are often noted and not ignored. I do not pretend to be a 'role model' but I would hope many would come forward and serve without thought of recompense."

# FDI CONGRESS 2007



Dr. Kuan Chee Keong.  
Additional text by Dr. Lim Lii & Dr. Bertrand Chew

# Dubai

**Despite** towering ultra-modern buildings like the Emirates Towers and Burj al-Arab, Dubai still exudes some of the atmosphere of the old trading port that long existed. Wooden dhows still moor along the Khor Dubai, the creek that runs through the city. This wharf part of the creek is a reminder of Dubai's trading history. The city's amazing transformation is literally reflected in Khor Dubai which has witnessed the bustle of the early fishermen, pearl divers and traders to the present prosperity boom which brings in international businessmen and tourists.

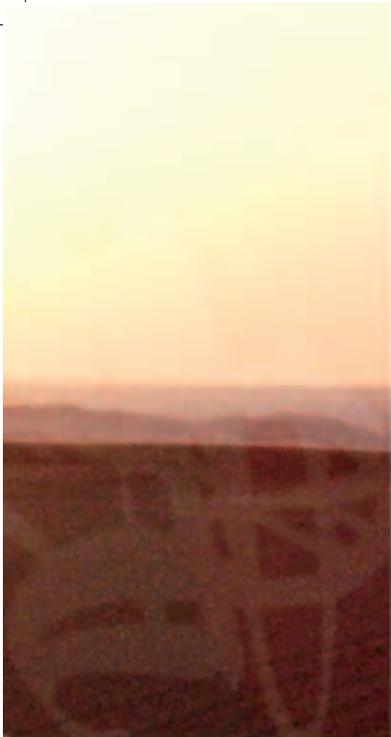
It is significant to note that this is the first time an FDI Congress is held in the Arab World. A total of 25,000 delegates from 193 countries attended the congress. Although the main FDI Congress started on 24th October, Prof Loh Hong Sai, Drs Benjamin Long, Raymond Ang, Bertrand Chew, Lim Lii, Ong Kheng Kok, Michael Mah, Ng Jet Wei & Ng Chin Siau arrived a few days early to begin a long series of meetings and conferences to iron out issues regarding DPL as well as foster ties between regional and in-

The SDA representatives attended the General Assembly A and B where various agendas and policies were discussed and reports presented. Award winners were announced and most notably, the election of FDI Office bearers was conducted.

The Opening Ceremony was of particular interest to the Singapore delegation as Singapore FDI 2009 Local Organising Chairman Prof Teo Choo Soo together with other members of the LOC, as well as SDA, were present to witness the Opening Ceremony.



From left: Drs Bertrand Chew, Benjamin Long, Prof Teo Choo Soo, Dr Choo Teck Chuan, Prof Loh Hong Sai, Dr Ng Chin Siau & Prof Keson Tan



After the Dubai FDI officially started, we busily divided our times between attending meetings and manning the IDEM and FDI booths to promote IDEM and Singapore FDI 2009 respectively. Drs Lim Lii, Ng Jet Wei and Raymond Ang liaised with the Singapore Tourism Board and Dubai to set up the booths. Dr Michael Mah, Committee Member of Singapore FDI 2009 LOC and another FDI staff handled enquiries from interested delegates. The rest of us took turns manning the IDEM shop, led ably by Dr Ong Kheng Kok and Koelnmesse staff Marissa, where we distributed IDEM 08 brochures, bookmarks and flyers as well as souvenirs from the Singapore Tourism Board..

The Scientific Programme under the theme of "Dental Diversity in the Land of Tomorrow" boasted a line-up of over 75 international speakers presenting over 80 lecture sessions as well as limited attendance courses. The FDI World Dental Exhibition was the largest in FDI history with over 300 companies from more than 40 countries.

The Singapore delegates were also kept busy with the World Dental Parliament, Asia Pacific Regional Organisation (APRO) meetings, National Liaison Officers' forum and several FDI Education Committee meetings. The IDEM Committee had meetings with Koelnmesse representative Denis Steker regarding the IDEM 2008 and on 26th October Dr Ng Jet Wei, together with Mr Denis Steker, gave a presentation titled "Dental Trends in Asia Pacific" to promote IDEM. The SDA delegates also met up with Kevin Lewis of the Dental Protection Ltd (DPL) and discussed various issues regarding dental indemnity over lunch. There were also meetings between the FDI 09 LOC Committee and FDI representative Paul Wilson which Dr Ng Chin Siau helped arrange.



No FDI Congress would be complete without social events. We attended dinners hosted by the Canadian, French and Japanese Dental Associations. We also ventured to the various souks or traditional market places and the more modern malls. We went on a desert safari with dinner, sandboarding, camel riding and a belly dancing performance thrown in.

## Do You Know?

With a global trading market share of 25% of the gold products, Dubai is one of the world's largest gold markets.



Dr Lim Lii posing next to a shop in Gold Souk

FDI Dubai 2007 ended on Saturday with a plea to the UAE authorities to introduce water fluoridation to combat caries. At a press conference, Chairman of the Scientific Committee, Dr Tareq Khoury said that while manufacturers of bottled water have added fluoride to their products, tap water used for cooking and drinking by many of the low-income population, still lacks the ingredient.

Despite the best preparations, this FDI was not without its negative aspects. The general sentiment regarding the Welcome Ceremony was not positive, perhaps due to the numerous repetitive cultural performances. Delegates were also particularly disappointed with the poor availability of taxis and atrocious traffic congestion around the convention centre.

Many delegates spoke fondly of the FDI 1990 held in Singapore where they were mesmerized by the Opening Ceremony and the overall efficiency. One delegate even bought a house in the Caribbean and named it 'Sentosa' after he attended Singapore FDI 1990! While all these bode well for our FDI in 2009, these high expectations certainly put a lot of pressure for the FDI 2009 LOC. As Dr Choo remarked, "There is a bright future for IDEM events and even more so if FDI 2009 is successful."

The next FDI Annual World Dental Congress will be held from 24th to 27th September 2008 in Stockholm, Sweden. The following year, FDI Congress returns to our fold after a break of 20 long years.



Many delegates spoke fondly of the FDI 1990 held in Singapore where they were mesmerized by the Opening Ceremony and the overall efficiency. One delegate even bought a house in the Caribbean and named it 'Sentosa' after he attended Singapore FDI 1990!



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## IDEM Singapore: A key platform for communications and advance dental training

**SINGAPORE** - With exhibition space increased to 10,000sqm in year 2008 and exhibitor numbers set to cross the 360 mark, IDEM Singapore remains as Asia Pacific's No. 1 showcase and meeting ground for the international dental community.

A one-stop focal point held in Uniquely Singapore where products of the global markets are brought together with the lucrative demand of the fast

developing dental sector in Asia Pacific. Take this chance to meet key decision-makers and strengthen your business network at IDEM Singapore 2008.

YOU ARE INVITED to preview the latest trends and methodology in dental healthcare.

Join IDEM and energize your dental business today.

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FDI World Dental Federation

Organizers:



Singapore Dental Association



**IF you have not** yet registered for IDEM 2008 held at Suntec Convention Centre from the 4-6th April 2008, here are a few more reasons ( as if you need any more! ) to do so ASAP.

**Reason 1:** Due to the overwhelming response, the organisers have had to increase the exhibition space yet again to meet the needs of the many exhibitors. This brings the total space of Asia-Pacific's leading dental event to a record breaking 10,000 square metres!

**Reason 2:** The British-Dutch group Unilever will be joining the IDEM fold for the first time next year, having chosen IDEM to present its partnership with FDI World Dental Federation to the Southeast Asian markets. Other companies like E-Woo will also be pulling out all the stops for their inaugural appearance in Singapore. The exhibitor list reads like a "Who's Who" of the international dental market, with the big boys like 3M Espe, GC Asia, Carl Zeiss, IvoclarVivadent, Nobel Biocare, and many more showing their support.

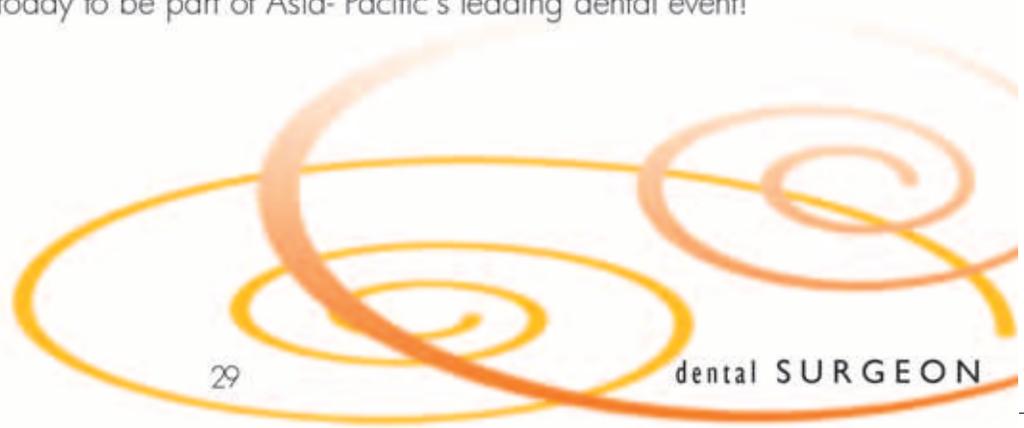
**Reason 3 :** Countries from around the globe, including Switzerland and Liechtenstein, the U.S., Brazil and Germany will also feature joint stands and pavilions. The German Federal Ministry of Economy and Technology has even singled out IDEM as an ideal platform for German dental companies in Southeast Asia and will be sponsoring group appearances from within the German dental industry. Meanwhile as word continues to spread of the importance and opportunities provided by IDEM, the French Chamber of Commerce in Singapore (FCCS) has plans for a first-ever French pavilion at next year's event.

**Reason 4 :** For the dentists attending the IDEM congress, the committee from the Singapore Dental Association (SDA), in cooperation with the FDI and the World Dental Education Society, has put together a top notch panel of experts from around the world who will be lecturing on fields ranging from implantology to restorative dentistry and guided tissue regeneration.

Titled "Scientific Basis of Clinical Practice," the IDEM congress will be focusing on applied dental technology and dental hygiene and aims to deliver hours of quality continuing dental education. Next year's event will feature many distinguished speakers including Prof. Steven Offenbacher, Prof. Edward J. Swift and Prof. Gregory King (all from the U.S.), Prof. Shimon Friedman (from Canada) among others.

The IDEM team was also at the recent FDI Congress in Dubai to provide information to interested companies and individuals ( read pg 24 )

So what are you waiting for, sign up today to be part of Asia-Pacific's leading dental event!



Whenever someone mentions the word Public Relations (PR), what comes to mind is a pretty face behind a glamorous job. Wining, dining and socializing with clients and media are part of PR but there is really more to it than meets the eye. Anyone can speak convincingly, write immaculately and hold himself up well, it does not mean that he or she understands the concepts of PR and can practice effective communication strategically.

Public Relations, in its broadest and simplest sense, is the deliberate, planned and sustained effort to establish and maintain mutual understanding between an organization and its public. Here, the term "public" is categorized into internal public (including members, staff) and external public (including customers/patients, suppliers, media, government bodies etc). More specifically, public relations today is not only a description of the various relationships that exist, but the practice of managing and working through legitimate means to improve them.

The product result of these public relationships is often referred to as image. An image is the picture that other people and groups of people have of the organization. Other terms such as reputation are often preferred to denote the perceptions that audiences have of other individuals, companies and organizations based on their experiences with them.

An organization's image in a real sense, or its reputation, is an important ingredient and often a requirement for gaining support from the community and being successful in its aims. For example, if an organization is perceived as responsible and making worthwhile contributions to society, people will be attracted to join and the government will be sympathetic in funding. On the other hand, if an organization is regarded with suspicion, it is likely assiduously avoided by politicians, poorly supported by members, and its chance of success will be slim. Similarly, consumers will more likely buy products or services from a company that is seen as environmentally responsible, benevolent to its employees and good for nation and community.

A good image coupled with a good reputation is the desired outcome of well-managed and successful public relations.

The scope of public relations are listed below and their concepts will be highlighted in the PR Snippets section in subsequent issues of Dental Surgeon :

- Communication Planning
- Media Relations
- Press Conference and Press Releases
- Crisis Communications
- Employee Communications and Newsletter
- Community Relations and Sponsorship
- Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)
- New Media – Internet PR
- Reputation Management, Corporate Identity and Branding

Public Relations has grown strongly during the past few decades and is set to become an even more important part of management in future due to factors such as increasing public education, the growing impact and pervasiveness of mass media, and the growth of consumer consciousness.

**“A company or organization today without an active public relations program, soon finds itself ignored by the media, threatened by hysterical minorities and faced with political and economic neglect.”**

- Jim R Macnamara

## Dentistry and PR

Dentistry is a part of the healthcare service industry and just like the doctors, we are constantly communicating with our internal and external “public”. In this day and age, you are not going to find a dentist or doctor who just simply treats his patients and earns his livelihood behind closed doors.

Besides treating patients, the dentist needs to deal with his staff/employees, relatives of the patients, dental suppliers, the general public, media, national dental associations as well as government agencies. Hence, PR is definitely an essential communication skill that should be in a dentist’s armamentarium. Interestingly, although not trained in PR, I have witnessed several dentists evolved to become excellent communicators, establishing very good rapport with patients, staff, colleagues, etc.

I have seen examples of dentists who do commendable community projects by going the extra mile to provide subsidized treatment for the needy in their neighbourhood; ever enthusiastic volunteer “tooth angels” who travel to less developed countries in the region to render much needed dental care services to the poor. In addition, some dentists even have their own websites and blogs to reach out to their patients and for the general dissemination of oral health messages. They are certainly on the right track to ride on the wave of the revolutionary New Media to engage the public via the cyberspace.

Overall, more can be done and achieved with PR now that advertising for healthcare profession is liberalized. However, a word of caution here in that advertising is primarily a one-way transfer of information, usually to sell a product or service. On the other hand, relationship marketing, which emerged in the 1990s as a more effective long term strategy than single transaction marketing, recognizes what public relations has always maintained – that, longer term relationships with our customers (patients) and key stake holders are more important and potentially more valuable than simply making a sale. We want our patients to keep coming back and gain referrals by “word of mouth”. We also want to establish good ties with SDA which is the representative body of the vast majority of dentists in Singapore. Subconsciously, many of us are already practising PR in our everyday lives and in our line of work even without any formal training!

By Dr Chye Chuan Hee Kelvin

## TOOTH FAIRY FUND – BRINGING SMILES TO THE NEEDY

Furthering its commitment to social responsibility towards the our local community, the National Dental Centre launched the Tooth Fairy Fund (TFF) at its 10th Anniversary celebrations in March this year to help fund treatment for patients facing financial difficulties.

Caring for the health needs of people across all ranks of society has always been part of the mission of public healthcare providers like the NDC. Every year, more than 500 patients seen at the Centre have difficulty affording even basic treatment. Many of these needy patients have medical conditions such as nasopharyngeal cancer, complex facial deformities or other inherited conditions which require multi-disciplinary care that stretch over a longer period of time and is costly. Others are in financial hardship and are unable to pay for much needed treatment, especially when Medisave, Medishield and Medifund generally do not cover dental treatment costs.

The objective of the Fund is simple – to help these needy ones achieve oral health, a healthier smile and with it, a better quality of life. The generous donations received will go towards improving the oral health of those in society who need assistance.

The Tooth Fairy welcomes contributions from the dental fraternity!

Donation forms are enclosed with this newsletter. Do drop a note to NDC's Corporate Affairs Department ([corporateaffairs@ndc.com.sg](mailto:corporateaffairs@ndc.com.sg)) if you need more forms or wish to partner the Tooth Fairy for a fundraising activity.

➤ The NUS Entrepreneurship Awards (NEA) was held on 3 September 2007 at the NUS University Cultural Centre. This event was jointly organized by the NUS Faculty of Engineering and the Students' Business Incubation of Global Organizations (BINGO). On that day, Dr Ng Chin Siau, Founder and Managing Director of Q&M Dental Group, was proudly awarded the Best Entrepreneur Award – Faculty of Dentistry.

➤ SDA council members Drs Ng Chin Siau and Ng Jet Wei attended the 6th Penang Dental Scientific Congress 2007 held from the 20-21st October at the Equatorial Hotel. Besides attending the lectures by well-known figures in the dental scene ( including Dr Patrick Tseng who was a keynote speaker at the symposium ), they also promoted IDEM 08 to the delegates present through a presentation and flyers inserted into the conference bags.

Dr Ng Jet Wei would like to thank the organising Chairman and Chairman of Malaysia Dental Association Northern Zone, Dr Neoh Gim Bok, for kindly allowing a IDEM 08 Presentation session to be held for about 150 delegates .

The winners of the lucky draw held in conjunction with the National Dentist Survey last Nov are :

- Dr Ng Keng Howe
- Dr Lee Wai Han
- Dr Yong Than Fui

Congratulations to the 3 winners , they will receive a free 1 yr SDA subscription for their participation.

Just below the gumline

Upper palate

Soft tissue of  
the cheek

**Listerine® reaches  
everywhere for  
whole-mouth health**

Soft tissue of  
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Under the tongue

- Listerine fights germs throughout the entire mouth—areas where brushing and flossing can't reach
- Listerine, added to any mechanical routine, can help patients reduce significantly more plaque
  - **52%** greater plaque reductions vs brushing and flossing alone\*<sup>1</sup>
  - **21%** greater reductions in gingivitis vs brushing and flossing alone\*<sup>1</sup>
- Listerine is safe and appropriate for long-term daily use

**Recommend Listerine, twice a day, every day, for whole-mouth health.**

\*Based on a home-use test among subjects with mild-to-moderate gingivitis.

Reference: 1. Sharma N, Charles CH, Lynch MC, et al. Adjunctive benefit of an essential oil-containing mouthrinse in reducing plaque and gingivitis in patients who brush and floss regularly: a six-month study. J Am Dent Assoc. 2004;135:496-504.



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**Fluoride**  
Prevents cavities

TOOTHPASTE **Ordinary  
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Superior cleaning<sup>4</sup>

Clinically proven in over 60 Studies  
Studied in over 15,000 patients.<sup>13</sup>

**Copolymer**  
Retains triclosan for 12-hour  
antibacterial protection.<sup>6</sup>

**Triclosan**  
1. Helps to prevent plaque bacteria,  
gingivitis and halitosis.<sup>8,10,14</sup>  
2. Helps to reduce key inflammatory  
mediators.<sup>7</sup>

**Sodium Fluoride**  
Prevents cavities.<sup>11,12</sup>



**Recommend Colgate Total Professional Clean to  
maintain a “Professional Clean” feeling every day**

References: 1. Data on file, Colgate-Palmolive. 2. Relative Dentin Abrasion (RDA) is below ISO standard for daily use toothpaste. 3, 4, 5. Versus ordinary fluoride toothpaste with conventional silica. Data on file, Colgate-Palmolive. 6. Amornchat C *et al. Mahidol Dent J*, 2004; 24: 103–11. 7. Modeer T *et al. J Clin Periodontol*, 1996; 23: 927–933. 8. Garcia-Godoy F *et al. Am J Dent*, 1990; 3: 15–26. 9. Banoczy J *et al. Am J Dent*, 2005; 8: 205–208. 10. Hu D *et al. Compend Contin Educ Dent*, 2003; 24(Suppl 9): 34–41. 11. Marinho VCC *et al. The Cochrane Library* 2006; Issue 1 “Fluoride toothpaste for Preventing Dental Caries in Children and Adolescents (Review)”. 12. Panagakos F *et al. J Clin Dent*, 2005; 16(Suppl): S1–S20. 13. Data on file, Colgate-Palmolive. 14. Davies RM *et al. J Clin Periodontol*, 2004; 31:1029–1033

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