Hundreds of complaints against Singapore dentists in 2017

By DTI

SINGAPORE: Despite the high quality of dental work being performed throughout Singapore, there are still occasions when standards are not met. According to the Singapore Dental Association, 270 complaints were lodged against dental practitioners in 2017, including performing of procedures outside of the dentist’s scope, long waiting times, overcharging and dissatisfaction with treatment outcomes.

In a recent report with Channel NewsAsia, Singapore Dental Association President Dr Lim Lii said, “The complaints were mainly due to misunderstanding on both part of the patient and dentist about the treatment rendered.”

“Due to a lack of proper communication, patients may not fully comprehend the advice like the limitations of treatment procedures given by the dentists. Similarly, the patients may not have adequately expressed their expectations to the dentists, resulting in apparent unmet expectations from the treatment,” she continued.

With misunderstandings often leading to lodging of complaints, some Singapore-based dental professionals believe the problem concerns the lack of awareness of the general public regarding dentistry and dental services provided by various types of dentists. Dr Elaine Tan, a consultant in clinical orthodontics at the National Dental Centre of Singapore, told Channel NewsAsia: “I think people have been thinking that all dentists are the same and that their job is just to extract or fill teeth. But in dentistry, we have different specialties.”

Complaints were mainly due to misunderstanding on both the part of the patient and dentist about the treatment rendered. SDA President Dr Lim Lii said.

There are no current restrictions in Singapore on the treatments dentists are allowed to provide, but dentists are expected to practise within their competencies and encouraged by the Singapore Dental Council to refer patients appropriately according to the body’s ethical guidelines. It is also illegal for a dentist to state that he or she is a specialist in a particular field if not registered in that field with the Singapore Dental Council.

In a move to help combat misunderstandings between patients and dentists and to minimise complaints lodged, the National Dental Centre of Singapore will be initiating a new awareness campaign. Aimsed at informing the wider public about oral health and dentistry in general as well as the provision of dental services, the campaign is set to be launched in March.

Cavitating jets may provide easier removal of oral biofilm

By DTI

SENDAI, Japan: Just like natural teeth, dental implants require proper care and oral hygiene to prevent disease. In a recent study, Japanese researchers looking for better ways for dentists to remove plaque from implant fixtures compared the effects of a cavitating jet with the standardly used water jet. They found that the cavitating jet removed biofilm from the rough surface of an implant fixture more effectively.

Prof. Hitoshi Soyama from Tohoku University and his team from Showa University compared the cleaning ability of a cavitating jet to that of a water jet. With the former, high-speed fluid is injected by a nozzle through water to create minuscule bubbles of vapour. When these bubbles collapse, they produce strong shock waves with sufficient force to remove surface contaminants.

To test the two different jets, four volunteers performed oral care for three days to allow biofilm to develop in their mouths. Their fixtures were then cleaned using both methods, and the researchers measured the amount of plaque remaining at several time intervals.

While there was little difference between the amounts of plaque removed by both methods.
Australian senate support for medical device reforms welcomed

By DTI

CANBERRA, Australia: A senate committee report recommending the passage of legislation that changes the way the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) regulates medicines and medical devices has been welcomed by the Australian Dental Industry Association (ADIA). It delivers a long-standing, legislative reform that ADIA has been lobbying politicians of all political persuasions to deliver on for nearly a decade.

“This bill contains important reforms that will cut the red tape associated with introducing into the Australian market new and innovative patient treatment and diagnostic options,” said ADIA CEO Troy Williams.

“This legislation, combined with the legislative changes made last year that ADIA also secured, from past practice where only the TGA could perform such evaluations.

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Williams went on to say that ADIA has been pushing for the changes because they create a regulatory framework for dental products that is based on a risk management approach designed to ensure public health and safety. He added that the reforms will simultaneously free the dental industry from any unnecessary regulatory burden.

The bill will reportedly also make changes that support amendments to the Therapeutic Goods Act 1989 made in 2017. The reforms will allow the TGA to authorise Australian companies to undertake conformity assessments, a significant departure creates a far more efficient system for dental product manufacturers to introduce new products to the Australian market. Whereas previously the TGA was the sole source of authority, the increasing use of overseas regulators and third-party Australian conformity assessment bodies will provide alternatives without compromising patient safety,” said Williams.

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Presentations, lectures and workshops all set to feature at IDEM 2018

By DTI

SINGAPORE: The 2018 International Dental Exhibition and Meeting (IDEM) Singapore will be held from 13 to 15 April. With lectures presented by dentists, educators and researchers from around the globe, as well as presentations on contemporary clinical advancements, the tenth edition is poised to be as well received as that of previous years.

Furthermore, in addition to the main conference, a number of workshops will be held. According to the IDEM organisers, the workshops will seek to widen attendees’ understanding and knowledge on particular topics. One such workshop will be held by Dr Galip Gürel. Based in Istanbul in Turkey, Gürel runs a six-chair practice with an in-house laboratory and presents across the globe. In a preceding session of lectures on 14 April, he will take participants through the process of a personalised smile design, detailing how the concept of Visagismile can be applied to achieve harmony between the patient’s personality and the final smile.

In the workshop on 15 April that leads on from Gürel’s lectures, participants will have the opportunity to see the importance of the mock-up by creating one of their own based on the Visagismile concept and using the 3-D REBEL program for smile design.

The session will begin by detailing the importance of communication when applying a digital workflow, then move on to discussing the importance of a mock-up. Additionally, Gürel will touch on the soft tissue, implants and veneers. The lectures will also explain the differences between applying the 2-D Visagismile concept and using the 3-D REBEL program for smile design.

In the workshop on 15 April that leads on from Gürel’s lectures, participants will have the opportunity to see the importance of the mock-up by creating one of their own based on the Visagismile concept. They will perform the entire process, including digital intraoral impression taking, creating the 3-D design in REBEL and 3-D printing in digital wax. In participating in the entire process, attendees will learn how to prepare teeth in a minimally invasive way through the aesthetic pre-evaluative temporaries.

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More information on IDEM and the workshops can be obtained at the official event website www.idem-singapore.com.