"...GCC is among one of the best regions in the world when it comes to dentistry and dental education"

Interview with Dr. Meshari Al-Otaibi, President, Makkah International Dental Conference, Past General Director of Security Forces Hospital, Makkah, Saudi Arabia

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Past General Director of Security Forces Hospital, Makkah, Saudi Arabia

"The Patient"?

In particular the end client – what led you and your team to this initiative?

Our team was led by many objectives but the most important thing is to upgrade the quality of restorative dentistry inside the kingdom and in promoting research, upgrading clinical and technical knowledge of the restorative dentist. We will also seek to collaborate between specialists in the domestic Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and the international sphere. Spreading the message and awareness of maintaining good oral health in our communities.

How will the SSRD impact the improvement of the dental community in the Gulf Coop-

eration Council (GCC) region, in particular the end client – "The Patient"?

The SSRD will impact the improvement of the dental community in the GCC region for the end client which is the patient by means of its quality in diagnosis and integrat-
ed management of diseases of the teeth, their supporting structures and the functional and aesthetic require-
ments of the individual as well as promoting disease control through caries prevention, risk assessment, diagnosis and treatment to tackle the challenges of the patient.

Working amongst one of the top dental hospitals in the Middle East region, how do you rate the level of dentistry in the GCC and what do you think requires improvement?

I strongly believe that the GCC is among one of the best regions in the world when it comes to dentistry and dental education. The area at-
tracts the leading players in the den-
tal industry every year to present their latest innovations, the hospi-
tals and the health authorities have partnered with key players, to deliver the best quality of service to the pa-
tients. Furthermore, the GCC has ex-
cellent dental education institutions which now graduate thousands of qualified dentists annually. In my opinion, the region is fast becoming a global center for dental tourism. I personally know a very long list of some exceptional GCC qualified den-
tsists who very proudly can put their name some of the best dental practi-
tioners in the world.

I believe what we need to develop now is a strong strategic plan to high-
light the need of prevention within dentistry, covering the whole GCC.

Dentistry is moving faster than ever, as a restorative dentist, what is the most important factor for dental professionals to keep in mind when embracing new technologies and treatment options?

As a restorative dentist, the most important factor for dental profession-
s to keep in mind when embracing new technologies and treatment options is that it will ultimately im-
prove and broaden access to dental care because the more high-quality digital information becomes avail-
able to researchers, the potential for more precise diagnosis and treat-
ment will continue to grow.

Col. Dr. Meshari Al-Otaibi, you have been active in the Mid-
dle East dental community for over 30 years. Our readers are interested to read more about you and your vast experience in the Middle Eastern dental scene, please if you could share some insights of where the profession is headed, in your opinion?

I have worked with my dental col-
leagues in societies, dental schools and various health authorities as a volunteer in many teams across our profession. This I believe is the secret behind my professional growth in the region. We are very proud of our oral health maintenance campaigns by which we have been success-
ful in reaching more than 2 million individuals in 4 years. In KSA we achieved this through our campaign "How to Keep your Beautiful Smile", this campaign is now in its 12th year. We worked with different stakeholders e.g. Security Forces Hospital Mak-
kah, Saudi Dental Society, Makkah International Dental Conference, and lately with The Saudi Society of Restorative Dentistry. Theses cam-
paigns are executed in partnership with Oral-B.

Another campaign we execute dur-
ing the annual pilgrimage of Hajj and is called "Pilgrims Smile". We were successful in initiating this cam-
paign such that it moves with the pilgrims during the days off Hajj. We travel with them from Arafat, to Muzdalifah and finally stopping in Mina. As you can imagine is logisti-
cally an extremely difficult campa-
gain to execute.

Will you be attending the upcoming 13th CAD/CAM & Digital Dentistry Int’l Conference coming May in Dubai?

As a long-term VIP guest to the event, have you ever played a role in the restorative society in the Middle East?

I look forward to attending this con-
ference, and I encourage dentists in all fields to come and follow the new technologies about CAD/CAM as I personally believe that digital den-
tistry is to be the new generation of dental science. Today there is a trend towards digital technology all over the world, and this reflects positively throughout dentistry in all special-
ties, particularly in Restorative Den-
tistry.

We appreciate your valuable insights and wish yourself and the Saudi So-
ciety for Restorative Dentistry (SSRD) lots of success moving forward in the quest to improve Restorative Den-
tistry in the region.