WHO says women need better health care

Daniel Zimmermann
DTI

HONG KONG/LEIPZIG, Germany: The World Health Organization (WHO) has stressed the need to improve health care for women, especially those services pertaining to key stages of life, such as adolescence and older age. According to a new report by the organisation, lack of access to education, decision-making positions and income limit women’s ability to protect their own health and that of their families. Policy change and action is needed within the health sector and beyond to remove these barriers, WHO Director-General Dr Margaret Chan said.

According to Dr Chan, women provide between 80 and 90 per cent of health care worldwide, whether in the home or as nurses, but rarely receive the care they need themselves. For example, in many countries sexual and reproductive health services tend to focus exclusively on married women. Few services also cater for marginalised groups of women, such as sex workers, intravenous drug users, ethnic minorities and rural women.

Although considered to be ‘male problems’, heart attacks and strokes are two leading global causes of death of women—who often exhibit different symptoms from men.

To the Editor

Re: Editorial, (Dental Tribune Asia Pacific No. 8, Vol. 7, page 4)

"...to treat health care not as a market commodity but as a public benefit institution."

Obviously, the writer of this article knows nothing about economics. The demand for health care is infinite. Making things free through a government programme will bankrupt governments and inevitably lead to rationing. Health care, like any other service, involves labour of individuals and is therefore NOT a right—unlike freedoms of press, religion or speech, which require nothing other than people leave us alone. We don’t need lectures from Euro-socialists like the writer. Europe, with its practically non-existent growth rates and entitlement culture, is definitely NOT a model we wish to emulate!

Kim Henry, USA, 13 Nov. 2009

Re: “Experts discuss future of implantology in Gothenburg” (Dental Tribune Asia Pacific No. 10, Vol. 7, page 1)

Fulfilling patient needs is the aim of my daily practice. Dental professionals would be better helped if they could have access to accurate information on the effectiveness of treatments found to have positive results, as reported in scientific papers. This means that opposing the commercial publishing of articles on treatments with non-positive results is surely the best and ethical approach, although not widespread. It’s odd that the person who promoted advertising of a surgical procedure is now blaming people for pursuing commercial interests.

Leopoldo Bozzi, Italy, 18 Nov. 2009
HIV/AIDS, pregnancy-related conditions and tuberculosis are other causes of death and disease of women aged between 15 and 45.

The WHO report seeks to identify key areas for reform both within and outside the health sector, including improving health systems to better meet women's needs throughout their lives, as well as leveraging changes in public policy to address and monitor the ways social and economic determinants of health adversely affect women.

“It's time to pay girls and women back, to make sure that they get the care and support they need to enjoy a fundamental human right at every moment of their lives, that is their right to health,” Dr Chan said.

US dental programme helps victims of domestic violence

Daniel Zimmermann

NEW YORK, NY, USA/LEIPZIG, Germany: The American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry Charitable Foundation (AACDCF) has announced that over 800 survivors of domestic violence have received free cosmetic dental care through the organisation’s Give Back A Smile programme. The results were released on this year’s Health Cares About Domestic Violence Day, which takes place annually on the second Wednesday of October.

The AACDCF Give Back A Smile programme was founded in 2006 to help restore the lives of domestic abuse survivors by providing dental care at no cost. In addition, the organisation supports dental professionals who are interested in learning from experts the way to approach difficult situations in the dental practice in cases of suspected domestic violence.

Currently, there are 400 applicants being treated throughout the US. According to the US National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, more than five million people are affected by domestic violence each year. Almost 75 per cent of injuries are to the head and face, which means the dental office is in an extremely influential position to be able to intervene and help stop the violence.

“Aafter suffering abuse, it is difficult for survivors to find something to smile about, and even more difficult when they don’t have a smile to show. AACDCF volunteers assist survivors of domestic violence by treating their dental injuries, restoring their smiles, self-esteem, and ultimately, their lives,” AACDCF Program Manager Lisa Fitch said.
LEIPZIG, Germany: Materials used in root canal procedures are not always compatible with each other or do not bond properly with the hard dental tissue. Root filling materials, for example, should not shrink as they harden and should be visible in X-rays. Materials used to rebuild the tooth should mimic the properties of the tooth itself.

Researchers at the Fraunhofer Institute for Silicate Research in Würzburg (Germany) have developed a new material that can be used for all components of root canal treatment. The material, which was developed in collaboration with researchers from VOCO GmbH, a German manufacturer of dental restorative materials, is based on organic-inorganic hybrid substances called ORMOCERS that are combined with various nano- and micro-particles. While standard materials shrink by 2 to 4 per cent, ORMOCERS only shrink by 1.3 per cent as they harden. They can also be adapted to adhere to the different parts of the tooth, the researchers said.

ORMOCERS are already used in optical functional coatings for glass and ceramic components and easy-to-clean coatings for metals and leather. According to ISC officials, a final product for dentistry will be launched in a few years.

The Greater New York Dental Meeting has elected Dr John R Halikias as new chairman for the years 2010 and 2011. He will lead the organisation in its effort to continue the GNYDM’s mission of fostering lifelong learning for dental professionals and providing enormous sales opportunities for the dental industry, meeting officials told Dental Tribune America in New York.

Halikias will accept his honour after he was unanimously elected by the GNYDM Organization Committee.

Halikias has served the GNYDM for more than 25 years while also being president of the Second District Dental Society, one of the sponsors of the meeting. He learned his dental degree from the New York College of Dentistry in 1985. He is also a member of the American Dental Association, New York State Dental Association, American College of Dentistry and Hellenic Dental Society, and is a fellow of the Academy of General Dentistry. He currently practices general dentistry with his father, Dr Robert Halikias, in Brooklyn, NY.

As the largest dental convention, exposition and congress in the United States, the meeting continues to attract more than 57,000 attendees including 17,000 dentists from all US states and 118 countries.