India plans to overhaul dental education system

HONG KONG/LEIPZIG, Germany: The Dental Council of India has recently announced to introduce changes in the country’s lacking dental education system. According to president Dr Anil Kohli who spoke to dental graduates of the Sri Ramakrishna Dental College and Hospital in Coimbatore in September, the Council will look into the accreditation standards for graduate and postgraduate dental courses, as well as continuing dental education and clinical fellowship programmes. Other issues including CREcognition in India and abroad will also be reviewed.

India has the largest number of dental schools and students in the world but the quality of dental education has gone down recently, especially in economically underdeveloped areas. In addition, a large number of graduates have to quit dentistry due to limited career options.

Dr Kohli said that the implementation of the changes will take several years to complete but they are needed to improve the quality of dentistry in the country and to attract more students from foreign countries. He also stressed the need for a national oral health policy.

“Our own figures show that only four to five per cent of the population visit a dentist. We’ll have to look at this aspect as the next frontier of dental care in India if we are going to provide fruitful employment to our fresh graduates,” he added.

A mathematical model constructed by researchers at Imperial College London predicts the risk of cardiovascular disease (heart attacks, stroke) associated with low background levels of radiation. The model shows that the risk would vary almost in proportion with dose. Results, published October 23 in the open-access journal PLoS Computational Biology, are consistent with risk levels reported in previous studies involving nuclear workers.

Cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death and one of the leading causes of disability in developed countries, as reported in the paper and also by the World Health Organization (http://www.who.int/whosis/en). For some time, scientists have understood how high-dose radiotherapy (RT) causes inflammation in the heart and large arteries.

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Dental graduates in India have trouble to find a career in dentistry. (DTI/Photo Michael Jung)