We will be offering specialty dental training programs in all the recognized dental specialties

Dubai, UAE: From the vision of HH Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoom, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, came the creation of Dubai Healthcare City in Dubai, UAE. The well-reputed Professor David Wray comes to the UAE to spearhead the creation of the new Dubai School of Dental Medicine located at Dubai Healthcare City.

Dental Tribune Middle East & Africa: Welcome Professor David Wray, we come across you here at the first ‘Umea International Dental Conference’ at the booth of Dubai School of Dental Medicine. How are you doing?

Professor David Wray: I’m very well thank you very much, a pleasure to be here.

Professor Wray, could you tell us about yourself, your presence here in Dubai and the opening of the new Dental School of Dental Medicine?

Well, I am Professor David Wray, I’m a UK trained doctor and dentist who’s previously been Dean of the Glasgow Dental Hospital and School in Scotland. And in the middle of the summer of this year [2012] I came to Dubai to open the ‘Dubai School of Dental Medicine’; The Dubai School of Dental Medicine is part of Dubai Healthcare City which, in turn, is the idea and the vision of HH Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoom, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, who decided that Dubai, as it emerged into a strong nation, required a strong healthcare infrastructure and hence, created Dubai Healthcare City and the Dubai School of Dental Medicine is one of the products of that vision. What we have been charged with is setting up the Dental School to train postgraduate students in all the dental specialties, and we have started that process and are taking in our first postgraduate students in January of 2013. We will be offering specialty dental training programs in all the recognized dental specialties in the first instance. During 2013 we will be offering Oral Surgery, Orthodontics, Pediatric Dentistry and Endodontics, and then in addition to this we will be offering Prosthodontics and Periodontics as Dental specializations.

The thing which is unique about this new Dubai School of Dental Medicine is that the students will, like many other places, be embarking on a three year intensive clinical training program with a clear didactic component and a research dissertation. In addition to that, the students will get an MSc which will complete the course—but as well as that, we are in the final stages of negotiation to allow our students to simultaneously graduate with a membership from the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh in the UK, a diploma which can subsequently be converted into a fellowship so that students will be graduating with both an academic qualification in the form of an MSc and also an internationally recognized clinical qualification, which would ultimately be a Fellowship from the Royal College of Surgeons in Edinburgh. Therefore, our graduates would have the same specialty qualifications, clinically, as those colleagues who are consultants and professors within the UK. And that influence of the Edinburgh College extends both to the Middle East, the Far East and Australasia, and of course they also examine in North America where they have joined exams with some of the American boards as well.

So we’re offering our students a unique package and they are going to be taught by an international faculty in a state of the art dental school and a dental clinical facility which will be completed during 2014, and we anticipate during 2015 that we will have 150 dentists working within the Dubai School of Dental Medicine either teaching or training.

Congratulations on the new project, an interesting initiative. With your vast experience in the UK, what can you say about Dubai?

Dubai is an interesting place to be. Because not only do you have the opportunity to teach with an international faculty, but you have the chance to influence the form of dental education in the Gulf region. Therefore they are bound to go either to North America or the UK in order to get specialty training. The problem with that is, if you take the UK as an example, and indeed the same occurs in North America, the students go over there at a significant expense because not only do they have tuition fees, but they have the cost of travel, accommodations and the cost of living within these countries as a foreign national. And these individuals then get an academic qualification from the host university, but don’t get anything to indicate that they’ve had a formal clinical training—and indeed they don’t get a formal clinical training within these institutions. So not only are we providing a homegrown opportunity for these students to get a postgraduate education to specialist level without having to leave the Emirates, which is certainly an advantage to some of the female graduates that we have here, but in addition to that they are getting a clinical qualification which will allow them to have a clinical license within the Gulf and, in fact, one which is internationally recognized.

Based on what selection criteria will you accept your students? And the program will be offered in which languages?

Well in line with the rest of the tertiary education facilities here these courses will be taught exclusively in English and our selection criteria demands are very clearly set, because of that our students must be proficient in English and reach the necessary grade of understanding English in order to participate in the course. However in addition to that, they need to be the top students forming their dental schools, they need to have had a few years’ experience: one, to cement and seal their clinical competence as a General Dentist and also an opportunity to figure out for themselves which area of dentistry they’d like to specialize in. And we then take them on a competitive basis after an interview process and the usual admissions criteria, and the students are then brought in and are encouraged to develop the ability to have lifelong learning when they leave, and also they will be subjected to a very student centered postgraduate training program where there will be a maximum class size of six students and any one cohort being taught by, as I said previously, the international faculty. So it will be very much, all small groups teaching, which we anticipate will produce not only students who are highly competent, but the clear intention is that they will be specialists who will be able to practice autonomously and provide high quality specialist advice.

In addition also serve as ambassadors for the new Dubai School of Dental Medicine as it increases in its scope and in its influence within the Gulf region because, of course, it’s going to end up being the largest dental healthcare facility within the region. Last but, as a parallel aspiration of this school, because we will be a large specialized unit we hope to be able to provide tertiary care for patients with complex and difficult problems. And hopefully we will very soon become a significant referral base for both the dental and the medical professions within the Gulf States.

Regarding your lecturers and educators, based on what criteria do you select them?

Well clearly when one has the opportunity to start a new school and has a blank sheet of paper with which to create an entirely new institution, the curriculum, etc. one starts with the very highest expectations and I’m glad to say that my experience today has exceeded my...
expectations and that I have not been merely taking what was available but have been able to recruit the highest caliber academicians from around the globe—senior academicians who are experienced in teaching postgraduate courses and who are also research active on an international level. The local licensing authorities within Dubai Healthcare City are very strict and they demand that, in addition to an academic qualification, like an MSc or a PhD and research activity, academic staff must also have a clinical qualification which is largely regarded as either an ability to get on the Specialist list within the UK or board certification within North America. And of course that would be a minimum standard that we demand for ourselves anyway, it means that out of all the senior academics who inquire about the opportunity of coming to join our faculty, a number of them are disappointed because they don’t have the qualifications necessary to make the cut. But there seems to be plenty of people, not only prepared to come to Dubai to participate in this exciting innovation, but also very keen to come when they see the basis on which the school is being set up and the confidence that they have in coming to an institution where education and standards for both academia and medical care are the priorities.

This, of course, exists because this is a government initiative which is not profit making in its aspirations.

Students will be keen to know the tuition fees, what are the packages which you will offer? The tuition fees in the first instance have been set at a competitive rate which, currently within the region, is $55,000, equating to AED 200,000, per clinical year over a 3 year period. But of course, this is a very reasonable investment because the 3 years in the Dubai School of Dental Medicine is going to be a springboard of which our graduates will launch a successful career either in specialist practice or within academia. And of course a large number of students are obtaining scholarships from various sponsoring organizations. Unfortunately, as things stand at the moment, a number of scholarships are only available to students who are prepared to go overseas to get a suitable postgraduate dental training but that, of course, is a regulation issue which was set up when there were no significant opportunities for postgraduate education within the region, and now that Dubai Dental School of Dental Medicine is up and running we feel confident that those scholarships will be extended to other graduates to come here to the Dubai School of Dental Medicine, having been sponsored by various individuals with a scholarship.

Professor David Wray, a pleasure to speak with you and thank you very much. We wish you all the best with the Dubai School of Dental Medicine.

Dubai School of Dental Medicine (DSDM) is a newly established home-grown dental institution launched to support the UAE community with the finest quality of dental care services and education. Dubai School of Dental Medicine is an institution of the Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Academic Medical Center at Dubai Healthcare City.

VISION
Dubai School of Dental Medicine will set the standard of excellence and be recognized as a leader in dental education, research and clinical practice.

MISSION
Dubai School of Dental Medicine aims to provide internationally recognized, student-centered dental education programs that combine advanced didactic, clinical and research training designed to prepare the candidate for a career at the specialist level.

The School opens doors in January 2013

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With the best of both worlds, Dubai School of Dental Medicine is a springboard of which our graduates will launch a successful career either in specialist practice or within academia.
Academia is the place for creative minds

Dubai, UAE: Dental Tribune Middle East & Africa interviews Dr. Khaled Abdullah Balto, Professor of Endodontics and Consultant of Micro-Endodontics in King Abdulaziz University (KAU) in Saudi Arabia (Photo courtesy of DTMEA)

by Dental Tribune Middle East & Africa

Dr. Khaled Abdullah Balto, Professor of Endodontics and Consultant of Micro-Endodontics in King Abdulaziz University (KAU) in Saudi Arabia (Photo courtesy of DTMEA)

Dental Tribune Middle East & Africa: Welcome Prof. Khaled Balto, please share with us a little bit about your origin and your many responsibilities in the Middle-East?

Prof. Khaled Balto: I graduated in 1994 as the first batch from KAU. The dental program there is 7 years long and includes considerable portions of basic science, as well as one year of internship training. Following my graduation I worked as a clinical instructor at the University [KAU] for one year. After that I did my postgraduate studies and clinical training at Harvard University. I returned back to Saudi Arabia in 2001 and since then have become a full-time staff member and hold my own private practice, limited to Micro-endodontics.

My responsibilities are vast, at the local level I am the manager of the endodontics department at KAU as well as for the Saudi Boards in the western region. I also manage the National Research Center for Osteopo-rosis as Deputy Director for Research Affairs and am heavily involved in lecturing and conducting hands-on training courses, not only in the Middle-East, but elsewhere in the world. I have an interesting piece of history when I was managing the Saudi Dental Society in the period between 2002-05 when I arranged 10 conferences and was member of the Gulf Arabian Countries for Dental Education.

On the level of the KAU and the Ministry of Higher Education in Saudi Arabia, I contributed to the academic assessment activity as Vice Dean, for quality assurance, which concluded a successful peer visitation by the Association of Dental Education in Europe as the first country outside Europe to pass this. Also, I managed academic assessment on the level of high-level management of the university for three years and laid down the foundation for the National Accreditation System for Medical and Dental Science via the Ministry of Higher Education.

Having such an extensive background, what would you say influenced your decision to pursue a career in education?

Academia is the place for creative minds, and this was the driving force in my decision. To contribute on large scale you need both the logistics that enable you to do so, and an academic atmosphere supports that to a large extent. Also, being a teacher, amplifies your scientific and moral messages across generations. So what you do with one patient in a clinic, could be applied to thousands and maybe millions throughout the years by teaching it to various generations.

What do you consider an important region-specific factor that contributes to the health of the dentistry scene in the Middle East?

As far as the Middle East is concerned, the two most important factors that would contribute to the dental health are: public awareness and preventive measures.

What have you learned from your current position as an educator that you would impart to other practicing dentists?

I have learned several things, among which are:

- Having the ability to alleviate human suffering gives great value to life, and thus acquiring skills in stress and pain management in the dental chair should be an ongoing practice for all dentists.
- The most powerful driving force to learn, and to continue to learn, is to share everything you know with others. You will be surprised to the amount of new knowledge that you receive.
- Customizing your dental treatment according to patient needs, including stress management, is one of the golden keys for success.
- Doctor, what can you tell us about what to expect from KAU in the future? What are your plans for growth and how are you planning to improve the Dentistry scene in the University?

KAU’s Vision Statement is to be a leading university in the Middle East. Based on this vision, one is always striving to monitor and update your performance in accordance to the most modern developed practices across the world. Therefore, the practice of academic assessment is an ongoing one. Amongst the indicators is the recent integration of micro-dentistry into the teaching curricula.

What would you say makes your school most unique? What makes it different?

Well, I do not think comparing my school to another is important. What is important is the role of formulating Dynamic Vision Statements comes into play. That is where the role of formulating Dynamic Vision Statements comes into play. As well as that of those creative minds that make it happen.

What can you tell about how the school is planning on improving the Dentistry scene in the Middle East?

KAU’s Vision Statement is to be a leading university in the Middle East. Based on this vision, one is always striving to monitor and update your performance in accordance to the most modern developed practices across the world. Therefore, the practice of academic assessment is an ongoing one. Amongst the indicators is the recent integration of micro-dentistry into the teaching curricula. I believe all dental practices will be offered via the micro-clinical approach in 15-20 years from now.

What have you learned about the Dental scene in the Middle East region, the changes you have seen and your insight on changes to come?

It is very impressive, and rather surprising, the changes that are taking place in the dental scene in the Middle East. In this part of the world we came long way forward in a very short time. An important indicator for such advancements is the emergence of specialty based practices to the market of several countries. Public awareness is on the rise as well as the number of well-trained dentists –not to mention the number of academic institutes that provide solid dental education. I anticipate the next change and challenge is going to be coping with the technical advances, including biologic (stem cells lines) and technological (computer assessed applications and devices).

And with this rise in both public awareness and well-trained dentists, how is the rising interest in the Dental education in the region affecting the scene?

Definitely, the rising interests in dental education is pushing standards forwards, but only if these dental education institutes monitor their performance against realistic and real pre-set standards of education. As in any medical related field, the industryclic of dentistry is always changing. Especially considering a trend that the world is seeing now with an emphasis on the integration of CAD/CAM dentistry being pushed further than it has before in the way that a lot of professionals and clinicians are constantly changing the way they completely perform. How has this affected the curriculum, or the ways you teach your students? What are you doing to keep up with these changes?

Throughout human history, changes have taken a long time to happen. It’s the same thing when we talk about emerging technologies in the dental field. As an endodontist, I am not involved in the teaching of prosthetics, but I told you how enthusiastic I am about the incorporation of Micro-dentistry to the teaching curricula. I believe all dental practices will be offered via the micro-clinical approach in 15-20 years from now.

As Al-Khaimah, UAE: Every long journey begins with a single step.

What can you tell about how the school is planning on improving the Dentistry scene in the Middle East?

Based on this vision, one is always striving to monitor and update your performance in accordance to the most modern developed practices across the world. Therefore, the practice of academic assessment is an ongoing one. Amongst the indicators is the recent integration of micro-dentistry into the teaching curricula. I believe all dental practices will be offered via the micro-clinical approach in 15-20 years from now.

A step towards a brighter future in the world of Dentistry

Rakocod is planning to organize similar workshops and CME activities in near future at advanced level for dentists, interns and students. Furthermore as a part of Continuous Medical Education (CME) program another Hand on workshop on Implantology and rotary file techniques will be organized in the Mid of March by Rakocod for all the dental specialties, interns and students. 

Report Submitted by: Dr. Ebadullah Shafi
Member of the Organizing Committee

Dr. Khaled Abdullah Balto, Professor of Endodontics and Consultant of Micro-Endodontics in King Abdulaziz University (KAU) in Saudi Arabia (Photo courtesy of DTMEA)
The first postgraduate dentistry educational institution in the United Arab Emirates

"I am inspired by the pursuit of excellence and the discovery processes represented by the academic university setting"

Dubai, UAE: Welcome Doctor Donald Ferguson, please share with us a little bit about your origin and your responsibilities in the Middle-East?

I am an American citizen and matriculated to Dubai from Boston University (BU) in the USA as Chair and Program Director in Orthodontics. Prior to BU, I was Associate Dean for Dentistry and Executive Director, Center for Advanced Dental Education, Saint Louis University, Missouri. My responsibilities in Dubai are as Founding Dean, European University College, a postgraduate dentistry educational initiative created by Dr. Elhami Nicolas.

What influenced your decision to pursue a career in educating?

I am inspired by the pursuit of excellence and the discovery processes represented by the academic university setting. I enjoy working with bright students with ambitions to create a better world.

What do you consider an important region specific factor that contributes to the health of the dentistry scene in the Middle East?

Current attention is on the United Arab Emirates and specifically on Dubai. There is so much that is NOT known about the dental health and well being of the people of this country and the city compared to the availability of parallel information in Europe or the USA. To gather this information, European University College has surveyed over 80,000 Dubai school-aged students to answer fundamental questions about prevalence of decayed, missing and filled teeth, status of oral hygiene and prevalence of malocclusion. EUC is academic institution responsible for guiding students in research and this large data base is utilized for several on-going Master degree theses. Summary information from these data should help formulate dental policy and manpower decisions with local and federal healthcare authorities.

What have you learned from your current position and an educator that you would impart onto other practicing dentists?

Under the leadership of HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Prime Minister and Vice President of the United Arab Emirates, and Ruler of Dubai, this city is a very exciting place with tremendous opportunities for excellent and ambitious dental professionals. Could you tell us about the European University College?

Nicolas & Asp Postgraduate Institute was initially licensed in 2006 and was the first of its kind in UAE and the geographic region by offering a 3-year Master degree training in Orthodontics. European University College (EUC), as it is known today, has grown exponentially and evolved dramatically in the past six years and offers 3-year Master degree programs includes EUC can practice in Sweden after satisfying Swedish residency requirements and demonstrating dental school equivalence training. What can participants expect from the curriculum?

Students enrolled at European University College can expect from the curriculum an education that is not different from the curriculum offered in Malmö, Sweden. EUC takes great pride in the excellence represented in its curricula and the high quality of its teaching faculty and support staff. Participants can expect a highly structured and scheduled learning environment with outstanding, cutting edge facilities and equipment and ample patient flow.

What are the plans of the university? What are your plans for growth?

It is expected that European University College will evolve into European University with the addition of at least two more colleges. It is expected that EUC will continue to increase its educational offerings in not only postgraduate dentistry but also other health care related disciplines. It is expected that EUC will grow its facilities as well as expand the number of students, teaching faculty and support staff.

How are you planning on improving the Dentistry scene in the University?

EUC maintains the highest standards of education and patient care consistent with the standards found in the United States and Europe and constantly strives to improve. Our vision includes being the best local, regionally and internationally. To that end, we continuously benchmark our programs and educational outcomes with standards found in Europe and the United States. "Being-the-best" is ingrained into the fabric of our Institutional soul... it is a daily part of our culture as a University College. What would you say makes your school most unique in relation to other schools in this field?

As stated previously, EUC is unique from the start being the first of its kind in the UAE and region, and we aspire to be an international leader in high quality education, research and community service. In comparison to other postgraduate dental institutions, EUC is in class by itself. One other institution has attempted to match EUC but did not succeed; yet another institution is newly forming and will be tested over time.

How is the school adapting to the changes to come?

As in any medical related field, the industry of dentistry is always changing. Especially considering a trend that the world is seeing now with an emphasis on the integration of CAD/CAM dentistry being pushed farther than it has before in the way that a lot of professionals and clinicians are constantly changing the way they completely perform. How has this affected the curriculum, or the way you teach your students? What are you doing to keep up with changes?

European University College is proud to offer the latest and best in technology and equipment utilized in its educational programs. A cone-beam computed tomography (CT) machine serves as a great source of research for improvements in diagnostics and treatment planning and is used as needed for orthopaedic surgery planning as well as oral implant placement. Application of latest technologies is studied through Master degree research has affected patient care quality as well as management and storage of patient records. Current EUC clinics are strongly electronic and nearly paperless in pursuit of best practice efficiency. EUC curricula are evidence-based and updated routinely to make the latest scholarly literature available to students. The recent opening of AL Maktoum Medical Library at Dubai Healthcare City has made access to electronic literature easier and updating curricula faster. These technological advances simply quicken the pace of making the changes necessary to remain excellent.

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DENTAL TRIBUNE Middle East & Africa Edition | Jan-Feb 2013
Aim high, acquire additional knowledge and training, go for a specialty.

Dr. Ahmed Al-Kahtani: I am Dr. Ahmed Al-Kahtani, Associate Professor of Endodontics and Head of the Division of Endodontics in the Department of Restorative Dental Sciences at the College of Dentistry in King Saud University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. I am also the President of the Saudi Dental Society. Please tell us about your role as President of the Saudi Dental Society? Including upcoming SDS events, courses, plans for the coming year and relationship with other dental societies and associations in the Middle East?

SDS continuously holds monthly activities for its members whereby a dental specialist or a dental company is invited to give a seminar on a particular topic of major dental interest. In this way, members gain additional knowledge and also interrelate with each other on a professional level. In January 28th-30th 2013, we will be holding the 24th Saudi Dental Society International Dental Conference at the Riyadh International Convention and Exhibition Center in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. The three full-day program will feature oral presentations and continuing educational courses given by renowned international speakers. You are all cordially invited to participate in our big event which is held annually.

What about the role SDAs plays in the Saudi Dentistry scene? The Saudi Dental Society is a community of dental professionals. Its mission is to disseminate dental knowledge and concern, promote scientific research and establish a closer relationship amongst its members locally and internationally.

As Associate Professor and Consultant and Head of the Endodontic Division in the College of Dentistry, you must be very busy? I have always enjoyed my role as academician and also play a vital role in the College of Dentistry which is my specialty. It is important to increase the student’s enthusiasm and understanding first prior to putting it into actual training and practice. Some examples of community events you

"The Saudi Dental Society is a community of dental professionals."

The Kingdom never cease to encourage more Saudis to pursue careers in the health care that is why King Saud University provided free education to develop and train competent dental professionals. How big is the influence of the Dental Industry in Saudi Arabia? There is a big influence of the dental industry in Saudi Arabia equally to that of the medical industry. This is why the University supported the College of Dentistry in establishing the Dental Hospital which will serve the public very soon. This is only in addition to the huge number of private Dental Clinics all over the regions that caters to the public who could not all be seen in the dental clinics of the College of Dentistry and several other hospitals. How many companies are there in Saudi Arabia more or less? I believe there are more or less 100 dental companies alone in Saudi Arabia. They are either companies officially distributing dental products and materials abroad or manufacturing locally materials or products used in dentistry. How many dentists operate in Saudi Arabia? How high is their level? In the Saudi Dental Society membership alone, we have a list of 7833 dentists on...
We Welcome you to the 24th Saudi Dental Society International Dental Conference

by Dental Tribune Middle East & Africa

In tandem with their recent accredited success, Dr. Ahmed Al-Kahtani, President of the Saudi Dental Society, presents an open invitation to their upcoming 24th Saudi Dental Society International Dental Conference at the Riyadh International Convention and Exhibition Center on January 28-30, 2013.

First of all, I would like to thank you for your wholehearted support that made the Saudi Dental Society the “1st Scientific Society” according to the results of evaluating the performance efficiency 1431-1432AH. We definitely cannot receive this award without your help.

Secondly, I am inviting you once again to participate in our 24th Saudi Dental Society International Dental Conference that will take place at Riyadh International Convention and Exhibition Center on January 28-30, 2013.

The joint collaborative effort of the last King Saud University’s 14th International Dental Conference, the 23rd for the Saudi Dental Society, was totally a tremendous success with an enormous attendance.

Our international speakers for this year’s conference will be of different specializations, with the latest and high technological aspects applied in the dental fields that will be shared to all the participants attending this conference. Advanced Continuing Education Courses will also be given to our General Practitioners, Dentists, Students, Dental Assistants, Technicians and Hygienists for further information about their vocations.

Other highlight of this conference will be the Research Award’s Competition whose candidates will be coming from the Graduate Students, Young Dentists, Interns and Students who will participate in the three different categories of the competition. Poster Sessions that will run from Monday to Wednesday will be held along the corridors of Riyadh International Convention and Exhibition Center. Medical and Dental Companies will also be participating in this conference by promoting their most up-to-date medical and dental equipment. Staff of the different companies with their own expertise will be demonstrating their latest and most modern medical and dental products. Again, I will be expecting your full support and cooperation to make this conference a fruitful and successful one.

"The Society supports several community services in many regions in Saudi Arabia."

with the College of Dentistry and the support of the King Saud University goes hand in hand in training our dentists and dental technicians in and developing research ideas, innovations and technologies that will aid them in their occupation.

What have you learned about the dental scene in the Middle-East region, the changes you have seen and your insight on changes to come?

Saudi Arabia has succeeded in establishing the most sophisticated and specialized health care services system. They have also provided it free to the general public. Our government through the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Higher Education sponsors a wide range of social services programs that will ensure our citizen a healthy living.

How do you see CAD/CAM & Digital Dentistry playing a role in Dentistry?

The properties of dental materials like strength of all ceramic restorations are highly influenced by the fabrication procedure and the skills of the individual dental technicians. With the introduction of the CAD/CAM systems in dentistry, the behavior of the material properties have been controlled and allowed using these materials that cannot be used by conventional dental processing techniques. These resolved the dentists problem in searching for an ideal restorative material. With the introduction of the digital system, it made dentistry more convenient, precise and accurate.

Thank you Dr. Ahmed Al-Kahtani, we wish you all the best.

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Baseline 4 weeks

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