Interview: 'The Majority of Qatari Dentists have a specialty certificate'

Doha, Qatar: Dr. Mohammad Al-Darwish, President of Qatar Dental Society, thank for taking the time for this interview. Can you tell us about yourself and experience as a Dentist?

My name is Dr. Mohammad Al-Darwish, President of Qatar Dental Society, and Prosthodontics in Hamad Medical Corporation at Al-Wakra Hospital in Qatar. My experience as a Dentist began when I graduated with my bachelor degree in 1997 from Alexandria University. After this time, I joined Hamad Medical Corporation as a resident for two years before I went to Chicago, USA to continue my postgraduate studies in Prosthodontics in the University of Illinois - where I stayed for 5 years before moving back to Qatar in 2005. In December, 2007 we established the Qatar Dental Society, and organizing the first Qatar International Conference in 2009 with the second conference being in April 2012. We are now in the process of establishing a Qatar Dental Journal. Could you comment on the Dental Market here in the Middle East?

I think it is very well developed, and that this is the right time to join the Middle Eastern Dental Market. Every day we hear about new dental schools and new dental clinics opening. At the moment, most of these Middle Eastern countries have a need for all of this—the market is very, very good.

How is the experience level of the Qatari Dentists in general?

In Qatar we actually have 922 dentists, around 120 of whom are Qatari, and the rest being an international crowd. The majority of Qatari dentists have a specialty certificate, and in the private clinics most of the doctors are General Practitioners. We also have around 70-75 Dental Technicians, and though I know that this is still quite a way from the number that we should have, we are definitely working on it.

We have a number of workshops pre-conference. As usual, we are planning to have more than six or seven workshops every month in order to update all the information and knowledge of all of the dentists in Qatar. When developing the Qatari Dental Market, do you look competitively at other Middle Eastern countries in specific the GCC?

There is absolutely competition between countries: everyone wants to be the best, and make their country the best. I think we are all still developing all of this in Qatar and with time we will reach the point that we are looking for. We are waiting for the Dental School to be open in Qatar. Hopefully someday soon we will have it.

You mentioned earlier you are planning a conference in 2014, could you elaborate?

Year after year the Qatar Dental Society and The Qatar International Dental Conference is growing. In 2009 we had an attendance of around 250, and by 2012 we have reached 850, we are now looking to increase this number still. In 2009, we did not have a workshop but in 2012 our workshop was fully booked! So now for 2014, we are planning to have more than six or seven workshops pre-conference. As usual, we also have a number of speakers coming from across the world, covering a variety of specialties and hot topics.

The developments sound very interesting and the Qatari Dental Market.

What can you share about the Dental Education in Qatar?

Until now we do not have a dental school, but Qatar Dental Society, Hamad Medical Corporation and other health sectors are doing continuing education courses and workshops every month in order to update all the information and knowledge of all of the dentists in Qatar. When developing the Qatari Dental Market, do you look competitively at other Middle Eastern countries in specific the GCC?

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