Bio-Emulation movement continues to grow

By DTI

BERLIN, Germany: On 4 and 5 July, the 2015 Bio-Emulation Colloquium was held in Berlin in Germany. The event, which was organised by the Dental Tribune International team in close collaboration with the Bio-Emulation Group, attracted more than twice the number of participants compared with last year.

Overall, more than 300 dentists and dental technicians attended the extensive programme on biomimetics in dentistry, including 16 lectures and 13 workshops.

After the successful premiere of the Bio-Emulation Colloquium last year in Santorini in Greece, this year’s meeting was held under the主题 “Bio-Emulation Colloquium 360°”. Key opinion leaders in adhesive and restorative dentistry educated the participants on methods and techniques to achieve high aesthetic standards and emulate nature using a histot-anatomical approach.

During the sessions, particularly the workshops, attendees had the opportunity to learn more about the mechanical and optical properties of natural teeth and gain knowledge on using existing techniques and materials. A considerable number of workshops were fully booked; for instance, Dr Pascal Magne’s session on dental morphology function and aesthetics was among the most requested.

Over 45 per cent of attendees who took part in a representative evaluation survey said that they would definitely recommend the event to others. They were most satisfied with the choice of speakers and topics in particular.

Many of the participants took advantage of the networking opportunities offered on the two evenings of the meeting. Each day, the Bio-Emulation Group announced that the next colloquium in 2016 will take place in Barcelona in Spain. More details will be made available in due time at www.bioemulationcampus.com.

Study reveals unrealistic public expectations regarding implants

By DT Asia Pacific

HONG KONG: Dental implants are gaining increasing popularity in the treatment of partially dentate or edentulous patients, and both the industry and dental professionals offer detailed information about implant materials, functions and procedures.

Yet, many people are not well informed and tend to overestimate the functionality of implants, while underestimating the expertise needed for implant dentistry. These are the findings of a qualitative study conducted at the University of Hong Kong.

The researchers aimed to evaluate the public’s acquisition of information and their perceptions regarding dental implants, as well as the effects of these perceptions on their care-seeking and decision-making behaviour.

The study examined a sample of 28 adults between 35 and 64 years old who had never been engaged in a dentistry-related job. Moreover, for inclusion in the study, participants had to have at least one missing tooth and to have heard about dental implants, but never received one or had any dental consultation regarding dental implants.

The participants were divided into six focus groups and had to discuss dental implants and their individual knowledge about them. All of the group discussions were transcribed verbatim and subjected to thematic content analysis following a grounded theory approach.

The Chinese research team found that the participants acquired information on dental implants through various means, such as patient information boards, printed advertisements, social media, and personal connections.

According to the researchers, the participants expected dental implants to restore patients’ appearance, function and quality of life to absolute normality. “They regarded dental implants as a panacea for all cases of missing teeth and overestimated their functions and longevity,” the scientists stated.

The participants further underestimated the expertise needed to carry out the clinical procedures to place an implant. However, they were deterred from seeking dental implant treatment by the high costs, invasiveness of the procedure, risks and possible complications.

Overall, the study found that the public is exposed to information of varying quality and has some unrealistic expectations regarding dental implants. Such perceptions may shape their care-seeking behaviour and decision-making processes in one way or another, the researchers said.

“The views and experiences gathered in this qualitative study could assist clinicians to better understand the public’s perspectives, facilitate constructive patient-dentist communication, and contribute to the creation of positive clinical experiences in implant dentistry,” they concluded.

The study, titled “Public perceptions of dental implants: A qualitative study”, was published online on 8 May in the Journal of Dentistry.
“Xylitol is here to stay”

An interview with Professor Emeritus Kauko K. Mäkinen, Finland

During the early 1970s, xylitol and other natural sweeteners were extensively tested in Finland as potential replacements for sugar. The series of over 20 research reports, published together in Acta Odontologica Scandinavica in 1975, became collectively known as the “Turku Sugar Studies”. Approaching the 40th anniversary of the publication, Dental Tribune had the opportunity to speak with Professor Emeritus Kauko K. Mäkinen, who led the original Turku research together with Arje Scheinin, about xylitol’s impact on caries levels, its popularity in Finland and the sweetener’s future prospects.

Dental Tribune: Prof. Mäkinen, you were involved in the first extensive studies of xylitol in the seventies. How far has the sweetener come since then? Prof. Emeritus Kauko K. Mäkinen: The awareness of xylitol among consumers and healthcare professionals has increased significantly since the early 1970s. However, knowledge about xylitol is not equally distributed across the world. Although awareness may approach 100% in Finland, the situation is different in other countries and the level of awareness depends on the level of dental and medical education in each country.

As you mentioned, in Finland, xylitol seems to be a part of daily life. Xylitol is indeed known by virtually all Finns and is also used by most people in Finland on a daily basis. Parents and grandparents have adopted a habit of buying xylitol for their children and grandchildren. At many day-care centres, children learn to use xylitol after lunch.

In Germany, for example, you can buy xylitol as a sweetener and it is also added in gum, but it is not widely known to the public as a mainstream product. Why do you think there is such a difference in “popularity”?

You are right about the situation in Germany. I cannot help but wonder why this could be, since xylitol was discovered by German chemists and its medical use in infusion therapy is best known by German physicians. It is possible that German dentists do not value early caries prevention as much as the dentists and the authorities do in Scandinavia. One would need a strong and committed distributor and an official endorse-