Hats off to tomorrow's dentists

In this issue: 3 Dean's Message 4 Faculty Focus 6 Meeting Reports 7 Research Highlights 8 Faculty Expressions 9 Personalia 9 For the Record 10 In the Chair 11 Student Expressions 12 Alumni Expressions 15 Calendar
Congratulations
to the HKU Faculty of Dentistry
on the publication of its inaugural issue of
Expressions

Greetings
from the
Hong Kong Dental Association

HKDA Council (2005-2007)
Standing: Drs Liu Wing Hong (Council Member), Tsang Chiu Keung (Council Member), Nelson Au Yeung (Council Member) and Michael Tsang (Council Member)
Sitting: Drs Nelson Wong (Honorary Treasurer), Tony Fok (Honorary Secretary), Vincent Leung (President), Sigmund Leung (Vice President) and Eugene Chan (Immediate Past President)
Welcome to the first issue of Expressions, the new newsletter of the Faculty of Dentistry at The University of Hong Kong.

The mission of the HKU Faculty of Dentistry is to serve the people of Hong Kong and the region by advancing their oral health and well-being through excellence in learning, discovery, patient care, and engagement. This newsletter is one of our strategies for building on excellence in engagement.

Building on excellence
The HKU Faculty of Dentistry is the sole custodian of dental education in Hong Kong, and it has made a significant impact on the overall health care sector of the territory by producing some one thousand dental practitioners and an array of ancillary personnel over a period of 23 years. We celebrate our silver jubilee next year.

We are now considered regional leaders in the arena of oral and craniofacial research and in the delivery of state-of-the-art clinical expertise. Furthermore, our undergraduate and postgraduate education programmes are widely acclaimed both in the region and internationally.

In 2005, for the second year running, the faculty generated the most peer-reviewed publications per academic staff at HKU. Also last year, faculty staff and students were honoured with various prizes at international level for achievements in research, and plans were made to create an Implant Centre to serve Hong Kong’s impoverished elderly population, a sizeable proportion of whom have no teeth and cannot eat properly.

This year, which marks the 20th anniversary of the first BDS graduates, we continue our efforts to steadily build on a foundation of excellence. The faculty’s Cell and Tissue Culture Laboratory was inaugurated during the 19th Annual Scientific Meeting, the Implant Centre will be established, and a new Master of Science in Implant Dentistry course will be designed. You can be assured that Expressions will keep you informed of and updated on these developments.

Strengthening bonds
Published three times a year, Expressions will deliver news of the faculty’s activities and achievements to your doorstep and will further strengthen the bonds that have already been established with alumni, the university community, and the dental community at large. Expressions will also keep you abreast of the latest advances in dentistry and oral health care, while bringing you news of continuing education courses and other events that will nourish your career.

Because of space limitations and printing deadlines, the faculty’s website <www.facdenthk.org> will often supplement the information in Expressions, so do please check the website regularly.

Initiation and sustainability of a publication of this nature cannot be achieved without the assistance and generosity of many, including you the reader. We hope the newsletter will put you in touch with your colleagues, and at the same time serve as a vehicle for you to let colleagues know of your news, views, and achievements. To strengthen our ties with the general public and promote oral health awareness, we also invite you to pass on Expressions to your friends, staff, and family, or to add it to the waiting room literature for your patients’ use.

Finally, I am indebted to the generous sponsors of Expressions, all contributors, and Dr Trevor Lane, the newsletter’s Managing Editor. If you have any comments or Letters to the Editor, please e-mail them either to me at <lakshman@hku.hk> or to Dr Lane at <tlane@hkusua.hku.hk>.

Happy reading!

Don’t forget your regular check-up...

@ www.facdenthk.org

for
- News and announcements
- Career development
- Course details and registration
- Notices of professorship vacancies
- Updates on the faculty’s 2007 Silver Jubilee
Congratulations, Class of 2005!

Eighty-five graduates, including BDS graduates and taught and research postgraduates, were formally admitted to Class of 2005 at the HKU Faculty of Dentistry’s Graduation and Prize Presentation Ceremony on the evening of 6 December 2005.

The graduation ceremony was held at the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine in Aberdeen and was presided over by the Dean and Masters of Ceremony Dr Katherine CM Leung and Dr Kwan-yat Zee. Special addresses were given by Prof Lap-chee Tsui, Vice-Chancellor of HKU, and Dr the Hon York YN Chow, Secretary for Health, Welfare & Food of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. Also present was the President of the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine, Prof Grace WK Tang.

In his speech, Dr the Hon York YN Chow said that he was honoured to be associated with the ceremony. He added that dental professionals have a major role to play in improving health care in Hong Kong, and he congratulated the Faculty of Dentistry on its service to the community, not only by producing talented young graduates, but also by providing cutting-edge, world-class clinical services.

Photo finish
To commemorate the occasion, graduating BDS students published the first ever Faculty of Dentistry Graduation Yearbook, which gave them an opportunity to reflect on the past 5 years’ hard work and achievements, and to give parting messages to staff and contemporaries. Staff were also given the chance to offer some words of wisdom to the graduating dentists. It is hoped that the publication of a yearbook will be “a new tradition”, according to Prof Lakshman Samaranayake in the Dean’s message to BDS graduates in the Class of 2005 Yearbook.

“You are at the beginning of a fascinating journey that will be punctuated by rapid advances in science and technology, changes in burden of disease and ethical and moral dilemmas, and changes in the way that society engages with caring professions…. Do embrace the future with open arms…”, says Dean Samaranayake in his yearbook message. Also included is the Dean’s own adaptation of the Hippocratic Oath for dental professionals.

In his yearbook message to the fresh graduates, Dr Vincent Leung, President of the Hong Kong Dental Association, adds his sentiments: “I sincerely encourage you to adhere to the ethical practice of dentistry and set up stringent guidelines for yourselves…. A good reputation is difficult to build; it may take years, but it is worth all the treasures in the world.” Expressions congratulates Class of 2005, and wishes all new graduates the very best for their careers ahead.

Reflections
“I wish everyone in our class success.” Dr Chi-to Kim (BDS 2005), winner of a Hong Kong Dental Association Scholarship, 2004-2005.
“Thank you to the staff for all of your patience and effort.” Dr Janet HL Wong (BDS 2005), winner of a Hong Kong Dental Association Scholarship, 2004-2005.
“After this 5-year course, I have gained lots of friends and knowledge.” Dr dominic KL Ho (BDS 2005), winner of the Hong Kong Dental Association Prize, 2004-2005.
“I am glad my dental study has come to the finish line and I am off to the real world.” Dr Jensen MK Lau (BDS 2005), winner of the Chan Kai Ming Prize 2004-2005.
“Least memorable moment: Clinic at 5:30 pm, with a temp bridge still to fabricate and cement.” Dr Derek Baram (BDS 2005), Valedictorian (see also interview in the Alumni Expressions section, page 13).
19th Annual Scientific Meeting

The HKU Faculty of Dentistry held its 19th Annual Scientific Meeting on 16 January 2006 at the Prince Philip Dental Hospital. After the Dean declared the proceedings officially open, the guest speaker, Prof Paul KH Tam, Pro-Vice-Chancellor of HKU, addressed the delegates in a plenary speech titled “Impact of RAE and CERG on Faculties of HKU.”

The meeting’s 22 oral presentations were divided into two sets of parallel sessions: the first covered ‘Restorative Materials’ and ‘Prevention, Diagnosis and Periodontology’, and the second covered ‘Orthodontics & Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery’ and ‘Oral Mucosal Infection & Biofilm’. Two special sessions, one chaired by Dr Margareta Bendeus and one by Dr Li-jian Jin, discussed the research presented in the 22 posters that were on show during the morning and afternoon breaks. The day’s programme also included an opening ceremony for the faculty’s new Cell and Tissue Culture Laboratory.

The faculty’s Annual Scientific Meetings give delegates a chance to catch up on the research progress achieved in the various disciplines, learn of current and future research activities, and explore opportunities for cross-disciplinary collaboration. In addition to the many BDS student attendees present, this year’s meeting attracted more than 100 staff, faculty members, taught postgraduates, research postgraduates, and external dental practitioners.

Stage all set for Implant Centre

Plans are being realised to establish an Implant Centre at the HKU Faculty of Dentistry to provide affordable implant treatment to the elderly population of Hong Kong. Building work will begin this year.

A major impetus for the creation of the Implant Centre is the current estimation that 12% of 65- to 74-year-olds have lost all their teeth and hence have difficulty eating properly and maintaining their health. Given the ageing population of Hong Kong, this public health problem is only set to worsen. In addition, Hong Kong lacks an institution that is dedicated to providing tooth implants and studying implantology, so the establishment of the faculty’s Implant Centre would fill this urgent, unmet need. These messages were conveyed by Dr Tak-wah Chow, Associate Dean for External Relations, to members of the mass media during a press meeting at the faculty on 10 January 2006.

The Hong Kong Economic Times, Oriental Daily News, Sing Tao Daily, and Ming Pao subsequently reported the faculty’s developments, most on the next day.

Fundraising campaign

In the press meeting, Dr Chow explained that earmarked premises at the Prince Philip Dental Hospital would need modernisation and adaptation, and that this process would cost HK$4.5 million in total. The sum of HK$1.3 million has already been raised or pledged.

Achieving the total target would allow the Implant Centre to be fully equipped to provide dental implant treatment, provide training in constructing and fitting implants, and allow research to be conducted in implantology. Using HK$1.5 million of the funds raised, the centre will be able to offer free dental implant treatment to 30 elderly patients. A 1-year full-time (or 2-year part-time) programme leading to a Master of Science in Implant Dentistry will hopefully be available starting in September 2006.

The newspapers covering the story also helped to promote a fundraising concert that took place in early February at Hong Kong City Hall, in aid of the Faculty of Dentistry (see next page).

Cell and Tissue Culture Lab opens

The HKU Faculty of Dentistry now has a new Cell and Tissue Culture Laboratory. The laboratory, situated on the seventh floor of the Prince Philip Dental Hospital, was officially opened by Prof Paul KH Tam, Pro-Vice-Chancellor of HKU, during the morning of the Faculty of Dentistry’s 19th Annual Scientific Meeting on 16 January 2006. Immediately after the opening, a guided tour of the facilities was given by the Dean, accompanied by Prof Urban Hägg and Prof Lim K Cheung.

Designed to update and strengthen the faculty’s research infrastructure, the Cell and Tissue Culture Laboratory was initiated in 2004 with funding assistance provided by the University Development Fund. The room conversion and the installation of the hardware were completed by autumn 2005. “This laboratory is now fully renovated and stocked with the latest equipment for cell and tissue culture research”, said Prof Lim K Cheung, Associate Dean of Research and Discovery. Equipment housed in the laboratory includes an inverted microscope imaging system that has phase contrast and fluorescence microscopy capabilities, class II safety cabinets to allow sterile culture procedures, and humidified carbon dioxide incubators to provide a controlled environment for cell and tissue growth.
Putting smiles on people’s faces

A solo piano recital, sponsored by the Sino Group, was given by Mr Wen-yu Shen on 8 February 2006 to support the missions of the HKU Faculty of Dentistry.

Mr Shen masterfully played a collection of favourites, including Beethoven’s Piano Sonata No. 21 (“Waldstein”), Chopin’s Scherzo No. 2, and Liszt’s Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2. Mr Shen, aged 19, is well known locally: he came second in the 2003 Queen Elizabeth International Piano Competition, first in the 2005 Rachmaninov International Piano Competition, and second in the 2005 Hong Kong International Piano Competition. The faculty is very grateful to Mr Shen, who is used to putting big smiles on his audience, for donating his time and artistry to our cause, of fixing and rebuilding smiles in the community.

Taking action

Readers who are interested in supporting the HKU Faculty of Dentistry can do so by visiting the centralised HKU donations website at <www.hku.hk/giving> and using the secure online form to donate to the Faculty of Dentistry via the Mustard Seed Action scheme, or by completing the donation form on page 13 and mailing it to the faculty.

Readers who are interested in the Master of Science in Implant Dentistry may contact Dr Tak-wah Chow (E-mail: <twchow@hkusua.hku.hk>; Tel: 2859 0313).

Meeting Reports

Fruitful research wins poster award

Dr Ricky Wong and Prof Bakr Rabie brought home the Best Poster Presentation Award from the Sixth International Orthodontic Congress, which was held in Paris from 10 to 14 September 2005.

The two researchers from the orthodontics unit at the Faculty of Dentistry presented results from their pioneering work on the in vivo bone-forming ability of naringin—a polymethoxylated flavonoid commonly found in citrus fruits. Their conference presentation explained how they created parietal bone defects in New Zealand White rabbits and examined bone generation after applying different grafts. After 2 weeks, the amount of new bone that formed after treatment with naringin in collagen sponge was 2.8 times that achieved by bone grafts and 4.9 times that achieved by collagen sponge alone. The research was recently published online, in Biomaterials 2006;27:1824-31.

Organised once every 5 years by the World Federation of Orthodontists, which represents more than 90 national orthodontic societies, the International Orthodontic Congress is one of the largest orthodontic events in the world. The best poster competition was exceptionally keen, as nearly 640 abstracts from all over the world were accepted for presentation. Renowned orthodontists and researchers, including Tom Graber, acted as judges.

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Deadline: 31 March 2006

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or see <www.facdenthk.org/postgraduate_prospectus.htm#tpp>

Dr Li-jian Jin, Dean Samaranayake, Mr Wen-yu Shen, Dr Frederick CS Chu, and Dr Tak-wah Chow

Going places with gene therapy

Dr Juan Dai, PhD student in the department of orthodontics, was announced winner of the Senior Travel Award at the 20th annual meeting of the International Association for Dental Research (IADR) South-East Asia Division, which was held in Malacca, Malaysia, from 1 to 4 September 2005.

Dr Dai was awarded the prize for her poster presentation of a research project titled ‘AAV mediated VEGF gene therapy to control mandibular condylar growth’. Under the supervision of Prof Rabie, this research used a non-pathogenic adenovirus associated virus as a vector to deliver an important gene, VEGF, into cells in mandibular condyles of rats. Two months later, the rats that had received the gene therapy showed a significant enhancement in the amount of new bone growth in the jaw. Such a protocol has the potential to help treat children born with craniofacial anomalies.

Dr Dai will use the prize of US$1000 to attend the 2006 IADR general session in Brisbane, Australia, at the end of June this year, where she will present the research findings in the IADR/Unilever Hatton Awards competition. Expressions wishes Dr Dai a safe journey and the best of luck in the contest.
Impact of whiter whites

The Oral Health Impact Profile—a 49-item questionnaire designed to measure quality of life related to oral health—is suitable for longitudinal use in self-evaluations of home tooth whiteners, a study conducted by Dr Colman McGrath and colleagues shows.

Of the 87 participating university students who tested a variety of commercially available whitening products, 71% completed the 196-point questionnaire both before the study and after 8 weeks. The questions asked for personal assessments during the previous 2 weeks regarding functional limitation, physical pain, psychological discomfort, social disability, handicap due to tooth or mouth problems. Participants were also asked to rank how satisfied they were with the whiteness of their teeth.

Overall, scores were 18% lower after the use of tooth-whitening products, indicating a perceived positive impact on oral health. Scores for functional limitation were reduced the most and corresponded to a moderate impact. Fifty-two percent of the respondents said they were satisfied with the whitening effect; their reduction in mean score was about four times that of the others, and score reductions were moderate both overall and for functional limitation. The authors conclude that the Oral Health Impact Profile is sensitive and responsive to the effects of home tooth whitening, especially in the domain covering functional limitation.


Whetting the appetite

A new patient-controlled intra-oral saliva delivery device developed at the University of Hong Kong Faculty of Dentistry has been shown in a pilot study to be able to alleviate dry mouth due to previous radiotherapy treatment.

Designed to overcome problems reported for similar lubrication devices, the prototype described by Dr Andrew YL Kam and colleagues consists of an acrylic maxillary base plate that contains saliva substitute, a cover with a ball-valve system, and an elastic diaphragm that allows the user to regulate gel release with the tongue. The device was tested by five partially dentate patients who had undergone radiotherapy for nasopharyngeal cancer and who complained of mouth dryness that interfered with daily activities. After using the device for 4 hours a day for 1 week, four patients said it was easy to use, two said it improved their speech, two said it helped during chewing, and one said it helped when swallowing food. Two patients indicated that the device made their mouth feel somewhat more comfortable than before and three considered the intervention to be beneficial. Cleaning and refilling were not problematic, and some participants said they would prefer a smaller device and would not mind the more frequent refills.

Concluding that their prototype seems to be effective, the authors note that the components of the lubrication system are inexpensive and relatively easy to assemble; still, the system could be made smaller and needs to be tested in a prospective clinical trial. Some future applications, they suggest, are alleviating dry mouth due to Sjögren’s syndrome and providing slow release of substances such as disinfectants, antifungals, and fluoride.


Life under the bridge

The survival of dental pulp beneath metal-ceramic crowns and bridge retainers may improve if better measures to protect the pulp were taken, according to a retrospective assessment of randomly selected patients who had received either of the two restorative treatments at the Prince Philip Dental Hospital between 1981 and 1989.

Dr Gary SP Cheung and colleagues considered restoration to have failed if periapical or pulp chamber radio-opacity were present in X-ray films if the root had subsequently been filled. In all, 15.6% of originally vital teeth fitted with a metal-ceramic crown and 32.5% of those fitted with a bridge retainer displayed endodontic signs of restoration failure. The pulp survival rate for single teeth fitted with a metal-ceramic crown was significantly higher than that for abutment teeth of a fixed-fixed bridge, both after 10 years (84.4% vs 70.8%) and after 15 years (81.2% vs 66.2%). In addition, maxillary anterior teeth used as bridge abutments were more likely than other tooth types to develop pulpal necrosis.

Although the investigators acknowledge that pulp testing per se was not used in their study, they suggest that bridge abutments involve more tooth preparation and hence pulp trauma than crowned teeth. They recommend that for these two treatments, preoperative tooth status be carefully evaluated, alternative procedures be considered, overreduction be avoided, and pulp be adequately protected.

[Cheung GSP, Lai SCN, Ng RPY. Fate of vital pulps beneath a metal-ceramic crown or a bridge retainer. Int Endodont J 2005;38:521-30.]

Globules get into the groove

Oxalate desensitisers, which are applied to acid-etched teeth to reduce postoperative sensitivity, interfere with certain bonding agents by forming tiny globules, Dr Cynthia KY Yiu and colleagues demonstrate in an in vitro study of extracted non-curious human third molars.

The researchers examined how oxalate desensitisers interacted with four single-bottle total-etch adhesives on acid-etched dentine, in terms of microtensile bond strength and electron microscopic appearance. The two most acidic adhesives (pH 2.68 and 2.81 vs pH 3.60 and 4.60) also had the highest fluoride content (3641 and 4527 ppm vs 70 and 130 ppm), and their use led to significantly reduced microtensile bond strengths (5.1-16.8 MPa vs 39.6-47.1 MPa), as well as the formation of spherical globules of 2 to 4 μm in diameter in tubules on the dentine surface, particularly at fracture sites.

These calcium fluoride globules formed because of the high fluoride level and the calcium ions released from oxalate by the adhesives’ low pH, report the authors. They warn that “clinicians should be aware of the potential drop in bond strength” when using an acidic, fluoride-rich total-etch adhesive with an oxalate desensitiser on acid-etched dentine.

Facial transplantation unveiled

By Nabil Samman

On 27 November 2005, the world’s first facial transplantation was performed in Amiens, France, by maxillofacial surgeon Professor Bernard Devauchelle and transplant surgeon Professor Jean-Michel Dubernard. Since then, the media has had a field day combining admiration, concern, and reproach, but above all, an inescapable element of sensationalism. So, what is all the hype about? Before we consider the answer, let us review some facts.

Background
Most people are familiar and comfortable with the concept of transplanting organs (such as kidney, liver, and heart) from other people—surgery known as allogeneic transplantation or allotransplantation. In general, organs are donated from brain-dead individuals after accidents, and almost every part of the world has a well-established system in place for acquiring and utilising donated organs in terms of ethics and technique.

In 1998, a new type of transplantation was pioneered by Dubernard himself in Lyon, France, when he transplanted a hand. This type of transplantation is termed composite tissue allotransplantation (as opposed to solid organ allotransplantation), and recent operations that can be added to this category include those of the larynx, the tongue, and now...the face. In contrast, autologous transplants or autotransplants involve the transfer of tissue from one site of the body to another site in the same individual, and these are extremely common in everyday surgical practice.

Technical aspects
In all transplantsations (autologous or allogeneic), the arterial blood supply and venous drainage of the transplanted tissue or organ need to be re-established at the recipient site by vascular anastomosis—commonly known as microsurgery—between the vessels of the donor tissue and those of the recipient site. As a technique, this is well established, but the risk of anastomosis failure (mainly due to clotting of blood in the vessels) is about 5% in experienced units. Nerves also have to be reattached.

Immunological aspects
The allotransplant recipient has to receive lifelong immunosuppressive therapy to minimise the risk of rejection of the transplanted tissue. Rejection, and hence necrosis and loss, of transplanted tissue may be acute (occurring within days or weeks), and the risk is about 10% despite all therapy. Slower or chronic transplant rejection (involving fibrosis, shrinkage, and loss of function of the transplanted tissue or organ) is a much more common problem, and the risk is 30% to 50% over 2 to 5 years. Furthermore, immunosuppressive drugs have their own drug-specific side effects, as well as a generic predisposition to life-threatening infections and the development of cancer in long-term survivors.

Psychological aspects
Patient selection is very important because transplant recipients are under a multitude of stresses: fear related to organ viability and ultimate function, transplant rejection, side effects of immunosuppression including infection and malignancy, compliance with treatment requirements and a new lifestyle, integration of the transplant into a new body image, and gratitude and guilt related to the donor’s family.

Facing the press
So, is there anything special about facial transplantation compared with conventional organ transplantation to justify the interest of the media and general population? Well, yes. The face is an organ of identity and communication. A face transplant conjures up not only the previously mentioned facts, but also issues related to reactions of others to an altered appearance and perceptions of identity. But I doubt that these are the only explanations for the media’s interest. There is also the erroneous perception that a facial transplantation is the ultimate appearance-enhancing procedure and, as such, the following is already happening or might happen if this misperception is not nipped in the bud: recipients, donor families, and surgeons may be the subject of intrusive and sensationalist media interest, the general public may develop unrealistic expectations regarding the purpose and outcome of facial transplantation, and this may lead them to hound health professionals in an attempt to secure such a service. In one extreme scenario, the ageing rich may create a demand for facial transplants to achieve a more youthful face.

Looking ahead
The realistic indication for a facial transplantation today is repair of the severely burned and non-functional face, or reconstruction to treat a major loss of facial tissue resulting from disease or trauma, provided all other criteria for transplantation are met. I am certain that once the practicalities of the procedure have been optimised, the novelty value worn off, and medical facts explained, facial transplantation will come to be regarded as any organ transplantation should be, and not as a special focus of curiosity for the media and general population.

Acknowledgement

Saving face

In November 2005, a 38-year-old woman from Valenciennes, France, received a partial face transplant to reconstruct her nose, lips, and chin, which had been damaged when she was attacked by her dog earlier in the year.
- In Lille, the brain-dead donor was kept on a heart-and-lung machine, and donor tissue (including fat, muscles, cartilage, skin, arteries, veins, and nerves) was removed and taken to a team of eight surgeons and 50 staff in Amiens.
- Damaged skin and muscle were removed from the recipient and the new face tissue was attached, requiring microsurgery.
- Two days later, the recipient was transported to Lyon to receive immunosuppressants and an injection of stem cells from the donor’s bone marrow to help prevent tissue rejection.
- A few days later, the recipient was able to eat, drink, and speak normally. She will be monitored closely for complications such as blockage of blood supply, infection, and rejection, as well as for the return of feeling and motor control.

Source: BMJ 2005:331:1359
New appointments

- Dr CW Cheung and Dr GTC Wong joined the faculty in 2005 as Clinical Assistant Professors in Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery.
- Dr CH Chu has been seconded from the University Health Service to the Faculty of Dentistry as Clinical Assistant Professor on a part-time basis from January to December 2006.
- Dr Trevor Lane joined the faculty as Technical Writer in December 2005.
- Dr Cynthia KY Yiu was appointed as full-time Clinical Assistant Professor in Paediatric Dentistry and Orthodontics in August 2005 (see also interview in the In the Chair section, page 10).
- Dr May CM Wong was retitled in October 2005 from Lecturer to Assistant Professor in Dental Public Health.

Farewell

The Faculty of Dentistry bids adieu to Dr Robert PY Ng, Assistant Professor in Conservative Dentistry, who left the faculty in December 2005, and Dr Lan Chen, Postdoctoral Fellow, whose last day with the faculty was 3 February 2006.

Dean honoured by alma mater

Expressions extends warm congratulations to the Dean of the Faculty of Dentistry, who was bestowed an Honorary Doctor of Science degree by his alma mater, the University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka, on 21 December 2005.

The award was conferred as a tribute to Prof Samaranayake’s unique contribution to the study of oral microbial diseases and authorship of more than 400 journal articles, numerous book chapters, and eight books that have so far been translated into Chinese, French, German, Italian, Korean, Polish, Portuguese, and Spanish. The university also recognised the Dean’s expertise in dental and medical education, particularly as consultant to the World Bank in problem-based learning.

Faculty soars to top again

In 2005, the Faculty of Dentistry learned that it toppled all faculties at HKU in research productivity in terms of the highest annual number of research publications per academic staff member. This is the second time in a row that the Faculty of Dentistry has gained this prestigious position.

Despite the faculty’s relatively small size of 43 academic staff, a total of 121 full journal papers and book chapters, 35 journal abstracts, 91 conference proceeding abstracts, 7 research theses, and 20 taught postgraduate theses were published between July 2004 and June 2005, note Prof Lim K Cheung and Dr Wai-keung Leung, respectively Associate Dean and Assistant Dean for Research and Discovery.

“We are proud of this achievement and hope the trend persists as we continually strive to publish our work in quality venues,” says the Dean in the Foreward of a booklet titled Annual Research Publications 2004-2005, which was recently released by the Faculty of Dentistry to showcase its publication output in the past year.

Annual Research Publications 2004-2005 is a compilation of titles of abstracts and journal articles published by faculty members, and includes a collection of selected abstracts of research published in peer-reviewed scientific journals, as well as abstracts of theses written by graduating doctoral students. By disseminating these publication highlights, it is hoped that the faculty’s “achievements in dental research may reach the wider public and the academic community further afield,” explains the Dean. Publicising the faculty’s research progress in this way and maintaining this leading position at HKU will certainly boost efforts to realise the faculty’s vision of being the leading dental faculty in Asia.

In the previous assessment period, between 2003 and 2004, the Faculty of Dentistry achieved 4.37 peer-reviewed publications per full-time academic staff member, compared with 1.27 to 4.19 for all the other HKU faculties, according to data from the HKU Management Information Unit of the Vice-Chancellor’s Office.

Even before that, from 2000 to 2003, the average annual count for the faculty was 3.1, compared with 0.7 to 2.8 for all the other faculties.

Winning awards in 2005

Prizes were received by the following Faculty of Dentistry students and staff last year in recognition of excellent performance in examinations, research, and teaching:

- Dr Raymond Chow (MDS 2003) received the Larry J Peterson Prize for the best paper in oral and maxillofacial surgery that was published in the prestigious journal Oral Surgery, Oral Medicine, Oral Pathology, Oral Radiology, and Endodontology in 2005. The paper presented research findings from a randomised controlled trial that compared two orthogнатic fixation methods (Cheung LK, Chow LK, Chiu WK). A randomised controlled trial of resorbable versus titanium fixation for orthognathic surgery. Oral Surg Oral Med Oral Pathol Oral Radiol Endod 2004;98:386-97. In the first prospective study of its kind, the authors showed that resorbable and titanium-plating systems performed similarly and resulted in similar efficacy and clinical morbidity when used for fixation to treat dento-facial deformities. The research was part of Dr Chow’s MDS project, which was supervised by Prof Lim K Cheung.
- Dr Dale KL Phan (MOrth 2005) was awarded the Gold Medal for the best performance in the Membership of Orthodontics Examination RCSEd held in Hong Kong.
- Dr Rosa WK Yeung (AdvDip Perio 2005) was awarded the Gold Medal for the best performance in the MRD examination of the RCSEd held in Hong Kong.
- Prof Bakr Rabie was named winner of the Outstanding Research Student Supervisor Award 2004-2005 by the Graduate School of The University of Hong Kong. Prof Rabie was presented the prize by HKU Vice-Chancellor Prof Lap-chee Tsui at the faculty’s 2005 Graduation and Prize Presentation Ceremony.
- For their continued loyalty and service to the faculty, Mr Yi-yung Cheng, Dr Peter YP Wat, and Dr William CW Yung were each bestowed the Long Service Award by the Dean at the faculty’s 2005 Graduation and Prize Presentation Ceremony. Mr Cheng is Honorary Research Associate and Drs Wat and Yung are Honorary Clinical Associate Professors.
Dr Cynthia Yiu

Dr Cynthia Yiu, BDS, MDS, FHKAM (Dental Surgery), FCDSHK (Paediatric Dentistry), was appointed as Clinical Assistant Professor in Paediatric Dentistry and Orthodontics in August 2005. She had been working as a Fractional Clinical Assistant Professor in Paediatric Dentistry since 1996 and Clinical Dental Surgeon in Paediatric Dentistry and Orthodontics from 1989 to 1996. Her research interests are permeability and durability of dentine adhesives, glass ionomer cements, and dental management of special needs patients.

What inspired you to enter dentistry?

My mother is one of the most important persons in my life. Being a doctor, she had to work long hours while I was young, so I was unable to spend as much time with her as I wished. I always wanted to follow her footsteps but also saw the importance in selecting a medical field that allowed a more ‘balanced’ life.

When I was small, I often had fights with my sister. During one fight, she got pushed to the corner of the table. When she turned around, I saw blood come out of her mouth and noticed that her front tooth was fractured. I was grounded by my mother for weeks. But from that incident onwards, I knew there was no other way to go but to enter dentistry.

What attracted you to the Faculty of Dentistry?

Shortly after graduation, I worked as an associate in a general dental practice. However, I did not really enjoy it, as I had to work long hours and on Saturdays, and provided similar routine treatments to patients day in day out. After working for a few months in private practice, I applied to the HKU Faculty of Dentistry to pursue the MDS programme in Paediatric Dentistry. I was attracted to the faculty’s excellent facilities, outstanding academic staff, and the ample opportunities for me to grow as a clinician and a scholar. More importantly, I was later given an opportunity to join the faculty, while still being able to balance my different roles as a wife, a mother, and a professional.

How did you become interested in dentine adhesives?

Dentine bonding was the research topic of my PhD thesis. I was inspired by the cutting-edge research done by my supervisor, Prof Franklin Tay, as well as his passion, perseverance, and determination to achieve excellence in research. From time to time, I would receive “work like an ant” e-mails from him that reminded me to work harder, to get my research done, and to publish the findings at the highest standard. I learned so much from my mentor that I hope to continue to do research in this area and generate new knowledge that can ultimately improve patient care.

Which part of your work is the most satisfying?

I enjoy working with children because they are fun, entertaining, and always truthful. Recently, I have been in charge of the Special Needs Patient Clinic in Paediatric Dentistry, and I have found it most gratifying to treat this special group of children who often have very limited access to treatment. I also enjoy teaching both clinical dentistry and problem-based learning classes, because I like to share my experiences with the students and see them excel professionally each year.

Which scientific discovery has inspired you the most?

The Internet has changed the way we communicate, learn about the world, shop, listen to music, watch movies, do research, manage businesses, bank, treat patients, and much more besides. It is probably the most important scientific ‘discovery’ in my lifetime. The Internet is supposed to make us all become efficient by doing less work. Unfortunately, I find the exact opposite is happening because most of us are working harder, trying to get more work done in a much shorter period of time.

What profession would you have liked to follow if you were not a dental professional?

Many people spend years gaining knowledge to prepare for a career that they later discover they do not like. When I chose dentistry 20 years ago, I did not really know much about the subject or the career; but over the years, I believe I made a very good choice. In addition, under the supervision and support of Prof Nigel King, I have evolved from a general dental practitioner to a specialist in paediatric dentistry and now an academic.

Currently, I have the honour of serving as President of the Hong Kong Society of Paediatric Dentistry and as a member of the Organising Committee of the 21st International Association of Paediatric Dentistry Congress, to be held in Hong Kong between 14 and 17 June 2007. If I were to choose my career again, I would still choose dentistry. Well, I guess I am one of the lucky ones.

How do you relax?

When I was younger, I enjoyed taking Sunday afternoon naps to relax myself. Now that I have a full-time post and a family with two kids, I do not really have much personal time. However, if I do have some spare time, I love to do exercise, meet my friends, and watch movies. Frankly speaking, I actually enjoy having a busy life, as I continue to learn each day from the different roles I play in my life.

What are your New Year’s resolutions?

Because the International Association of Paediatric Dentistry Congress 2007 is around the corner, I would like to do my best to support the Hong Kong Society of Paediatric Dentistry in 2006 to prepare for this event. It will be a great learning experience for me to be involved with such a project.
A kaleidoscopic year so far
By Rico WH Chu

It has been go-go-go since the new academic year. In August 2005, batches of new BDS students from Class of 2010 were welcomed to the faculty by representatives from Classes of 2008 and 2009, among others. Throughout late summer and early autumn, the new students enjoyed various special programmes, including a welcoming ceremony, games day, and orientation camp.

November was an especially busy month thanks to the Dental Festival, which was organised by BDS I to IV students. Events included a Variety Night, a Music Night, and a Drama Night. The highlight of the Dental Festival was the Annual Dinner, which took place on 25 November 2005 at the Hong Kong Jockey Club in Happy Valley. More than 150 students, doctors, and professors attended the event to savour the sumptuous dinner buffet and take part in the many entertainments organised by students from Class of 2007. The Professor Samaranayake Trophy, given to the class that has contributed the most during the Dental Festival, was this year awarded to Class of 2007. Well done, Class of 2007!

In late November, the Asia-Pacific Dental Students Association Mid-year Meeting was held in Hong Kong to facilitate the organisation of its Annual Meeting in Korea in August 2006. With the support of faculty and doctors, students from Classes of 2007 and 2008 accompanied 16 delegates from the Asia-Pacific region for a 3-day programme that included a city tour and a strategic meeting. It was an invaluable experience for the students involved, who had a great chance to make friends with other dental students from Asia-Pacific countries. As one of the members of the Hong Kong contingent, I am eager to meet our fellow delegates again soon in Korea.

Students Association Mid-year Meeting was held in Hong Kong to facilitate the organisation of its Annual Meeting in Korea in August 2006. With the support of faculty and doctors, students from Classes of 2007 and 2008 accompanied 16 delegates from the Asia-Pacific region for a 3-day programme that included a city tour and a strategic meeting. It was an invaluable experience for the students involved, who had a great chance to make friends with other dental students from Asia-Pacific countries. As one of the members of the Hong Kong contingent, I am eager to meet our fellow delegates again soon in Korea.

Homeless have poor oral health, students report

Many homeless people in Hong Kong have poor oral hygiene and poor attitudes towards oral health, and many have oral diseases that go untreated, according to BDS IV students in a Community Health Projects report issued at the end of 2005.

Not much is known about the oral health of Hong Kong’s homeless population, so the student researchers interviewed a sample of homeless people from Kowloon and Hong Kong Island who had been recruited with the help of the St James’ Settlement, St Barnabas’ Society, Society for Community Organisation, and Salvation Army. The mean age of the 147 respondents was 48 years (range, 21-75 years), and the majority (95%) were men. On average, participants had been homeless for 53 months (range, 1 month to 40 years); 52% had been homeless for less than 1 year. Three quarters of the sample were unemployed.

Some of the results regarding dental care among the homeless are as follows:
- 15% of those interviewed said they did not own a toothbrush;
- 47% brushed their teeth only once a day;
- 14% did not brush their teeth at all;
- Most (95%) did not have a regular dental check-up;
- Only 16% had been to a dentist in the past year.

When asked what they would do for dental decay with pain, only 29% of interviewees said they would go to a dentist; for a gum problem, only 26% said they would see a dentist. Among the respondents who were given an oral clinical examination, the mean number of decayed teeth was about 3 per person and 96% had periodontal pockets.

Furthermore, responses to the Oral Health Impact Profile questionnaire revealed that nearly 9 in 10 respondents felt that their oral health had had a negative impact on daily life in the past year. This burden was significantly increased if respondents had been homeless for 1 year or longer; were unemployed; did not have a toothbrush or toothpaste; said they had poor oral health; had had dental pain or sought dental care in the past year; or currently had fewer than 20 natural teeth.

The students remark that when compared with the general adult population, the homeless people surveyed brush their teeth less often, have poorer periodontal health, and feel that daily life is more adversely affected by their oral health. Homeless people’s “burden of oral health is significantly associated with their socio-demographic background…, oral health behaviour…, and their oral health status”, the study concludes. Recommending that “it is important to help homeless people to alleviate this burden”, the students propose that this underserved group be provided with “a basic oral health care delivery system funded by the government on a cost-recovery basis”.

Presented with the research findings, the Apple Daily Foundation recently awarded a grant of HK$100,000 to support a joint project between the Faculty of Dentistry and the Society for Community Organisation to provide essential dental care to the homeless population in Hong Kong in 2006.

The study was conducted by (now BDS V) students Kathy KW Chan, Gary KW Chow, Donny HP Lam, Otto LT Lam, Edward KH Liu, Miko CM Lo, Clara KW Wong, and Frank KW Wong. The project advisers were Drs Colman McGrath and Yan Luo.
Pioneers celebrate their 20th

Year 2005 marked the 20th anniversary of the graduation of the first ever batch of HKU dental graduates. Class of 1985 celebrated the special occasion with a 1-day scientific symposium at the Prince Philip Dental Hospital on 18 December 2005, titled Twenty Years of Quality Dental Care in Hong Kong.

Co-organised by the HKU Dental Alumni Association (HKUDAA) and the Faculty of Dentistry, the symposium was attended by more than 100 delegates, including many current dental students. Class of 1985 alumni presented 11 short lectures in orthodontics, oral and maxillofacial surgery, prosthodontics, implant dentistry and periodontics, endodontics, and even liver transplantation, which shows the wide spectrum of specialties in which our alumni are engaged. The reunion also gave a chance for alumni to exchange their valuable clinical experiences and to catch up with each other personally. The celebration continued with a gala dinner on 26 December at the Hong Kong Disneyland Resort, where families of alumni had a chance to meet and greet each other in a fun and festive setting.

Mentorship matters

A very successful mentorship scheme among dental alumni has been in place in the past few years, bridging mentors and mentees to build mutual support and friendship between senior and junior colleagues. Each clinical group of fresh graduates is automatically assigned to five or six mentors, so that the ratio of mentors to mentees is almost 1:1. Mentors come from a wide range of clinical backgrounds, interests, and graduation years, so mentees from each group have a choice of different mentors to approach whenever they need assistance. We thank all mentors for participating in this worthwhile programme. Alumni who are interested in volunteering as mentors should contact the HKUDAA President, Dr Franklin Tsang-tsang She, or e-mail: <she@smileclinic.com.hk> or Tel: 2396 8886.

Upcoming events

As a Continuing Medical Education provider, the HKUDAA has been working hard this year by organising a Tuesday evening lecture series for BDS alumni.

Four presentations have already been given so far in the topics of orthodontics, periodontology, plastic surgery, and endodontics. Dr Raymond LK Chow will next give a presentation on oral surgery (date to be announced). We are very grateful to GlaxoSmithKline for sponsoring this lecture series. To register in advance for these free lectures, please e-mail the HKUDAA President, Dr Franklin Tsang-tsang She, or write by regular mail to the HKUDAA.

Furthermore, all HKU dental alumni are welcome to attend the HKUDAA Annual General Meeting and dinner, which will be held on 26 March 2006 at the Salisbury YMCA (41 Salisbury Road, Tsimshatsui, Kowloon).

Keep in touch

The HKUDAA would like to hear from you, especially if you have changed job or address. In addition, the association publishes its own newsletter, Double-Sided. If you have not received the alumni newsletter in the past year, please contact the HKUDAA President, Dr Franklin Tsang-tsang She by e-mail: <she@smileclinic.com.hk> or Tel: 2396 8886.

Please do stay in touch with the HKUDAA and share with fellow alumni your news, announcements, views, and accomplishments. Photographs to illustrate your news item are also welcome—send hard copies to the past year, please contact the HKUDAA President, Dr Franklin Tsang-tsang She by e-mail: <she@smileclinic.com.hk> or Tel: 2396 8886.

To join the HKUDAA, please send an e-mail to either <she@smileclinic.com.hk> or <dentalum@www.hku.hk>.

Obituary

Odd Preben Lind

Known as Preben Lind in Hong Kong and Odd Lind in Denmark, his native country. Odd Preben Lind, DDS (R Dent Coll, Copenhagen), JD (Copenhagen), MPH (Calif), joined the Faculty of Dentistry as Reader in Dental Public Health in 1982 and was promoted to Professor in 1986. Before coming to Hong Kong, he had worked in the Danish Public Health Service and had been a senior academic in Public Health Dentistry in Denmark. While at the Faculty of Dentistry, Prof Lind established undergraduate teaching in dental public health, basing it on active participation through the planning, conduct, and reporting of community health projects. This model for dental public health teaching is still used at the University and has been emulated in many countries. Prof Lind also helped to design and deliver the Masters programme in Dental Public Health and instituted student Community Health Projects, which have provided much information on the oral health scene in Hong Kong and the region. He moved to Malaysia in 1988 and retired in Spain, where he passed away in late 2005. Odd Preben Lind influenced greatly his students and colleagues, and worked tirelessly for better oral health for all the communities in which he served.

[Based on an obituary written by Dr EF Corbet for The University of Hong Kong staff newsletter, December 2005.]
**Interview with Dr Derek Baram**

Dr Derek Baram completed the HKU BDS course in 2005 and was awarded the Dr Wong Min Sam Prize in Paediatric Dentistry and Orthodontics, The Royal Australasian College of Dental Surgeons Prize, the Sir Edward Youde Memorial Scholarship, and a JAL Scholarship. He shares with Expressions his impressions of his university days.

**Q** How did you become interested in dentistry?
I became interested in science at a very young age. I also wanted to work with my hands. Dentistry became an obvious choice for me.

**Q** What struck you most about student life?
At the beginning, I found the transition from secondary school to university life a bit difficult, but I adapted quickly and, looking back now, I realise that HKU’s energy and drive are meant to spur students to achieve their best.

The faculty’s and university’s belief in fostering well-rounded students who can think and succeed ‘outside the box’ has been an inspiration.

**Q** Who or what motivated you during the 5 years of the BDS?
My family has been a big motivating factor; their belief in me has been a driving force through all the difficult and doubtful times.

**Q** Have you changed in any way during your student life?
I feel that I have become more serious and, although I sometimes wish to bring back the kid in me, I know my outlook and perspective on life have been enriched and expanded.

**Q** How did you relax, and what would you have done if you’d had more spare time?
I would like my gift to remain anonymous

Most importantly, all donations made by HKU alumni and students between November 2005 and October 2010, whether local or abroad, will be matched by alumnus Dr Stanley Ho under the Stanley Ho Alumni Challenge, up to a total of HK$100 million per year. Moreover, matched amounts from your donations to the Faculty of Dentistry will be routed back to the faculty, so the impact of your donation will be doubled! Please take advantage of this great opportunity to help us invest in the future of the faculty and the university.

Thank you for your generous support!

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The Faculty of Dentistry is continually seeking funds to support the modernisation of its facilities, to enhance its teaching and clinical services, and to sustain its research excellence, with the aim of being the premier dental faculty in Asia. We seek your help, and value all contributions, big or small.

Making a donation is easy, via the form below, or through the centralised online Mustard Seed Action scheme of The University of Hong Kong, which can be found on the webpage <www.hku.hk/giving>. Simply click on ‘Mustard Seed Action’ in the left-hand menu, click the option ‘Donate Here’, and then tick the Faculty of Dentistry to be the destination of your gift. The secure online site allows both one-time and recurrent donations to be made, and tax-deductions are available for residents of Hong Kong, United States, and Canada. Donations are cumulative, and donors of amounts exceeding HK$20,000 will be eligible for HKU Foundation membership. All donors are acknowledged in the Mustard Seed Action website and in other university publications and webpages, but you can choose to remain anonymous by ticking the relevant box in the online form. For enquiries, please telephone: 2857 8584 or 2241 5951, or fax: 2517 6351.

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Calendar

Faculty events

Wednesdays, 6:00 pm-7:30 pm
Oral Health and Science Seminars
Lecture Theatre 1, Prince Philip Dental Hospital
See <www.facdenthk.org/cme> for programme and registration details

6-7 March 2006
Continuing Education Course in Orthodontics:
The New Discipline in Lingual Orthodontics
Dr Dirk Wiechmann, Germany
Simulation Laboratory, 6th Floor, Prince Philip Dental Hospital
See <www.facdenthk.org/news00.htm> for programme and registration details

16-19 November 2007
HKU Faculty of Dentistry Silver Jubilee Celebrations and Gala Dinner

Holidays

University Holiday
16 March 2006
Foundation Day

General Holidays
5 April 2006
Ching Ming Festival
14-17 April 2006
Easter holidays
1 May 2006
Labour Day
5 May 2006
Buddha’s Birthday
31 May 2006
Tuen Ng Festival
1 July 2006
HKSAR Establishment Day

Meeting planner

23-27 February 2006
28th Asia Pacific Dental Congress
Karachi, PAKISTAN
E-mail: <info@apdcpakistan.com>

28 February-2 March 2006
AEEDC Dubai 2006, UAE
International Dental Conference
Dubai, UAE
Contact: Dr Matias Cholakian
Tel: +971 4 3624717
E-mail: <vddec@index.ae>
Website: <www.aedec.com>

2-4 March 2006
1st Congress of the World Society of Lingual Orthodontics
New York, New York, USA
Website: <www.wslo.org/congress/site.php>

8-11 March 2006
35th Annual Meeting & Exhibition of the American Association for Dental Research
30th Annual Meeting of the Canadian Association for Dental Research
83rd Annual Meeting & Exhibition of the American Dental Education Association
Orlando, Florida, USA
Website: <www.dentalresearch.org>

10-13 March 2006
South China International Dental Equipment & Technology Expo & Conference
Guangzhou, CHINA
E-mail: <maurawu@ste.com.cn>
Website: <www.dentsouthchina.com>

22-24 March 2006
12th International Dental Congress of the Egyptian Clinical Dental Society
Cairo, EGYPT
Website: <www.egycalendar.com/ecds12>

7-9 April 2006
International Dental Exhibition and Meeting (IDEM)
SINGAPORE
E-mail: <info@koelnmesse.de>
Website: <www.idem-singapore.com>

26-28 April 2006
11th Southeast Asian Healthcare Show 2006
Kuala Lumpur, MALAYSIA
Contact: Mr Bhullar Singh, ABC Exhibitions
E-mail: <bhullar@abcex.com>

18-20 May 2006
British Dental Conference & Exhibition
Birmingham, UK
Website: <www.bda.org/education/annual.cfm>

26-28 May 2006
Australian Dental Expo
Melbourne, AUSTRALIA
Website: <www.b2btradeshows.com/trade-events/australian-dental-expo.html>

22-24 June 2006
American Dental Association 206th New Dentist Conference
Boston, Massachusetts, USA
Website: <www.ada.org/prof/events/featurednewdent/index.asp>

24-26 June 2006
Roots Summit VI
Amsterdam, NETHERLANDS
Website: <www.rootssummit.com>

28 June-1 July 2006
84th General Session & Exhibition of the International Association for Dental Research
1st Meeting of the Pan-Asian-Pacific Federation
Brisbane, AUSTRALIA
Website: <www.dentalresearch.org/meetings/brisbane/index.html>

29 June-1 July 2006
European Federation of Periodontology, Europerio 5
Madrid, SPAIN
Website: <www.europerio5.net>

5-7 July 2006
European Organisation for Caries Research (ORCA) Annual Congress
Glasgow, Scotland, UK
Website: <www.orca2006.org>

18 August 2006
9th Annual Implant Prosthodontic Symposium of the International Congress of Oral Implantologists
Montreal, CANADA
E-mail: <cioi@oralimplants.com>
Website: <www.cioi.org/dentist-meetings-courses.htm>

13-16 September 2006
3rd Meeting of the Pan European Federation of the International Association for Dental Research
Dublin, IRELAND
E-mail: <phol@rhi.hi.is>
Website: <www.pei2006.com>

16-19 September 2006
92nd Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Periodontology
Meeting of the Japanese Society of Periodontology
San Diego, California, USA
Website: <www.perio.org/meetings/am/index.html>

22-25 September 2006
FDI World Congress
Shenzhen, CHINA
Website: <www.fdiworldental.org/microsites/Shenzhen/congress1.html>

13 October 2006
5th World Dental Meeting
Yokohama, JAPAN
E-mail: <okuyama@quint-j.co.jp>
Website: <www.quint-j.co.jp>

20-22 October 2006
24th World Congress of the International Congress of Oral Implantologists
Taipei, TAIWAN
Website: <www.icoi.com.tw>

6-9 November 2006
7th Asian Congress on Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery
HONG KONG
Contact: Daniel Chok, Conference Secretariat
Tel: +852 2871 8896/8815
Fax: +852 2871 8898
E-mail: <info@acoms2006.org>
Website: <www.acoms2006.org>

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