Making patient care comprehensive
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¹ Schiff T et al Am J Dent 2009; 22 (Spec Iss A): 8A-15A
² Harlin D et al Am J Dent 2009; 22 (Spec Iss A): 16A-20A

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Being well prepared

By Lakshman Samaranayake, Dean

The HKU Faculty of Dentistry always strives to live up to its motto of "Tomorrow's Dentistry…..Today", and this issue of Expressions contains some recent examples of strategic planning in various areas.

♦ 2010 Undergraduate Curriculum—In preparation for the 6-year dental curriculum of 2012, some exciting new elements have been included in the 2010-2011 undergraduate degree (see page 5).

♦ Centre for Advanced Dental Care (CADC)—The CADC on the 6th Floor of the Prince Philip Dental Hospital was officially opened by Dr Rita Fan on 27 May 2010. This specially designed facility allows the Faculty to offer advanced and comprehensive dental care services, as well as to provide advanced training to Faculty students and the local dental community. Comprehensive and cross-disciplinary patient care is becoming an important approach to modern dentistry (see pages 9-10).

♦ Faculty's first Endowed Professorship—In April, I was bestowed with HKU’s first Endowed Professorship in Dentistry. The generous endowment, created by local philanthropist Dr Wah-ching Tam to support dental excellence in perpetuity (see page 13), will allow the Faculty to develop long-term education, research, and knowledge exchange goals.

♦ Alumni assisting alumni—Faculty alumni have set up a new Alumni Jobsite on the website of the HKU Dental Alumni Association. Dental alumni can use the site not only to share job opportunities with each other, but also to provide mutual support by exchanging knowledge and tips on general business and professional practices (see page 17).

♦ Dental Library Endowment Fund—Three Faculty members recently took part in a continuing dental education event for local dentists, as a fund-raiser to kick-start HKU’s newly established Dental Library Endowment Fund. The endowment fund is going to be instrumental in maintaining the top quality of Hong Kong’s only university dental library (see page 6).

As always, we welcome your comments and views to help us be even better prepared for the future (e-mail <dentktu@hku.hk>).

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FDI World Dental Federation

Chewing of sugarfree gum such as Extra is beneficial to dental health.
2010 BDS Curriculum announced

The HKU dental curriculum has been revised for the next academic year, in preparation for the 3+3+4 Hong Kong–wide educational reform in 2012, when the 6-year Bachelor of Dental Surgery (BDS) degree begins.

Although the 2010 BDS degree will still last 5 years, the revised curriculum starting this autumn aims at gradually bringing in some of the new elements of the 2012 curriculum. Some developments have already started, and some will be on-going, together covering a wide range of areas among both students and staff (see Table).

The changes were announced on 3 May 2010, at the Faculty’s Annual Retreat 2010, at the Gold Coast, New Territories, which this year focused on the undergraduate curriculum. The last major curriculum reform in the Faculty was the full integration of problem-based learning (PBL) in the BDS curriculum in 1998, following a University-led Faculty review in 1996. Since then, the Faculty Curriculum Development Committee has regularly performed audits and invited peer review to maintain the effectiveness of the new curriculum, which aims to promote collaborative and interactive learning, as well as horizontal and vertical integration across the various dental disciplines.

New projects
Some of the initiatives to be implemented in the 2010 curriculum have received specific funding from HKU Teaching Development Grants—namely, content review by a clinical psychologist, blended learning, English language enhancement, and learning through peer-reviewed journals. A “buddy system” will also be set up, allowing first-year students to be paired with third-year students for peer-support during the first 3 years of the degree programme.

“We want to ensure that HKU dental graduates remain the best prepared worldwide,” says Dr Cynthia KY Yiu, Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education (pictured above, right, with Dr Susan Bridges, Assistant Dean for Curriculum Development, at the Faculty Retreat 2010). “We believe that both short- and long-term planned developments to the BDS curriculum will help graduates continue meeting ever-evolving challenges in all aspects of dental practice, particularly by fostering life-long learning and team skills.”

Preparing for the future
Recent Faculty research bears out the success of this comprehensive and student-centred approach. A 2009 questionnaire survey of dentists graduating from the integrated PBL programme in 2004 to 2008 showed high self-rated levels of well-preparedness in the vast majority of areas of general practice, with the highest scores recorded in the “bread-and-butter” basic clinical skills. Preparedness levels were higher among respondents who work in a team practice than among those in solo practice, and increased with the duration of post-BDS work experience.

“The findings highlight the effectiveness of PBL and the valuable role that current dental professionals could have in helping fresh graduates transition to becoming practitioners confident in meeting the demands of life in dental practice,” says Dr Yiu, who was the principal investigator of the study.

New projects

Enhancement of problem-based learning (PBL)
- Development of a revised curriculum map to be provided to teachers and students
- Hosting of 6th International Conference on PBL in Dentistry
- Enhanced BDS I and staff PBL induction programmes
- Reconstitution of Problem Development Groups
- PBL problem-writing workshop (Prof Edward Lo)
- PBL facilitator training workshop (Dr Michael Botelho)
- Review of PBL learning issues
- Review and development of PBL problems
- Review of the psychosocial domain of the PBL Curriculum (HKU Teaching Development Grant awarded to Dr Susan Bridges)

Diversification and support of student learning
- Extended BDS I Orientation Programme
- Journal-based learning (HKU Teaching Development Grant awarded to Dr Michael Botelho)
- Medical case-based extension programme
- Expanding e-learning to include blended learning (HKU Teaching Development Grants awarded to Dr John Dyson and Dr Susan Bridges)
- Web posting of Resource Sessions, Key Topics Sessions, and Oral Health and Science Seminars
- Assignment of a personal tutor to each group of BDS students

Enhancement of clinical education
- Establishment of guidelines on polyclinic teaching
- Web CT network of “polyclinic” part-time teachers
- Introduction to Clinics workshops for BDS I students
- Introduction of Buddy System (BDS I with BDS III students)
- Workshop on bilingual communication skills for BDS I and II students
- Motivational interviewing workshops for BDS III
- Annual Clinical Induction Programme for BDS II students
- Review of key-skill assessments
- Introduction of clinical learning portfolio
- Review of reception screening process to increase patient pool

Staff development
- International teaching and learning collaborations and Faculty representation on local and international education organisations
- Dissemination of good practice through scholarship of teaching and learning
- HKU Teaching Development Grant applications
- Establishment of Faculty Teaching Awards
- Organisation of “Excellence in teaching” workshops

Other initiatives
- Annual Faculty retreats and workshops on undergraduate education
- “Brown Bag” lunch-time staff development sessions on dental education, with invited international guest speakers
- Graduate surveys (HKU Teaching Development Grant awarded to Dr Cynthia Yiu)
- Language enhancement (HKU Teaching Development Grant awarded to Prof Colman McGrath)
HKU Libraries establish Dental Library Endowment Fund

The University of Hong Kong Libraries have set up a Dental Library Endowment Fund to help maintain the first-class status of the HKU Dental Library.

As the only dental library in Hong Kong, the HKU Dental Library serves all undergraduates, postgraduates, staff, and practising dentists. All registered dentists including HKU dental alumni can use the library freely on a walk-in basis, and current students and staff can use its electronic resources remotely.

However, prices for academic books, journals, and digital resources are increasing annually by 5% to 8%. In addition, the unstable economy and costs associated with the upcoming 4-year curriculum (and 6-year BDS) have prevented the University from being able to keep pace with the library’s materials budget. With the Dental Library Endowment Fund, HKU plans to raise supplementary funds to ensure that the dental collection continues to grow in strength and size.

New appeal
"The quality of the Dental Library is so important to Hong Kong’s dental profession," says Dr Anthony W Ferguson, HKU Librarian (pictured right). "To maintain its quality, we need to raise HK$ 6.6 million immediately for the continued purchase of basic materials and to acquire advanced research materials.”

Kick start
On 30 April 2010, local dentists had the chance to contribute to the Dental Library Endowment Fund while obtaining valuable dental information, at a half-day continuing dental education event organised by HKU Libraries and the Faculty of Dentistry. The 100 or so attendees raised almost HK$45,000 in donations. Prof Niklaus Lang, Dr Michael Botelho, and Prof Lim K Cheung donated their time and expertise as presenters.

To contribute to the Fund and keep dental knowledge flowing in Hong Kong, please visit <http://lib.hku.hk/giving/dental.html>.

ITI Education Week, Hong Kong

The Second International Team for Implantology (ITI) Education Week in Hong Kong, themed “Contemporary Periodontics and Implant Dentistry”, will be held at the HKU Faculty of Dentistry, at the Prince Philip Dental Hospital, from 11 to 18 September 2010.

The Education Week is suitable for general dental practitioners, as well as specialists and postgraduates in their last year of training who have an interest in comprehensive dental care. After daily case presentations and group discussions, comprehensive treatment planning will be performed to implement new knowledge and biological concepts. Hands-on exercises will provide necessary skills for advanced procedures in implant dentistry and related fields such as regeneration.

For more information and to register, please visit: <http://www.itil.org/educationweek>
Nicotine, the major chemical in cigarettes, may slow down bone repair by lowering expression of some growth factor genes, according to a research team that included Prof Lim K Cheung, Dr Li Ma, and Dr Li-wu Zheng from the HKU Faculty of Dentistry.

Noting that cigarette smoking reduces bone density and delays fracture healing, the researchers tested the effects of timed-release nicotine implants in rabbits that had undergone lower-jaw surgery designed to promote new bone growth (distraction osteogenesis). They had previously used this method to show that nicotine impairs bone repair, but the underlying mechanism was unknown.

In this study, which compared animals with and without nicotine implants for 18 days after surgery, real-time polymerase chain reaction analysis revealed that nicotine reduced gene expression (mRNA levels) of transforming growth factor-β1, platelet-derived growth factor, and basic fibroblast growth factor. Because these growth factors are normally involved in blood vessel formation and bone regeneration, their altered expression "may be responsible for impaired bone healing" in the nicotine-treated group, the authors conclude.

Making light work

Using a specially designed chemical compound, researchers at The University of Hong Kong and the Chinese University of Hong Kong have been able to kill fungus cells with light.

The research team, which included Prof LP Samaranayake, Dr Paul Tsang, and Dr CJ Seneviratne from the HKU Faculty of Dentistry, first allowed a new light-sensitive chemical (a bisamino-phthalocyanine) to enter the fungus Candida albicans. They then used a medical laser of 675-nm wavelength to activate the chemical, making it generate reactive oxygen species inside the cells, thereby killing them. The amount of cell death depended on the amount of chemical used, and neither the laser nor chemical alone had any effect.

Given that the fungus Candida albicans commonly causes human disease and its resistance to conventional drugs is rising, the authors suggest that their new light-sensitive compound has "potential clinical value".

Healing during implantation may be helped if wound flaps are sewn with low tension, according to two implant dentists at the HKU Faculty of Dentistry.

Dr Rino Burkhardt and Prof Niklaus Lang examined initial wound healing during single-tooth implantation in 60 patients. Healing at 1 week was related to the tension applied to the wound flaps at the time of suturing, with failure (dehiscence) being more likely at higher flap tensions and for thinner flaps. In contrast, healing was successful if flap tension at suturing was minimal (<0.05 N). To ensure optimal wound closure in the first stage of implantation, the authors recommend flap tension to be below 0.10 N, "by use of a thin suture thread and an appropriate flap elevation".

A bacterium that is known to contribute to severe gum disease produces a molecule that can have two, opposite effects on the heart, a rat study from The University of Hong Kong has shown.

Porphyromonas gingivalis is associated with both gum disease and cardiovascular disease in humans, perhaps because lipopolysaccharide (LPS) produced by the bacterium in the mouth enters the bloodstream. The HKU team, including Prof W Keung Leung from the HKU Faculty of Dentistry, simulated this situation by injecting different doses of purified LPS into the abdominal cavity of rats. One day later, heart attacks were induced by temporarily starving isolated hearts.

Low-dose (0.5 mg/kg) LPS pretreatment protected hearts by speeding recovery from the high calcium levels induced by the starvation step. However, higher doses (1-4 mg/kg) of LPS amplified heart damage. Further investigations are needed to explain these opposite outcomes, the researchers comment.

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For more information, visit our website at <http://facdent.hku.hk/learning> or e-mail Ms Betty Lo at bshlo@hkucc.hku.hk.

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of a patient are clearly recognised and diagnosed. A high level of competence is needed to combine various therapeutic approaches of both routine dental care and advanced care for more complex procedures. The Centre therefore also provides advanced dental education, aided by a closed-circuit television system that allows the live transmission of any clinical procedure to a nearby seminar room (top right photo).

Implants and more

Because oral implantation has become more predictable and long-term implant survival has reached satisfactory levels, the use of implants to reconstruct the dentition is now a major treatment option. Originally, the Faculty planned an Implant Centre but realised that a comprehensive approach to dental care includes replacing missing teeth with fixed bridgework as well as by implantation. At the same time, implantation is performed by a range of specialised dentists, such as periodontists, oral surgeons, family dentists, and specialists in oral rehabilitation.

The establishment of a cross-disciplinary, purpose-built Centre for Advanced Dental Care also allows the consideration of further, recently introduced treatment modalities and technologies. For example, the CEREC® system mills porcelain restorations after intraoral imaging (see Box). Moreover, the routine use of microscopes during endodontic therapy and periodontal plastic surgical procedures naturally come under advanced dental care.

Specialised services and training

All six clinical units in the Centre are equipped for all procedures in modern dental care including surgery. For reconstructive processes, the Centre will provide all the facilities necessary for postgraduate training as well as for highly specialised services offered by the HKU Faculty of Dentistry. We hope it will serve as a major Asian centre for advanced dental care, as well as a key collaborative educational and research platform for local and visiting dental practitioners and clinical research scholars.

Prof Niklaus P Lang, <nplang@dial.eunet.ch>, is the Director of the Centre for Advanced Dental Care. Further coverage of the Opening Ceremony can be found on <http://facdent.hku.hk>.
Making patient care comprehensive

By Niklaus Lang

“To satisfy or re-institute the patient’s needs for aesthetics and function under healthy conditions” represents the most noble goal of oral rehabilitation. Fulfilling this goal requires a comprehensive treatment approach, which is why the HKU Faculty of Dentistry in late 2008 created its discipline area of Comprehensive Dental Care and recently opened its Centre for Advanced Dental Care.

Patients who experience multiple problems in the mouth usually present with a variety of oral and dental conditions, such as mild or severe gum disease (gingivitis or periodontitis), tooth decay (dental caries), and altered biting or chewing (functional disturbances). Treatment requires a comprehensive treatment approach involving all disciplines of dental medicine. Too often, however, only one dental problem is pursued and managed at a clinical consultation. As a result, important aspects of oral health may be overlooked or even neglected.

Modern thinking
Mechanical aspects have long dominated treatment concepts of clinical dentistry. Only in recent years have dentists realised that oral diseases represent opportunistic infections caused by oral biofilms (different micro-organisms living together in a layer attached to human tissue). Consequently, modern dental care must emphasise the biological aspects of oral diseases and consider biological issues both in prevention and during therapy.

Firm foundations
The comprehensive treatment approach focuses on biological treatment modalities, such as when preparing a patient’s mouth for the reconstruction of a tooth structure under clinically healthy conditions. An appropriate comparison can be made with an architect who builds a challenging high-rise building. For such an enterprise, “healthy” foundations have to be laid before the construction of the building becomes possible.

Likewise, foundations or “abutments” for dental reconstructions have to be in a healthy condition in terms of surrounding tissue (periodontally) and internal tooth tissue (endodontically) before they can be incorporated as part of a patient’s dentition. Moreover, reconstructions for missing teeth that are placed on neighbouring natural teeth and oral implants that replace the whole tooth and root are high-maintenance devices that require supportive and holistic care for a lifetime.

New traditions
Worldwide, academic and clinical communities have realised that a strictly departmental approach regarding dental care has resulted in a loss of the bigger-picture view and potential omission of important health treatment. To overcome this problem, the comprehensive approach to dental care requires that all dentists consider all oral and general health aspects of a patient.

In addition, the growing evidence for a link between oral and bodily health and the realisation that dental diseases should be addressed as opportunistic infections have been major areas of progress in modern dental care. For example, initial periodontal therapy is now a prerequisite for subsequent reconstructive therapy. In modern treatment planning, a comprehensive appraisal of all of a patient’s problems and their subsequent interdisciplinary management has become a necessity. Although important in the view of most patients, aesthetic aspects of dental care should come second to the efforts of re-instituting oral health.

The concept of comprehensive diagnosis, management, and prevention is likely to have a large influence on the future of dental practice, dental education, and oral health.

Prof Niklaus P Lang, <nplang@dial.eunet.ch>, is Professor in Implant Dentistry at the HKU Faculty of Dentistry.
Don’t brush off toothbrushing!

A study from the UK has added to the evidence that a healthy mouth is associated with a healthy heart. Expressions examines how toothbrushing and good oral hygiene may be linked to heart disease.

Toothbrushing has recently been reported in the British Medical Journal to be related to the risk of heart and blood vessel (cardiovascular) disease, such as heart attack, narrowed or blocked arteries of the heart, and stroke. The study, conducted by a team from University College London, found that people who did not brush their teeth twice a day were significantly more likely to experience a cardiovascular problem than those who did.

The findings
The researchers analysed nationally representative data in the Scottish Health Surveys of 1995, 1998, and 2003, focusing on nearly 12,000 adults aged 35 years or older. About 6 in 10 people reported visiting a dentist at least once every 6 months and 7 in 10 brushed their teeth twice a day. Of the 555 cases of cardiovascular disease recorded during an average of 8 years of follow-up, 170 were fatal. After adjustment for relevant factors such as age and sex, family history of cardiovascular disease, dental visits, and smoking, statistical analysis revealed that people who brushed their teeth only once a day had a 30% higher risk of cardiovascular disease than those who brushed twice a day.

Those who brushed less than once a day had a 70% increased risk. In addition, members of the latter group had increased concentrations of two inflammatory markers (C reactive protein and fibrinogen) in their blood, suggesting “a possible role of poor oral hygiene in the risk of cardiovascular disease via systemic inflammation”, the authors comment.

The meaning
Research is increasingly showing that cardiovascular disease is related to oral disease—in particular, long-standing oral infection leading to gum inflammation and eventual loss of supportive tissues around teeth (periodontal disease). Poor oral hygiene is a known major risk factor for periodontal disease.

“By using toothbrushing habit as a stand-in for periodontal health, the researchers have used large-scale survey data to confirm the relationship between periodontal disease and heart disease,” says Prof Li-jian Jin, Professor in Periodontology at the HKU Faculty of Dentistry. “We don’t know how the two diseases are connected, but findings in this and other research papers point to the body’s inflammatory response to oral infection as one possible mechanism.”

The implications
Evidence for the oral-systemic health relationship is getting ever stronger. Prof Jin previously showed, with colleagues from Sweden, that severe gum disease (periodontitis) in adults is associated with premature death, most frequently owing to cancer and disorders of the circulatory and digestive systems. It should be noted, however, as with the UK study linking toothbrushing to cardiovascular disease, that association is not the same as causation.

Still, good oral hygiene is certainly good for oral health. “Untreated, chronic periodontal disease is quite widespread and is a common cause of tooth loss,” says Prof Jin. “Brushing teeth twice daily and flossing once daily will help to remove bacteria-laden plaque from teeth and reduce gum inflammation, periodontal disease, and tooth loss.”

References
Faculty achievements

—Prof Lakshman Samaranayake (Dean and Chair Professor of Oral Microbiology) has been appointed as the holder of the HKU Faculty of Dentistry’s inaugural Endowed Professorship: the Tam Wah-Ching Professorship in Dental Science, established by Dr Wah-ching Tam (see page 13). He has also been selected as the winner of a 2010 Distinguished Scientist Award for Oral Medicine and Pathology Research by the International Association for Dental Research (IADR). The highly coveted prize will be presented at the Opening Ceremony of the 88th General Session and Exhibition of the IADR on 14 July 2010 in Barcelona, Spain.

—Dr Ricky WK Wong (Associate Professor in Orthodontics) has been appointed as an Editorial Board Member of the Asian Pacific Orthodontic Society. He has also recently co-authored, with Prof Bakr Rabie (Professor in Orthodontics), the following two chapters on novel biological agents that can induce bone growth:


—Dr Ying-ying Tan (Master of Orthodontics student) won the Houston Poster Award at the 86th Congress of the European Orthodontic Society, held in Portoroz, Slovenia, from 15 to 19 June 2010. Dr Tan’s poster was titled “Effects of vascular endothelial growth factor (VEGF) on osteoblastic cells in vitro” and was based on a project that was supervised by Dr Yan-qi Yang, Dr Ricky Wong, and Prof Bakr Rabie. The Houston Poster Award is regarded as a major international research award in the orthodontics field, and, along with this occasion, the Faculty Discipline of Orthodontics has won the accolade five times in the past 10 years.

—Dr Michael Y Chen (MPhil student in Orthodontics) won the Second Prize in the e-Poster Competition of the Indian Orthodontic Society Mid-Year Convention 2010: Beyond Boundaries, held in Hong Kong and Macau from 10 to 16 April 2010. The poster was based on the project “Antimicrobial activity of prune extract on Streptococcus mutans”, which was supervised by Dr Ricky Wong and co-supervised by Prof Urban Hägg, Dr CJ Seneviratne, Prof Lakshman Samaranayake, and Prof Colman McGrath.

Staff moves
The Faculty bids a warm welcome to:

• Dr Dominic KL Ho, Principal Clinical Dental Instructor
• Mr Manson Tong, Senior Technical Officer
• Ms Hazel HS Leung, Executive Officer
• Ms Elaine MC Chan, Executive Assistant
• Ms Helen SY Lin, Executive Assistant

...And congratulations to:

• Dr Susan Bridges, who has been appointed Assistant Dean (Curriculum Development)
• Dr CJ Seneviratne, who has been promoted to Research Assistant Professor

...And a fond farewell to:

• Prof AS McMillan, Chair Professor of Oral Rehabilitation
hkU confers first Endowed Professorship in Dentistry

By Lakshman Samaranayake

I am delighted to report that HKU, and Hong Kong, has formally received its first ever Endowed Professorship in Dentistry, to perpetually support excellence at the HKU Faculty of Dentistry.

The Tam Wah-Ching Professorship in Dental Science was established at an HKU Dedication Ceremony on 10 February 2010 and was formally bestowed at HKU’s 4th Inauguration of Endowed Professorships on 13 April 2010. This historic development is a testament to the rising reputation of dental education and research at the University and of the dental profession in the community of Hong Kong.

Enlightening the community
The benefactor of the Tam Wah-Ching Professorship in Dental Science is Dr Wah-ching Tam, a well-known local industrialist and philanthropist (pictured above, far right). Dr Tam launched his lighting business in the 1950s and strongly believes in giving back to the community. I would like to thank Dr Tam and HKU, and everyone in the Faculty and dental community, for their support over the years. I sincerely hope this will be the first of many Faculty endowed professorships to follow, as our great city of Hong Kong has many philanthropists who value wisdom and virtue, the two key words of our University motto “Sapientia et Virtus”.

Thinking about this endowed professorship, I have a special memory, of when Prof Tak-wah Chow and Dr Frederick Chu, my Associate and Assistant Deans for External Relations, respectively, walked into the Faculty Deanery with the news that Dr Tam together with Ms Shirley Chan had decided to make this very special gift to the Faculty. Although I did not realise at the time that I would be most fortunate to hold this coveted and generous endowed professorship, I was truly delighted that we had secured such a pledge—mainly because we had unsuccessfully attempted to secure such funds within the local community in the past. I now firmly believe that great schools and faculties need endowed professorships, because:

• Endowed professorships are a symbol of intellectual and scientific accomplishment, and a clear public symbol of university excellence;
• Endowed professorships help keep universities such as HKU at the leading edge of higher education, research, and engagement;
• Endowed professorships allow universities to recognise the accomplishments of eminent and dedicated Faculty; and
• Endowed professorships are necessary to attract renowned new scholars to stimulate the learning environment.

Holding the torch
I am deeply humbled to receive the inaugural Endowed Professorship in Dentistry. I realise that I am merely a transient holder of the torch of the professorship, to be passed on to those who follow me for years to come. I truly consider this honour not only a mark of recognition of my research and administration, but also an appreciation of the superb academic and clinical work, teaching excellence, and commitment to community engagement among my Faculty colleagues.

I am conscious of the fact that Dr Tam has a deep-rooted sense of serving the Chinese community through this endowment, and I shall ensure that his wish is realised to the fullest extent.

Prof Lakshman P Samaranayake, <lakshman@hku.hk>, is Dean, Chair Professor of Oral Microbiology, and Tam Wah-Ching Professor in Dental Science, at the HKU Faculty of Dentistry. An HKU video about the Tam Wah-Ching Professorship in Dental Science can be found at: <www.youtube.com/watch?v=N4WVd4kyZbk&hd=1>.

Prof Lakshman P Samaranayake, <lakshman@hku.hk>, is Dean, Chair Professor of Oral Microbiology, and Tam Wah-Ching Professor in Dental Science, at the HKU Faculty of Dentistry. An HKU video about the Tam Wah-Ching Professorship in Dental Science can be found at: <www.youtube.com/watch?v=N4WVd4kyZbk&hd=1>.
How many years have you worked for HKU?
I've been at the HKU Faculty of Dentistry for more than 25 years. I appreciate the University's recognition that some academic staff spend most, if not all, of their career for HKU, by honouring them with 25-year and 35-year Long Service Awards.

I truly value receiving my 25-year award from our Vice-Chancellor, Prof Lap-chee Tsui (top right photo), at a ceremony attended by HKU's senior management team and HKU Council Chairman Dr Che-hung Leong. The ceremony was very memorable.

Can you recall your first day at the HKU Faculty of Dentistry?
Yes, I still clearly remember when I joined the recently established Faculty in September 1983, with Prof Geoffrey Howe as the Head warmly welcoming me to the then-named Department of Oral Surgery and Oral Medicine, as the most junior lecturer among the staff.

What was your favourite activity back then?
I really enjoyed teaching undergraduates at that time, because the Faculty's first ever batch of BDS students were still in their third year of study. I especially empathised with them at examination time, as I myself was also going through several fellowship examinations from different Royal Colleges to gain recognition of my growing expertise.

How has your career developed over the past 25 years?
I temporarily left HKU in March 1987 to pursue my dream of becoming not just an oral surgeon but also a maxillofacial surgeon, by enrolling in the oral and maxillofacial surgery training programme at the University of Adelaide, Australia. I got acquainted with and later brought back Prof Henk Tideman to join the Faculty (now Emeritus Professor). I then got promoted to Associate Professor in 1994 and, after my PhD qualification and research publication performance, to Professor in 1998. With the retirement of Prof Tideman in 2004, I was offered the position of Chair Professor of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery.

During the past 25 years, my interest in the field has grown even more and I am amazed by the speed the discipline has developed.

What is your work philosophy?
I would say: "Hard work pays off", both personally and at an institutional level. Just as HKU appreciates long and loyal service, I appreciate the hard work and efforts of the Faculty and University in fostering a rich and world-class atmosphere of knowledge creation and sharing. I have no regrets in dedicating my time and whole professional career to HKU. I hope that I can earn the 35-year award before my retirement!
Visit from Tsurumi University

22-26 March 2010

A delegation from the School of Dental Medicine, Tsurumi University, Yokohama, Japan, visited the Faculty for a week in March. The group observed clinic sessions and problem-based learning tutorials, and took part in Simulation Laboratory classes. Prof Akira Yamane, Chairman of the International Relations Committee of the Tsurumi University School of Dental Medicine told Expressions: “The main purpose of our visit was to further strengthen the mutual relationship between our universities.

During our visit, we were able to have many fruitful discussions with HKU staff and students, while exchanging academic information and taking part in observational visits to many a number of clinics. We were very impressed with the dedicated, friendly, and truly international staff and excellent students. We were also impressed by the Faculty’s problem-based learning way of education and the broad exposure that undergraduate dental students are given to the clinical environment, starting at an early stage of their dental education. Last, but not least, we are grateful for all the hospitality and friendship extended to us by Prof Samaranayake and his staff, including the dental students.”

Visit from International Islamic University, Malaysia

3 February 2010

Four faculty (kulliyah) members of the Kulliyyah of Dentistry of the International Islamic University, Malaysia (IIUM) visited the HKU Faculty of Dentistry in February to discuss future educational and research exchanges. After the delegation’s Faculty tour and visit, Dr Akbar Sham Hussin (Dean of the IIUM Kulliyyah of Dentistry; pictured, second from the right) presented a souvenir of thanks to Dean Lakshman Samaranayake.

Signing of MoU with University of Turku

5 February 2010

The HKU Faculty of Dentistry has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Institute of Dentistry of the University of Turku, Finland, to promote academic collaboration and exchange. During his visit to the Faculty, Prof Pekka Vallittu, Dean of the Institute of Dentistry (pictured above, right, with Dean Lakshman Samaranayake) was also a Guest Lecturer for an Oral Health and Science Seminar.

Signing of MoU with University of Pennsylvania

12 March 2010

The HKU Faculty of Dentistry has signed an MoU with the School of Dental Medicine of the University of Pennsylvania, USA.

Pictured below, after the MoU signing ceremony (left to right), are Dr Rory Watt, Prof W Keung Leung, and Prof Li-jian Jin (HKU); Prof Denis Kinane and Prof Syngcuk Kim (Dean and Associate Dean, respectively, of the School of Dental Medicine of the University of Pennsylvania); and Dean Lakshman Samaranayake, Prof Esmonde Corbet, and Prof Niklaus Lang (HKU).
Raising public awareness

By Jennifer Yu

The Dental Public Health Committee of the Dental Society is a branch of the HKU Students’ Union (HKUSU) and aims to raise oral health awareness in Hong Kong, via school visits and public oral health campaigns. Session 2009-2010 has been a busy one so far.

Tooth or not?

From 8 to 12 March 2010, we co-organised an interactive HKU oral health exhibition with the Dental Unit of the University Health Service at the Run Run Shaw Podium on the main campus. Named “True or False, Tooth or Not” (“齒”是而非), the 5-day event was designed to clarify oral health misconceptions and to educate students, staff, and visitors about periodontal (gum) diseases and personal oral hygiene.

The exhibition consisted of three areas: oral health instruction booths where participants learnt how to brush and floss effectively, a dental consultation area staffed by two dentists from the University Health Service, and poster-board displays. This year, the committee chose to supplement the board displays by personally discussing them with the 1000 or so visitors. Participants said they enjoyed the clear explanations, and also the novel theme of oral health misconceptions, as it gave them a chance to clarify some common misunderstandings about dental procedures and dental problems.

By Jennifer Yu

Health Expo 2010

The Dental Public Health Committee, Dental Society, HKUSU, collaborated with Metro Radio Finance and the Hong Kong Society of Periodontology and Implant Dentistry to hold the “Oral Health Exhibition 2010” at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre from 28 to 30 May 2010.

The aim of the exhibition was to raise awareness of periodontal diseases and to clarify common oral health misconceptions (see Box). More than 200 visitors received basic periodontal examinations and learnt of their current periodontal status as well as its significance to their oral health. In addition, student helpers engaged in conversations with visitors to share important dental knowledge by means of information boards and computer presentations. For me, this valuable opportunity to serve the public as part of a large team of students, dental hygienists, and dentists was a remarkable experience.


Student Expressions

16

Five myths
1. “Health drinks” are good for oral health. ✗
2. It’s better to eat less but more frequently. ✗
3. Dental floss is only a cleaning accessory. ✗
4. Mouthrinse can replace brushing. ✗
5. I should visit the dentist only if I have toothache. ✗

Five facts
1. Some sports drinks and juices are marketed as health products, but they may contain acids or sugar, which can lead to tooth erosion and caries. ✓
2. During frequent snacking, saliva doesn’t have enough time to neutralise acids, so teeth become more prone to cavities. ✓
3. Toothbrushes don’t remove plaque from surfaces of teeth that face each other, but floss does. Both brushing and flossing are needed for oral health. ✓
4. Mouthrinses do not remove plaque as brushing does; benefits of mouthrinses, depending on their ingredients, are maximised only when used in conjunction with proper brushing and flossing. ✓
5. Once pain is detected, the condition is usually severe and treatment options are more expensive. Prevention is better than cure, so arrange regular check-ups to detect hidden problems. ✓
Market yourself!

By Andrew Chan

In today’s turbulent world, it is important that any business, including that of a dentist, has a prudent plan to allow for both good and bad times ahead.

In the same way, on an individual level, it is a good idea to periodically take stock and make a personal marketing plan, at least for the coming year. Hence, the title of this piece has two meanings. One is that professionals, especially business owners, should personally know how to make marketing plans—or more precisely, to write them down formally and share them with relevant people. Then, you will have a clear picture of your company’s current position, destination, and mode of reaching that destination. And everyone concerned will be on the same page.

The second meaning is that if your goal includes working for someone else, your personal marketing plan may need to include upgrading yourself through new skills and acquiring a promotion, or marketing yourself to a new employer. Then, you will need to know how to produce an outstanding job application and CV, and develop confident interview skills. Although this article is more about business marketing, a closer look will reveal parallels with personal marketing, too.

The six-point plan
I have modified a commonly used marketing plan to consist of The Six P’s for you to consider, as follows:

1. **Purpose**: What is your main service or specialization? What are your targets for the coming year? What is your mission and vision? Who is your audience?

2. **Position**: What is your current situation? What is the current business environment? Have you done a SWOT analysis (what are your Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)?

3. **Policy**: What are your decided strategies to achieve your financial and non-financial objectives? What are the costs and market growth areas or new areas? Are there opportunities for partnerships, or research and development?

4. **Promotion**: How can you achieve (3), considering your and others’ timing, products/services/ideas, pricing, distribution, publicity/advertising, or personnel?

5. **Performance**: How will you budget and plan, implement, and analyse your performance?

6. **Preparation**: What else do you need to consider? What are the internal and external factors? What contingency plans can you make? When will you revise your plan for the next year?

Your impact factor
Whether marketing your business or yourself, you have only a few seconds to grab a person’s attention and show your true worth. For written material, you have to be your own professional writer and know the tricks of the trade: brevity, accuracy, and image are all important to the first impression you make.

Whatever material you prepare, be it a proposal, advertisement, name card, or CV, get a second and third opinion. Put it away for a few days and then look at it with fresh eyes as a critical reader, to check if you would “buy it”. Run the computer’s spell/grammar check to catch typos. (However, the spellchecker will not help with wrong word choice, homonyms, or tenses; I mean, tense.)

In CVs and cover letters, first list out your knowledge, skills, duties, experience, and achievements. You may surprise yourself! Use concrete qualifiers as power terms to market yourself, such as: Proven skills in, Skilled/Proficient in, Knowledge of, Trained in, Responsible for, 10 years’ experience in..., and use active verbs such as Devised, Implemented, Supervised, Coordinated, Established, Published, Achieved....

Alumni Jobsite
By the way, the HKU Dental Alumni Association (HKUDAA) now has a free Alumni Jobsite section for alumni of the HKU Faculty of Dentistry to advertise jobs to each other, courtesy of the Faculty’s Knowledge Transfer Unit.

We will gradually add business and job-hunting tips there too, so drop us a line if you have some business advice to share. I hope the Alumni Jobsite will one day help you achieve your personal goal. Good luck!

Dr Andrew Chan (BDS 2003), <accchan@graduate.hku.hk>, is President of the HKUDAA.

Calling all alumni: Please e-mail us via <dentktu@hku.hk> if you have any news, announcements, and updates to include in future issues of Expressions and in the website of the HKUDAA <http://facdent.hku.hk/hkudaa>, as well as any job advertisements and business tips to share.
Surgical quiz

By Dr Philip KM Lee (BDS 1986, MDS[OMFS] 2000), Specialist in Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery

During a routine dental examination of a 36-year-old Chinese woman, the dentist found a strange-looking lesion between the upper incisors in the periapical dental film (Figure). Results of an electric pulp test confirmed teeth 11 and 21 were vital.

1. Describe the lesion and give your diagnosis.
2. What is the appropriate treatment?

Patient quiz

Use the information on the Patient Page (opposite, page 19) to find words that are connected with the cause of bad breath. See below for tips.

Write expressions

The written word is different from the spoken word, in that the writer and reader are usually not face to face and so cannot ask each other for clarifications or paraphrases.

The lack of body language and facial expression also means that text needs to be prepared carefully to achieve clarity and to avoid confusion. Careful drafting is especially needed if you are writing for formal, academic, or professional purposes, or if you intend to be understood by as many different people as possible.

(FYI: In contrast, some informal writing is designed to be understood quickly and represent the spoken word. Text messaging has even evolved its own short-cuts, AFAIAA JTLYK BICBW. TPAE. BTW, YANETUT, W. L.On 2 <http://facdent.hku.hk/engagement/ke> IYW, 4 FOMO. BBFN.)

Quick quiz

A useful tip for clear writing is to ensure that all your terms are “parallel”. How can these sentences be improved?

(1) Bad grammar is like having bad breath: you may not realise it until a friend tells you.
(2) Bad breath can either be directly or indirectly caused by strongly flavoured food.
(3) Causes of bad breath, or halitosis, includes digestive problems, not cleaning teeth or dentures properly, and various medical conditions.
(4) A reason that someone has bad breath or other oral health problems is smoking, which the dentist may advise you to stop.


Check your answers to this issue’s quizzes on the Knowledge Exchange webpage of the Faculty’s website at <http://facdent.hku.hk/engagement/ke>
Guide to bad breath

What causes bad breath?
There are many different causes of bad breath (halitosis), including poor oral hygiene, oral medical conditions and uncontrolled oral infections like periodontal (gum) disease, medical problems, some drug treatments, smoking, and strongly flavoured food such as onions or garlic (see Box).

See your dentist immediately if you have a bad taste in your mouth, or if you find that bad breath persists after use of breath fresheners. Keep a diary of your diet and any drug treatments to help your dentist identify the likely cause of bad breath.

How can bad breath be treated?
Your dentist will (1) perform a full-mouth check-up, (2) examine bad breath, and (3) use information you give on your diet, drugs taken, dry mouth, surgery, or illness, to find out the severity of bad breath and if the cause is oral. He or she may then arrange appropriate treatment and/or advise follow-up, eg:
- Perform or arrange treatment for gums (periodontal treatment) and other necessary dental treatment
- Give professional oral hygiene instructions and recommend (1) a special antimicrobial mouthrinse to help fight plaque, or (2) professional teeth cleaning for oral health, as appropriate
- Prescribe artificial saliva for dry mouth, or recommend sugar-free sweets/candy or increased fluid intake
- Give advice and tips on quitting smoking*

How can I prevent bad breath?
Visit your dentist regularly, so that underlying problems that lead to bad breath can be caught and treated early, including periodontal disease and dry mouth. Between dental visits, you can:
- Avoid strongly flavoured food, or after such a meal you can chew sugar-free gum, use mouthrinse, or brush your teeth
- Brush your teeth with a fluoride toothpaste twice a day and use floss (or an interdental cleaner if advised by your dentist) once a day to clean between teeth; in addition to this routine, you can use a fluoride mouthrinse to help fight plaque; see the Hong Kong Government Tooth Club, <www.toothclub.gov.hk>, for brushing and flossing methods
- Take out removable dentures at night and clean them thoroughly before use the next day
- Brush your tongue daily for more effective control of bad breath
- Schedule professional teeth cleaning regularly
- Reduce the frequency of snacking
- *Give up smoking; Hong Kong Department of Health Smoking Cessation Hotline: 1833 183; HKU Smoking Reduction Hotline: 2819 2697; HKU Female Smoking Cessation Hotline: 2819 2692; Hong Kong Council on Smoking and Health website: <http://smokefree.hk> (Chinese) or <http://smokefree.hk/en/home> (English)


Written by Trevor Lane, DPhil; edited by Li-jian Jin, DDS, PhD. This Patient Page is for general informational use and is not a substitute for diagnosis; for specific advice, please consult a dentist.
Real Science.
Proven Results.
Worldwide Recognition.

BRUSH, FLOSS, LISTERINE®

LISTERINE® mouthwash has been awarded the Seal of Acceptance of the International Academy of Periodontology for helping to reduce gingivitis and the progression of periodontitis. Adding LISTERINE® to a daily mechanical oral routine with regular check-up can help maintain oral health.