**Victorian dentists strike**

By DTI

**MELBOURNE, Australia:** On Wednesday, 22 August, dentists across Victoria stopped working for half an hour as a form of protest against unacceptable waiting times for public dental care. The strike action follows intense advocacy activity by the Australian Dental Association Victorian Branch (ADAVB), which has shown a light on the fact that dentists employed in the state’s community health centres are the lowest paid public sector dentists in the country.

Dr Michelle Pettersson, a senior dentist at Your Community Health, who took part in the strike, said: "The work we do is so important to the overall health of disabled, elderly and disadvantaged Victorians, yet we all feel overlooked and underappreciated by the Victorian Government."

According to the ADAVB, at a community health care clinic in Darebin, the wait for eligible adults seeking general dental care is 22.8 months. Some Victorian dentists say this is due to insufficient funding, which results in the inability to retain experienced clinicians.

However, an interactive map released by the ADAVB shows a far greater problem, reportedly exposing waiting times of up to four years for some vulnerable Victorians. Additionally, less than 20 per cent of eligible Victorians are accessing care annually, leaving more than 150,000 remaining on waiting lists. ADAVB President Dr Kevin Morris noted that the data from the interactive map means that just over a third of all cases of care are for emergency treatment rather than routine care, which puts more strain on the public system.

"The ADAVB is calling on both the State and Federal Governments to support an increase in funding, with a target to double the number of patients being treated on a yearly basis to 800,000 by 2023/24. This would represent approximately 29 per cent of the eligible population," said Morris.

**Straumann strengthens position in low-cost implant market**

By DTI

**BASEL, Switzerland:** With implant dentistry continually developing and evolving, so too are some of the low-cost options. In a recent move to secure a greater stake in that market, Straumann recently signed agreements to buy further shares in T-Plus, a Taiwanese dental implant manufacturer. Once the Taiwanese Investment Commission has approved the purchase, Straumann will gain a 60 per cent share in the company.

T-Plus develops and manufactures attractively priced dental implant systems, which are sold exclusively through distributors in Taiwan and China. Its portfolio includes three tapered implant designs and covers a broad range of indications and customer preferences. The concepts, features and quality are similar to those of popular implant brands, something that Straumann believes makes T-Plus an attractive, inexpertive option for dentists using systems like Osstem and Astra.

Straumann first entered the non-premium market two years ago with a 30 per cent take in the France-based dental implant systems manufacturer Anthogyr. They have now reported that in Asia more than six million non-premium implants are sold annually, of which more than a third are low-cost.

"1-Plus provides us with the additional product range, registrations and brand to penetrate the entire non-premium segment in Taiwan and mainland China. In addition, it provides us with a modern, certified manufacturing facility in Asia. The company has a good track record and is well positioned for international growth, supported by the Straumann Group’s global presence, network and expertise," said Patrick Loh, Head of Sales in Asia Pacific.