From the Editor’s Desk

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First of all, I beg your pardon for taking a little bit longer in coming out this issue of APDF Newsletter. I have just taken over the duty from my respectable countrymen Dr Suresh Nan on 16 May 2010. Dr Suresh has done a very good job during his tenure and hence naturally this has imposed an invisible pressure on me to match his standard so as not to let him down. Suresh has also been a good friend and a great help to me in guiding me along to this Newsletter. I wish to dedicate this newsletter to him and his beloved family for giving me this opportunity to prepare my maiden Newsletter.

The response and contribution of articles to different national dental associations (NDA) has not been encouraging. However, I view this as my inexperience in presenting to them the nature of articles I needed for this Newsletter. The onus is on me to present an outline and then followed by requesting for the necessary information to achieve this end. I would take this as a learning curve and hopefully I could do better in the coming issues.

It was once said, “The future is here; it’s just not widely distributed yet.”

My thoughts on the ADTA

Nearly two years ago, the American Dental Trade Association (ADTA) undertook a rigorous study to better understand the market trends for the dental industry. I thought it would be helpful to share the highlights of the ADTA study with all of you. These high- lights point to a considerable degree of change—changes in technology, changes in the marketplace, and changes in the economic trends of dental care. These changes would have a considerable impact on the subject topic of Continuing Professional Development (CPD).

From an economic context, the ADTA report suggests future changes will move at a considerably different pace. Today, more than with economic value of dental care comes from procedures and real estate that were not available 20 years ago. With shifting interests on the part of patients, evolving technology and other external factors continuing to emerge, it seems reasonable to expect a future marked by additional—if not revolutionary—change. Future trends promise to re- frame the momentum of the past in combination with the less clear forces of the future, such as consumer behaviour and technology.

While it is clear that change is occurring—and that change will continue throughout our industry—the systemic nature of the supply and demand forces make for a complex and dynamic picture. Technology will interact with disease patterns; dental workforce issues will interact with patient behaviour; practice models will interact with service channels; and graphic arts will interact with capacity issues. All together, whether gradual or radical, change is certain. Both providers and the industry as a whole can influence this evolution by encouraging new service choices, practice models, technologies, access points, and staffing concepts.

The ADTA report predicts a very optimistic future. The College and each of its members will be the change we want to see. It is our responsibility to ensure that we are well prepared and ready to embrace change.

The 19th Asia Pacific Dental Congress will be the optimal opportunity to undertake this task by continuing dental education programmes, specific courses and to bring continuing dental education in every corner of this vast region. It has the task of upgrading practice and competency of dentists and specialists.

To this end the College has conducted joint scientific programmes in member countries. Organised workshops and is responsible for all the scientific programmes in the Asia Pacific Dental Congress for 1995 onwards. The College also awards Fellowship based on dedicated service to the profession and shared enthusiasm among their individual Associations or through activities of APDF/APRO. Fellowship could be awarded by attending accredited courses and having satisfied in attendance, knowledge gained etc. the candidates become eligible to sit for an examination conducted by the College. On passing a Fellowship will be awarded.

Today the Federation (ADTA/ APRO) serves its member associations well and is a truly useful umbrella organization of this region. Its annual congresses are leading events in the region attracting both the industry and delegates. The College has continued to evolve with a number of continuing dental education programmes being conducted in the region. It maintains a high standard in the scientific programmes of the Asia Pacific congresses.

From a beginning of 52 dentists from 8 countries today Asia Pacif ic Dental Federation/Asia Pacific Regional Organisation and its educational component ICCDE officially represents 27 countries with annual congresses attracting thousands of dentists each time it is held. There are no lack of hosts and countries’ invitations extend to 5 consecutive years ahead of time.

Both the APDF/APRO and its educational component ICCDE are well structured organisations. They are truly the voice of dentistry and dental health and continuing dental education in this region.