Experts discuss future of implantology in Gothenburg
First Brånemark Symposium draws over 200 dental professionals to Sweden

GOTHENBURG, Sweden/LEIPZIG, Germany: Professor Per-Ingvar Brånemark from Sweden has urged dentist worldwide to focus on their patients’ needs. Despite the recent developments in oral and maxillofacial reconstruction, the field should focus on the development of simple and affordable solutions rather than following commercial interests, he told Dental Tribune Asia Pacific during an exclusive interview at the first P-I Brånemark Symposium in Gothenburg last week.

80-year old Brånemark was the first clinician to place a modern dental implant back in 1965. He also discovered the concept of osseointegration, which had a huge impact on oral rehabilitation and other clinical disciplines such as orthopaedics.

The P-I Brånemark Symposium, which is supported by dental heavyweights Nobel Biocare, is supposed to be the first in a number of interdisciplinary events focusing on issues like the quality of life, economics and ethics in regard to oral rehabilitation. The symposium drew over 250 international scientists and dental experts, among them doctors from Australia, China and India, to Gothenburg in order to meet and discuss the latest concepts and developments in oral and maxillofacial reconstruction including the latest advancements in implant surfaces, bone augmentation, as well as imaging and CAD/CAM-based prostheses. New studies revealing promising satisfaction figures among patients that received treatment with dental implants were also presented.

“Osseointegration has been the major breakthrough in 20th century oral rehabilitation and brought together clinicians from different disciplines who otherwise may not have met,” said Dr Daniel van Steenberghe, Belgium, Scientific Chairman of the Symposium. “The purpose of this meeting is to enhance this cooperation for the sake of the patient.”

According to latest industry figures, the worldwide market volume for dental implants was US$700 million in 2008. Industry experts say that this volume is expected to increase further due to lower delivery costs and better long-term clinical results.

China rivals US in research race
A new report by Thomson Reuters has found that Chinese researchers have more than doubled their output of scientific papers in recent years and now rank second after the United States in terms of volume. In 2008, China published 112,000 papers compared to 540,000 in the US.

Patients in danger of zinc overdose
The US Consumer Healthcare Products Association has recently issued a national alert against the use of denture creams containing zinc. According to the organisation, exposure to excess zinc through these creams can lead to unexplained weakness, loss of sensation or other nerve symptoms.

Alkalines can damage teeth too
A new study from the Sahlgrenska Academy in Sweden has revealed that substances with high pH values damage enamel, a condition usually associated with acid erosion. The researchers exposed extracted teeth to a number of alkaline substances such as household degreasers and found that organic material on the surface of the tooth dissolves rapidly indicating that the organic components of the enamel are also affected, as the enamel becomes more porous.

Medical tourism slows down, but could recover
While the economic recession has eroded the growth rate for medical and dental tourism by approximately 15.6 per cent from 2007 to 2009, the economic recovery may help spur a sustainable 55 per cent annual growth rate for the medical tourism industry by 2010, according to a new report released by the Deloitte Center for Health Solutions in the US.

Medical tourism has experienced a significant slow down driven by consumers putting off elective medical procedures over the past two years. However, a better economy and health care reform in the US will likely propel growth in the elective outpatient market, particularly if elective cosmetic and dental procedures are not considered basic benefits, the report states. In 2009, a projected number of 645,000 Americans will travel abroad for outbound medical and dental care.

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