First special needs dental clinic opens in Singapore

By DTI

SINGAPORE: The first dental centre functionally designed to cater for the elderly and people with special needs was recently opened at the National Dental Centre of Singapore in Outram. The Geriatric Special Care Dentistry Clinic offers a full range of oral health services customised for patients with complex medical needs, including a wheelchair-tilting device that allows patients to remain in the wheelchair during dental treatment.

The National Dental Centre opened the clinic in response to Singapore’s rapidly ageing population and growing demand for primary care services, claiming that the special needs unit has wider walkways, larger waiting areas and dental chairs, as well as handrails and low counters. Moreover, every treatment room is furnished with dental radiographic equipment so that patients do not need to be transferred to another room to obtain radiographs.

During the opening ceremony, health minister Gan Kim Yong stressed that oral health and dental care must be incorporated as part of the government’s overall strategy for ensuring good health among seniors. Although critical, oral health is an often underestimated component of the overall well-being of geriatric and special needs patients, he said.

“We must also invest in training dental healthcare professionals to better serve our seniors and undertake more research in disease trends in geriatric dentistry,” Gan stressed. In addressing this issue, the clinic will serve as a training ground for the next generation of oral health professionals who are specialising in this field.

As reported by Channel NewsAsia, the Ministry of Health is already offering scholarships for dentists who are keen to take up the challenges of geriatric and special needs dentistry. So far, four dental professionals have completed specialty training under this programme in the clinic.

Being the first of its kind in Singapore, the clinic has seen more than 4,000 patients to date. A second geriatric and special needs dentistry clinic is being planned at the upcoming Centre for Oral Health at the National University Health System and is expected to open for service in 2019.

King’s College London collaborates with China’s largest dental group

By DTI

BEIJING, China & LONDON, UK: King’s College London Dental Institute is extending its international reach with the launch of a number of activities that will see the institute partner with BYBO Dental Group, one of China’s largest dental providers, over the upcoming months. The collaboration started in July with a distance learning programme that will offer BYBO staff across China training and information on the management of tooth wear and occlusal change.

In addition to the distance/blended learning programmes, face-to-face lectures by King’s academics, including Profs Raman Bedi, Martyn Cobourne and Francis Hughes, at various sites in China began in June and will continue until the end of the calendar year, the university said in a press release. All information will be available to BYBO staff in both English and Mandarin.

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In addition to continuing professional education, the partnership will include staff exchange, as well as the transfer of clinical expertise and protocols, over the next three years.

Estimated to be worth £3.6 million, the collaboration agreement was first announced at the end of 2015.

“King’s Dental Institute’s commitment to improving oral health knowledge and provision in practice around the world shines through in this collaboration,” commented Prof. Dianne Bekow, Executive Dean of the Dental Institute, on the partnership. “Not only is it a fantastic opportunity to share our world-leading expertise with BYBO, but it also offers us a unique chance for us to learn from one of China’s most renowned dental providers.”

Founded in 1993, BYBO consists of 200 chain dental clinics with approximately 6,500 employees across China, according to its figures.

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Wheelchair-bound patient being treated on wheelchair titling unit.