Still lots to see and discover at EAO 2014

Annual scientific meeting of the European Association of Osseointegration continues today

- Reduced diameter or length of implants are just two of the topics, which will be discussed this morning when the annual scientific meeting of the European Association of Osseointegration continues here at the Auditorium Parco Della Musica in Rome. Until Saturday, over 30 speakers from Italy and abroad will also present on risk factors, soft tissue recession and bone augmentation dilemmas, among other topics. As a first, there will be a special parallel guest country session this afternoon organised by the Korean Academy of Osseointegration in Seoul. It will present an impressive line-up of clinical experts from one of the largest markets for dental implant rehabilitation in Asia.

Visitors are also invited to attend tomorrow’s Award Ceremony which is going to honour submission in basic, surgically related and prosthetically oriented clinical research in implant dentistry.

According to latest estimates of the EAO, approximately 2,500 professionals are expected to attend this year’s congress in Rome, which is being held for the 23rd time. While the number of expected visitors is most likely to remain steady compared to the last two editions in Denmark and Ireland, participation at the commercial exhibition has increased with over 90 companies and dental institutions to showcase their latest products and solutions this year. On display are new implants, biomaterials and digital treatment solutions, with some of them to be available to European dentists for the first time. Visitors can also learn more about these products during a number of corporate-sponsored satellite symposia and hands-on workshops to take place during all three congress days.

More information about the meeting, scientific sessions and industry exhibition is available on the EAO congress website at www.eao-congress.com. The association also offers an application for mobile devices and tablet computers that is aimed at giving visitors quick access to congress-related information. Daily news updates, interviews and product reviews from the show floor are available on the Dental Tribune website at www.dental-tribune.com. The newsfeed can also be accessed by scanning the QR code below.
For the first time in the history of the EAO meeting, clinical experts from a country outside Europe will jointly participate in a special parallel guest country session, organized by the EAO in partnership with the Korean Academy of Osseointegration. As part of this year’s scientific congress programme, clinicians and educators from dental schools in South Korea will present on a wide range of implant related topics including computer-guided flapless implant surgery or surgical intervention in case of peri-implantitis.

According to Prof. Bu-Kyo Lee, professor of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery at Asan Medical Center in Seoul and director of International Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons, the session will not only discuss innovative methods and clinical techniques but also provide a comprehensive insight into the state of dental implantology in the Western Asian country.

“Expectations have been high since the EAO accepted the proposal by our Chairman Dr Je-Uk Park to host a parallel session at the 2014 congress in Rome,” he told today international in an interview. “I am sure that attendants will enjoy the knowledge that our experts, under the motto ‘Cutting edge of implant dentistry’, will bring to the table.”

Lee said that, while implantology in South Korea was considered inferior compared to Western Standards not long ago, the specialty has taken a big leap forward in recent years.

“Most of what we know about implantology today has its roots in developments that began in Europe decades ago,” he said. “Now we have been given the opportunity to give something back by presenting clinical knowledge and methods which have been developed in our country and could benefit implantology worldwide.”

“It is a honour to have been invited by the EAO ahead of other important markets such as Japan or the US. We hope that the presentations will be up to par with what attendants expect in terms of content and clinical skills,” he added Lee.

According to Lee, eight speakers will present during the session today which will also commemorate the recent 10th anniversary of the Korean Academy of Osseointegration. It will commence today right after the meeting of the General Assembly at 13:15.

Dental implants have come a long way in South Korea since they were introduced to the country four decades ago. Back then, US and European products wholly dominated the still young market. Now, with 223 implants per 10,000 people, the country has one of the highest implants per capita rates in the world, ranking after Germany and Israel. According to a report published by the Korean Health Industry Development Institute, the regional market exceeded US$300 million in 2013. That year, forty South Korean companies manufactured approx. 12 million dental implants. Later, in June, the Korean National Health Insurance Corporation announced that it would expand the coverage of dental implants in patients aged 70 and older beginning in 2015, and those aged 65 and older in 2016; domestic competition is thus expected to increase even further.

The market saturation has recently forced many manufacturers to increasingly pursue sales markets overseas. Owing to their price advantage, implants “Made in Korea” have started to gain more market share overseas. In the Asia Pacific, a recent report by the Millennium Research Group (MRG), a market intelligence provider in Canada, has predicted that manufacturers from South Korea could dominate dental implant markets in that region as early as 2016. By that time, the total regional market is expected to exceed US$800 million.

While exports to Western countries have remained relatively slow, South Korean manufacturers like OSSTEM already rival established implant providers such as Straumann or Zimmer Dental in Asian countries like Pakistan, Malaysia and Hong Kong. Other significant market players in the region include DIO Implants, a company partly owned by DENTSPLY, as well as MegaGen and Shinhung.

Implants from Korea are also catching up in terms of clinical data, the report stated, a fact that will make them increasingly adoptable for implant specialists in that region. Manufacturers now offer seminars focusing on basic and advanced implant placement training and the advancement of restoration skills to dentists. Having recognised the increasing financial limitations provided by dental implants, a growing number of South Korean dentists has also taken part in seminar programmes that focus on how to remain competitive. This led to an increase in the number of dentists who are able to perform implant surgery procedures. Demand for implants has been also driven by a new trend among South Korean dentists to promote aesthetic treatment through dental implants.