Gan announces initiatives to address oral health care needs of the elderly

Singapore health minister joins opening of IDEM

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With an ever-increasing number of people over the age of 65, Singapore’s population is ageing faster than other countries in the South East Asian region. Addressing healthcare needs of seniors is a significant duty to ensure effective care. The international Dental Exhibition and Meeting (IDEM) in Singapore yesterday, the country’s minister of health, Gan Kim Yong, provided insight into how the city-state intends to address the growing dental care needs of elderly people. He said that his ministry took the initiative of oral disease on the elderly, and the need to address the growing dental care needs faster than other countries in the South East Asian region.

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Emphasising the negative impact of oral disease on the elderly, Gan said that his ministry took the first step in addressing the particular needs of seniors with the introduction of the first geriatric dental clinic at the National Dental Centre last year. More facilities offering the equipment for and expertise in treating elderly patients are to be introduced with the opening of the new Centre for Oral Health in 2019. In order to train more dental professionals in the needs of elderly patients, the ministry is currently also providing sponsorships in the areas of geriatric and special needs dentistry. Multidisciplinary collaboration has also been stepped up with improved education of allied health professionals, such as oral therapists.

“I would like to take this opportunity to thank all dental practitioners who have been volunteering their services to the nursing homes outside their usual working hours,” he said.

Gan attended yesterday’s IDEM opening ceremony as a guest of honour. In addition to the minister, delegates were addressed by Singapore Dental Association President Dr Kuan Chee Keong, FDI World Dental Federation President Dr Patrick Hescox and Koelnmesse Vice President for Asia Pacific Michael Dreyer, who invited professionals to make use of the extended offerings at this year’s show. In addition to a sold-out industry exhibition featuring the latest products and innovations from over 500 manufacturers and distributors around the globe, delegates will be able to learn more than ever before about the latest developments in dentistry by attending the congress programme.

Besides the numerous clinical presentations and hands-on workshops being presented by internationally distinguished experts, there are programmes for all members of the dental team, including dental technicians and auxiliary staff, such as nurses and hygienists. Furthermore, participants at this year’s show will be able to find out more about the latest dental tools and technologies during the daily symposia being presented by the Dental Tribune Study Club again at Booth 6N-17 in the exhibition hall on Level 6.

For more information on IDEM Singapore 2016, please visit the official congress website at www.idem-singapore.com. The latest news from the show floor is available daily through the today international congress newspaper or online at the Dental Tribune Asia Pacific website (dental-tribune.asia).