Asian experts discuss implants at German meeting

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LEIPZIG, Germany: Over 180 dentists from Asia, Germany and the UK recently discussed new concepts in restorative implant dentistry at a joint symposium held at the University of Tübingen in Germany. Japanese scientists led by Prof. Takashi Miyazaki from Showa University presented new research on utilising spark erosion for the improvement of implant surfaces. The technology is currently being used in other industrial fields for cutting metal using high voltage electronic discharges.

Dental implantology has seen an upswing in countries like Korea and China, where more than 80 of all dentists are now able to place implants. According to Prof. Yen Lin of the School of Stomatology at the Beijing University in China, who also attended the meeting, between 2,000 and 3,000 implants are placed in the clinic’s Department of Implantology each year.

Industry reports predict that the market will grow to over US$125 million by 2013, reflecting a compound annual growth rate of more than 50 over the next four years.

The symposium, chaired by Clinical Director Prof. Heiner Weber, was organised by the Department of Prosthodontics at the University of Tübingen. Since the 1980s, the university has been educating dentists, technicians and dental students from different parts of Asia in dental surgery.

Asia, Europe take on fake drugs

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LEIPZIG, Germany: Politicians and business leaders participating in the Asia–Europe Summit ASEM 8 in Brussels in Belgium have decided to strengthen trans-regional cooperation in health care services between Asia and the European Union. They have also called for improved intervention policies on counterfeiting, including the recognition of Good Manufacturing Practice certification by Asian countries.

Counterfeit goods, including medical products, account for US$200 billion or 2 per cent of the world’s trade, according to figures from the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe. Many of them originate in countries like India and China, where restrictions against counterfeiting are ineffective. Amongst others, the US Food and Drug Administration had to recall tons of counterfeited Colgate toothpaste in 2007, which were produced in China and contaminated with a chemical compound commonly used in antifreeze.

“Counterfeited medical products are not only of concern to dentists and the dental industry. They represent a threat for all medical professions,” Friedrich A. Herbst, Executive Director of the Association of International Dental Manufacturers told Dental Tribune Asia Pacific. “The spread of counterfeit products can only be reduced when each and every individual along the distribution chain is committed to ensuring that the product or good he is offering, distributing or selling comes from a reliable source which is known for its personal integrity and ethical standards.”

Herbst added that the World Health Professions Alliance, a non-governmental body representing over 600 health organisations around the world, recently announced a public health alert on the prevalence of falsified medical products. The organisation also provides resources on their website (www.who-mpa.org) for physicians and dentists seeking more information on the matter, he said.