Singapore fund buys major stake in Straumann

SINGAPORE/BASEL, Switzerland: The Government of Singapore Investment Corporation (GIC) has increased its stake in a dental company. As reported in late November, the government-run fund recently bought 10 per cent of shares from Dr Thomas Straumann, the major shareholder of the Swiss implant manufacturer of the same name.

With the transaction, estimated to be worth more than CHF167 million (US$179 million), GIC now holds 14 per cent of the company’s shares and is the second largest shareholder after Straumann himself. Dr Rudolf Maag, former Straumann chairperson and another major shareholder, holds 11 per cent.

GIC first bought into Straumann in October this year. In July 2011, it also acquired more than 5 per cent of shares in Nobel Biocare, a major competitor of Straumann based in Zurich. Worldwide, the sovereign wealth fund based in Singapore is currently managing assets of approx. US$100 billion, according to business news provider Bloomberg.

Straumann, who served as chairperson from 1990 to 2002, commented in a statement that the reallocation of his share in the company was necessary owing to the current economic circumstances; however, he agreed not to reduce his remaining stake of 17 per cent for one year.

Owing to decreasing demand for high-cost dental treatments in Europe, the company recently announced the reduction of its global workforce by 6 per cent from 2013 in an effort to improve profit margins.

Ivoclar Vivadent establishes subsidiary

SHANGHAI, China: Owing to the fast-growing dental market in China, the restorative materials specialist Ivoclar Vivadent has expanded its Shanghai office into a new subsidiary. The Shanghai office, established in the 1990s, is now the company’s seventh local division in the Asia Pacific region.

The new subsidiary, introduced during DenTech China, was established in order to provide better product services to Chinese dental professionals and to meet the challenge of long-term growth in China.

According to the company, an estimated 13 per cent growth is expected for the dental market in Asia Pacific in 2012 and the dental market in the region will account for 18 per cent of the global dental market by then. Given this development, a subsidiary in China emerged as an important strategic investment, the company stated.

Founded as a manufacturer of ceramic teeth about 85 years ago, Ivoclar Vivadent today owns subsidiaries and sales offices with more than 2,600 employees in 22 countries, including Australia, India, New Zealand, Japan and now China. It is one of the largest international dental companies and ranks third in the global market.

Ivoclar Vivadent products, including ceramic systems, furnaces, resin teeth, composites and adhesives, are shipped to about 120 countries worldwide, according to the company.
HAMBURG, Germany: The German dental manufacturer DMG Dental has announced that its successful Luxatemp brand of bis-acrylic composites has been on the market now for 20 years. Launched in 1992, it was the first temporary crown and bridge material that did not require time-consuming hand mixing.

It is currently available in three different versions that are indicated not only for temporary crowns and bridges, but also for inlays, onlays, veneers as well as long-term temporaries.

Recently awarded the highest possible rating of five stars by the independent test lab REALITY, the company’s latest product Luxatemp Star is said to offer top performance with regard to break resistance and flexural strength, while ensuring dependable stability and durability. Long-term shade stability has also been optimised, according to DMG. Moreover, Luxatemp Star is claimed to attain its final hardness in just five minutes, making it faster than its predecessor Luxatemp Fluorescence, which was acclaimed as Top Provisional Material and Best of the Best by Dental Advisor in February 2011.

The company currently provides more information about Luxatemp on its website at www.dmg-dental.com/20-years. The Luxatemp product family is available in markets worldwide through a network of more than 70 dealers.

Singapore corp. starts distribution of laser tech

SINGAPORE: Healthcare Solutions & Services (HSSC) in Singapore has taken over the distribution of laser technology for both hard- and soft-tissue dental treatment by Syneron Dental Lasers in Israel. The LiteTouch Er:YAG laser, featuring a fibre-free laser delivery system, will be officially launched in the city-state in February next year.

Negotiations between Syneron and HSSC regarding a distribution deal already began in October, said HSSC business manager Tommy Ng, commenting on the recent transaction. According to him, the agreement with Syneron is part of a larger expansion plan that will also see the company entering the market for medical devices.

HSSC has been distributing tooth replacements and biomaterials from Southern Implants and Centrix, among other dental companies, since mid-2011. Besides the scheduled soft launch early next year, Ng said that it will also have the LiteTouch on display at an upcoming laser symposium in Singapore later in 2013.

“Singapore is a mature and sophisticated dental market,” he said. “With a high average number of GDPs, dentists are capable of investing in high-technology equipment, while the future pool of well-educated dental patients are more receptive to treatment using dental lasers.”

Syneron Dental Lasers introduced its latest LiteTouch model at this year’s congress of the World Federation for Laser Dentistry in Barcelona, Spain. It has been on dental markets since 2007.