Interview: Dr. Rani, Dean of College of Dentistry, University of Sharjah in UAE

"We also have a dental technology program—a diploma of dental technology where we train future dental technicians, who are very heavily involved in using CAD/CAM technology in their studies.”

"Here at the University of Sharjah, Dental College, we deliver the knowledge and we take the students through a special experience"

"We are in a very, very exclusive dental environment amongst excellent dental colleagues.”

By Dental Tribune Middle East & Africa

SHARJAH, UAE: The Middle East today holds a place as one of the foremost economic hubs in the entire world. However, the current popularity in medical tourism into the region has shown that there is more interest in the region than big business. Highly accredited Dr. Rani Samsudin is a prime example of the current state of the dentistry scene in the Middle East. Currently Dean of the University of Sharjah’s College of Dentistry, the renowned Doctor shares with us, his invaluable insight into the dentistry scene in the middle east.

Trevor Dayanov: Doctor, tell us a little bit about where you’re from, what your responsibilities here are.

Thank you very much. Well I come from Malaysia, and I was holding a deans position at the dental school in the Universiti Sains Malaysia, before I was invited to this.

"Here at the University of Sharjah, Dental College, we deliver the knowledge and we take the students through a special experience”

"As in any medical related field, the industry of dentistry is always changing. Especially considering a trend that the world is seeing now with the integration of CAD/CAM dentistry being pushed farther than it has before in the way that a lot of professionals and clinicians are constantly changing the way they completely perform. How has this affected the curriculum, or the way you teach your students? What are you doing to keep up with these changes?"

Well certainly the computer has changed our daily lives: its changed the way we work at our office and the way we live at home, in fact he way we travel to countries. It’s because of computers that we can fly high, we can fly faster and we can be anywhere in the world within a few hours. So computers have affected dentistry very much. But I must say that computer related technology in medical and dental field is not new. It has been around for the past thirty or forty years. But I must say that in the early years in the introduction of computers to healthcare systems and healthcare technology, has not been very successful because it has been introduced to senior dentists and doctors who were born before the era of computers, so they do not know how to operate computers! But then, when we look at our students today, research has shown that all children who are born after 1980 are very computer literate, and there are many publications about that. So we have taken this into consideration, and we have found that when children are educated in an environment where it is not digital, they don’t find the lesson interesting. So when students learn in a classroom room using none of the chalk and blackboard, method of teaching they find the lesson very boring, because their life is digital, AND they can cope with it.

Therefore we consider all these factors, and because we know that the computer industry will take the dental industry to a different level, and it has happened now and will in the near future, we have added the CAD/CAM technologies in operative dentistry, we have also introduced our students to methods of assessing and planning dental implants using software, to analyze where is the best site to place dental implants in the patients jaw, and all this planning is done using software. So coming back to CAD/CAM, we have started delivering lectures to students in CAD/CAM technology, we are the biggest investor in CAD/CAM technology education in this region, where for your information, we have four CAD/CAM systems in our clinics and labs, and all the systems are the Sirona Systems, and our dental technicians are also trained in using these technologies.

We also have a dental technology program—a diploma of dental technology where we train future dental technicians, who are very heavily involved in using CAD/CAM technology in their studies. Because we are very sure that when they graduate and they go into private dental labs, I am sure that all labs will need their knowledge and skills to operate the CAD/CAM and no more the manual way of constructing dentures and gums. Therefore, in the second year of our program where CAD/CAM technology has been introduced to undergraduate students.

"As coming back to CAD/CAM, we have started delivering lectures to students in CAD/CAM technology, we are the biggest investor in CAD/CAM technology education in this region, where for your information, we have four CAD/CAM systems in our clinics and labs, and all the systems are the Sirona Systems, and our dental technicians are also trained in using these technologies."

We also have a dental technology program—a diploma of dental technology where we train future dental technicians, who are very heavily involved in using CAD/CAM technology in their studies. Because we are very sure that when they graduate and they go into private dental labs, I am sure that all labs will need their knowledge and skills to operate the CAD/CAM and no more the manual way of constructing dentures and gums. Therefore, in the second year of our program where CAD/CAM technology has been introduced to undergraduate students.