Interview: 'All parties together to have one single Dental Conference'

Muscat, Oman: During the Saudi Dental Society International Conference in Riyadh, Dental Tribune Middle East & Africa had the pleasure to interview Dr. Jasim Al Saidi, Chairman of the organizing committee for the Oman International Dental Conference 2013.

Dr. Jasim, how are the preparations going for the Oman Dental Conference taking place on 27th and 28th of February 2013 in Muscat, Oman?

Dr. Jasim Al-Saidi: This is the first Oman International Dental Conference, of which I am the chairman, and it is going to be really international as many of our speakers are coming from both abroad and Oman.

What are the main focuses of your Conference?

Mainly it will be focusing on new developments and studies related to dentistry in all specialities including Implantology, Orthodontics, Cosmetics and some major surgeries as well.

You refer to this as the ‘First’ Oman Dental Conference although there have been several in the past, could you explain your intentions?

You are correct, this is not the first Conference to be conducted in Oman in fact we have conducted more than 15 Conferences before, however the name of the conference has been changed to the ‘Oman International Dental Conference 2013’ because the organizing committee itself has been changed for this Conference. Usually it was run by either the Ministry of Health or the Oman Dental Society, but now we are gathering everybody – all parties together to have one single Oman International Dental Conference.

How many participants do you expect?

We are expecting to have around 700-800 attendees including dentists and dental related professionals.

Will your event include an exhibition?

We will have an exhibition. In the eyes of Oman it is a good sized exhibition, but when compared to other big events such as IDS or SDS it is not that big of an exhibition. We are expecting approximately 30 companies for this event.

You mention you will have some international speakers as well as locals. Will there be any familiar faces?

We have a number of notable speakers coming to the conference that we are gathering from all over the world. Some of these include Professor David Wray and Professor Donald Fergusson from Dubai, Louis Hadhan from Lebanon, Professor Jean Pierre Bernard from France, Dr. Nahi Jabbour, Professor Mike Mulcay, Dr. Mohammed Sartawi. With this being said, we are hoping this conference will be the first of its kind and we plan on having this running every two years in the future.

Dr. Jasim, you are a dentist yourself. Could you share some of your personal experience?

I have been working as a dentist for the last 12 years and I find that it is a very nice but a challenging profession. You have to be prepared for a lot of challenges when approaching situations. Not everybody can be a dentist, you have to work hard and bear in mind that at some stage you will have some back pains and headaches due to the positions in which you work! Being a dentist on its own is a specialty.

What are your thoughts of the Dental Market here in the Middle East?

I think it is blowing up very, very quickly, even in Oman. However, the problem in Oman is that until now we did not have many specialists, we need to not only encourage but support dentists to pursue further education and chose a specialty. My opinion is to support them because not many people can do this by themselves. Many dentists require sponsorships in order to go abroad as it is expensive. If dentists had more opportunities to study abroad for sure they will do so.

What can you say about the education in Oman, at the moment? As you mention some of the top Dental Schools from UAE will have their deans lecturing at your event in February such as Professor Fergusson and Professor Wray. Is UAE an example for Oman regarding the development of Dental Schools?

Yes, to an extent. We have only one dental school at the moment that was established six years back only with the first group of graduates completing just this year. We are hoping that both the size and quality will increase over the coming years in Oman.

Dr. Jasim, is there anything else you would like to address to the readers of DTMEA?

Dear Dental Professionals. We invite you to visit our conference in the lovely city of Muscat, Sultanate of Oman for the Oman International Dental Conference 2013 on 27th & 28th of February, 2013. We hope that you will be part of this historic event and join us for many years to come in Muscat. Thank you. Thank you Dr. Jasim, we wish you all the best for your conference and in all your future events.