

Expecting the unexpected in implant dentistry

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Medical advances and better understanding of the functions of the body mean people can live longer nowadays. Prevention of dental disease has enabled more people to keep their teeth into their senior years. As more people are keeping their teeth and living longer, normal age-related changes of the oral and dental tissues become more pronounced. These bring about esthetic and functional problems and indirectly affect socialization. Nowadays, people's oral health-related quality of life plays an important part in their lives. A conservative approach is still highly recommended over aggressively sacrificing tooth substances. Implant dentistry has gradually emerged as a very important and useful treatment modality in oral rehabilitation. Not only do implants solve many problems like inability of the patient to cope with dentures in edentulous cases, they are also more conservative as abutment teeth can be spared when replacing missing teeth. However, each treatment modality has its own complications, and those deemed in need of further treatment in an unexpected manner can be regarded as failures¹. This also explains why clinicians and patients are disappointed when the complication is unexpected by both parties. It is logical that failures of this sort can be avoided by a conversion of the unexpected to the expected. The featured article in this issue² provides a comprehensive view of the unexpected complications that can present clinically. Readers will certainly gain a better understanding of the nature of and best strategies for handling the complications of implant dentistry from these two prosthodontists experienced in implant rehabilitation.

It is nice to know that the Hong Kong SAR Government plans to increase the subsidy given to the elderly for health care, including dental services. This is

a first step in the right direction but hopefully more will be done. A study into how elderly people respond to this offer is presented in this issue³.

May we take this opportunity to thank Drs Jenny Wai-Ling Man, Franco Chi-Hang Wan, and Jasmine Chak-Yan Yeung for their invaluable help while being members of the Editorial Board. Their departure from the Editorial Board will be our great loss. We also wish to give a warm welcome to our new members, Dr Charles Yat-Cheung Yeung and Dr Ken Wai-Kuen Chiu. Together we will strive to make the *Hong Kong Dental Journal* more successful.

We would like to extend our deepest appreciation to those Honorary Editorial Advisors who are leaving us. Thanks a lot. At the same time a big welcome to the new Advisors who are joining us.

As this issue was being prepared we heard of the sad death of Professor Ian Barnes. His contribution to dentistry and especially to the Faculty of Dentistry in Hong Kong will always be remembered.

References

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