

DENTAL TRIBUNE

The World's Dental Newspaper • Pakistan Edition



PUBLISHED IN PAKISTAN

www.dental-tribune.com.pk

NOVEMBER, 2019 - Issue No. 06 Vol.6



An exclusive interview
with Dr Mahmood
Shah

INTERVIEW

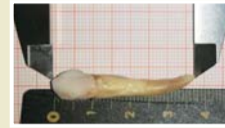
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New Medical and Dental Council elects its President & Vice-President

DT Pakistan Report

KARACHI - The Medical and Dental Council constituted under the new Pakistan Medical Commission Ordinance 2019 held its first meeting recently at a local hotel in Islamabad. The meeting was held pursuant to section 4(2) of the PMC, wherein the Ordinance was formally presented followed by the election of Medical and Dental Council's (MDC) President and Vice President; committees were formed and duties were delegated.

The council members unanimously elected Dr Arshad Taqi as President and Mr Ali Raza as Vice President of the Council unopposed. The meeting was attended by members of the newly formed MDC: Mr Muhammad Ali Raza, Mr Tariq Ahmad Khan, Dr Rumina Hasan, Dr Asif Loya, Dr Arshad Taqi, Dr Anees-ur-Rehman, Surgeon General of Pakistan, Lt. General Dr Khawar Rehman, and President CPSP (College of Physicians and Surgeons Pakistan), Prof. Dr Zafarullah Chaudhry. Ms Roshaneh Zafar

attended the meeting via Skype. After election, the President Dr Arshad Taqi took over the chair of the meeting. The trouble of the medical and dental fraternity was

Ex-employees of grade 1-4 of PMDC applying for positions will be given priority.

As per the law, NLE was to be conducted for the first time in end of 2020 or start of 2021..

duly noted and in order to remove hold from the processing of new licences, renewals and other certificates the meeting proceeded to appoint temporary staff members. The temporary members are to take over during the transition period and not stay in office for over 90 days. Dr Nasser Mohiuddin, Director General (Tech.), Ministry of National Health Services Regulations and Coordination (NHSR&C) was

appointed on temporary basis. Temporary staff for the Medical Authority was also appointed. It was announced that remuneration of each temporary member would be determined by the Human Rights (HR) Committee and approved by the President.

Advertisement for appointment of secretary to the Council and members of the Medical Authority on merit will be published at the earliest and interviews and assessments will be carried out as per the system recommended by the HR Committee. It was also clarified that the 100 ex-employees of Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PMDC) who fall in pay grade 1-4 will be given first preference and priority when positions for similar nature are advertised, as per the Section 49(3) of the Ordinance.

The Council unanimously decided that the Director Finance prepare the necessary approvals for payment of the 6 months basic pay and the 20 days salary for October 2019 of all ex-employees of PMDC to ensure

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Digitalise verification system for doctors: PMC

DT Pakistan Report

ISLAMABAD - A press conference was called by The Pakistan Medical Commission (PMC) recently. They announced PMC's plan for digitalization of the verification system of doctors and medical students.

Dr Arshad Taqi, PMC President and Mohammad Ali Raza, PMC's Vice-President



Image: DT Pakistan

presided the occasion.

While addressing a press conference, Taqi said that following the formation of PMC, they took several steps to improve its working. The clearance of pending cases of good standing certificates and the verifications of applications for doctors' were included in the steps. The PMC clarified that the Higher Education Commission (HEC) would ensure that the PMC's standards were implemented in medical colleges as per the directives of a new law.

"The HEC will conduct inspections of medical and dental colleges whose

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Scientific Session on Advanced Dental Sciences 2019

DT Pakistan Report

LAHORE - The College of Dentistry, Liaquat Medical & Dental College (LMDC), recently held a Scientific Session on Advanced Clinical Sciences, in collaboration with 1st UHS - International Dental Conference. The scientific meeting brought together international and national speakers from various reputed universities and dental practices under one roof. The theme of the event was "Together towards Tomorrow."

The event was formally inaugurated by the Patron-in-Chief, Prof Dr Aqib Sohail, renowned Oral and

Maxillofacial Surgeon and Principal, College of Dentistry, LMDC. He conveyed gratitude to all the honorable guests and speakers of the event. Minister of Health Punjab, Prof Dr Yasmin Rashid, was the Chief Guest of the event.

In her address, Dr Rashid appreciated the professional commitment of the dental faculty and congratulated the organizers of the event for arranging such a beneficial event. Vice-Chancellor, UHS, Prof Dr Javed Akram, and Vice-Chancellor, King Edward Medical University (KEMU), Prof Dr Khalid Masood Gondal, graced the event as the Guest of Honor. Senior faculty members



Photo: DT Pakistan

from all specialties attended the event including Prof Dr Nazia Yazdaine, Prof Dr Abida Ijaz, Prof Abid Ashar, Prof Dr Muhammad Qasim Saeed, Prof Dr Abdul Moeed Zaigham, Prof Dr Nasir Saleem, Prof Ayub Shah, Prof Dr Hina Zafar Raja, and Dr Saroosh Ehsan.

Eminent keynote international and national speakers enlightened the attendees with their knowledge and spoke on various topics related to the field of dentistry. Dr Ala Ersheidat (Jordan), Dr Ansa Akram (UK), Mr Mazahir Hussain (Spain),

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4TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

Patient Safety Comes First- Experts at Dentistry - Dental Symposium

ISLAMABAD - Riphah International University and Riphah Institute of Health Care Improvement and Safety organized the 4th International Conference on Patient Safety. A three-day extensive program was designed including pre-conference workshops and lectures from both national and international speakers. The session was facilitated by Prof. Dr. Yawar Hayat Khan, Professor of Dental materials, Islamic International Dental College (IIDC), Director at CLIQ (Center of excellence in Leadership, Innovation and Quality) & ALSS (South Asia and UAL), MSLDE (Master of Science in Leadership and Dentistry) at RACKODS (Ras Al Khaimah College of Dental Sciences), UAE and Co-facilitated by Prof. Dr. Ulfat Bashir, Principal IIDC. Among the esteemed panel of speakers included Dr. Sabrin Azim, Assistant Professor Oral & Maxillofacial surgery, RACKODS, UAE, Professor Dr. Azhar Sheikh, Dean Foundation University Dental College, Prof. Dr. Arshad Malik, Principal HBSDC (Hazrat Bari Imam Sarkar Dental College), Dr. Muhammad Humza Bin Saeed, Associate Professor Community Dentistry, IIDC. The panel discussion was moderated by Dr. Kanwal Zulfiqar, Assistant Professor, Orthodontics, Head Quality Assurance Team, IIDC. Deans of various dental colleges were invited in the conference.

The conference was focused on all the aspects of healthcare with the agenda to create awareness among the health care practitioners and contribute in their effective learning by making the correct and verified information and knowledge available.



Photos: DT Pakistan

Patient safety in dentistry was one of the primary focuses on the Conference.

A Dental Symposium was organized by the Faculty of IIDC. Informative presentations regarding the patient safety in dentistry and how it can be improved and implemented were engrossed.

Dr. Sabrin Azim presented the clinical aspects of patient safety and emphasized on building a culture in all healthcare organizations and how they are bringing exclusive changes in their University RACKODS, UAE in collaboration with Riphah University.

Professor Dr. Azhar Sheikh talked about the 'Patient Safety in dentistry and Our responsibility'.

Prof. Dr. Yawar Hayat Khan, explained the implementation of the WISH (Waste Industry Safety and Health) framework and the progress that can be made within our facilities with honest efforts.

Prof. Dr. Arshad Malik extensively focused the adverse events resulting from the negligence in clinical procedures.

Dr. Muhammad Humza Bin Saeed focused on the Importance of Non-Technical skills and their incorporation in the dental curriculum. The presentation session was followed by the panel discussion from the eminent speakers.

The discussion included an interactive Q&A session with the audience. Panel discussed the various aspects regarding the patient centered, safe dental care. Role and responsibility of an individual health care worker was exclusively agreed upon. Building of effective local Task forces in collaboration with the local communities was decided which would monitor and work for awareness and improvement of the dental facilities within their area.

Development of patient safety culture within the organizations and eliminating the fear or punishment factor in case of reporting any adverse event or scenario was agreed. Building a trust within the organization and making sincere efforts towards a defined goal of 'Quality Care for All' was the concluding statement of the Dental Symposium. **-PR**

Pakistan won big at World Implant Symposium

KARACHI - Dr Irfan Qureshi stood third in poster competition at DWS (Dentis World Symposium) 2019, Dentist & Gt-Medical, World Implant Symposium held at Madrid. He also won grant of 500\$ as a grand prize.

His poster was titled 'The Vampire Sinus Lift- Digital Restoration of One Q Implants placed in Autologous Sinus Augmentation'. **-PR**



DUHS participation in Oral Health Promotional Activity at Health Asia

KARACHI - The Faculty of Dentistry Dow University of Health Sciences (Dow International Dental College, Dow Dental College and Dr Ishrat-ul- Ibad Khan Institute of Oral Health Sciences) participated in the 17th Health Asia International Exhibition and Conference held at Expo Centre Karachi from September 24th to 26th, 2019. The focus was to assess oral health of traders, exhibitors and



Photo: DT Pakistan

visitors of the three-day exhibition. The basic objective of this activity was to provide free oral health screening to the masses and deliver health promotional activity to the focused population. In this context around 700 patients were observed and screened for various oral health diseases. The referrals were made to dental hospitals of all dental colleges of DUHS. The participants

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DENTAL TRIBUNE

The World's Dental Newspaper - Pakistan Edition

Publisher/CEO

Syed Hashim A. Hasan

hashim@dental-tribune.com.pk

Editor Clinical Research

Dr. Inayatullah Padhiar

Editors Research & Public Health

Prof. Dr. Ayyaz Ali Khan

Editor - Online

Haseeb Uddin

Designing & Layout

Sheikh M. Sadiq Ali

Dental Tribune Pakistan

3rd floor, Mahmood Centre, BC-11, Block-9, Clifton, Karachi, Pakistan.

Tel.: +92 21 35378440-2

Fax: +92 21 35836940

www.dental-tribune.com.pk

info@dental-tribune.com.pk

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International Office/Headquarters

Publisher and Chief Executive Officer

Torsten R. Oemus

Chief Content Officer

Claudia Duschek

Dental Tribune International GmbH

Holbeinstr. 29, 04229 Leipzig, Germany

Tel.: +49 341 48 474 302

Fax: +49 341 48 474 173

General requests:

info@dental-tribune.com

Sales requests:

mediasales@dental-tribune.com

www.dental-tribune.com

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[‡]Air blast hypersensitivity test in a clinical study after 1 application and after 2 weeks.

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[¶]In the same study, testimonials were recorded from real patients after treatment with Colgate® Sensitive Pro-Relief™.

References: 1. Ayad F, Ayad N, Vazquez J, et al. *Am J Dent* 2018.

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Hands-on workshop held at IADSR

LAHORE - Institute of Advanced Dental Sciences and Research (IADSR) organized a one-day workshop on 'Cross Infection Control in a Private Setting'. It was held as a part of the 9th Professional Diploma in Advanced General dentistry (PDAGD). The workshop was facilitated by Dr. Sameer Nasir BDS, MS (Restorative).

The workshop was initiated with an introduction to cross-infection, the chain of infection, the pathway of microorganisms and different modes of infection transmission. Dr. Samir discussed the prevention of infection transmission in-detail with SOPs which must be practiced for infection control. He further elaborated on different techniques for infection control including sterilization, appropriate disposition of contaminated waste material and wrapping to participants. Further on, Dr. Samir taught management of high-risk patients, general protocols for patient's



Photos: DT Pakistan



examination, and cross infection control steps for individual dental procedures. He emphasized immensely on the immunization of practitioners which is not practiced by many practitioners and explained infection control in dental radiology and computers as well.

The last session was hands-on, comprising an identification of Instrument Processing area in private practice, receiving instruments and washing, autoclaving, instrumental drying and storage. The dental unit for start, in between and end of the day which also included preparation for fillings, extractions, impressions, dental implants and aligners were prepared by facilitators.

Participants performed the hands-on session enthusiastically. **-PR**



– ‘TMD and Splint Therapy’ workshop



Photos: DT Pakistan



LAHORE - Institute of Advanced Dental Sciences and Research (IADSR) conducted a two-day workshop on 'Temporomandibular Disorders (TMD) and Splint Therapy'. The workshop was organized as a part of the IADSR 9th Professional Diploma in Advanced General dentistry (PDAGD). It was facilitated by Dr. Waleed Toosy BDS, FCPS (Prosthodontics) and Asst. Professor Avicenna Dental College.

The first session comprised of occlusion, its basic

introduction, and the centric relationship between the maxillary and mandibular teeth. Next, occlusal adjustments were taught by the facilitator as it is one modality to improve the overall pattern of the tooth.

Participants were also taught about canine guidance and how things can go wrong if a practitioner does not have canine guidance. Anatomy of the temporomandibular joint (TMJ), the anatomy of articular disc of the temporomandibular joint, disorders of TMJ and possible causes of disorders

were discussed in detail by the facilitator. Participants were further taught about the clinical examination of the muscles and clinical examination of the disease. Splint fabrication was demonstrated by Dr. Waleed and was then performed by the participants.

Problems raised during the procedure were solved by the facilitator, and the queries raised by the participants about the topic were also solved by him. The two-day workshop concluded by achieving its desired learning objectives. **-PR**

– Hands-on workshop on ‘Periodontology’

LAHORE - Institute of Advanced Dental Sciences and Research (IADSR) held a two-day workshop as a part of IADSR 9th Professional Diploma in Advanced General dentistry (PDAGD) on 'Periodontology'. It was

The facilitator demonstrated the effective use of probes to measure depth and to detect the patient of perio disease. Next, furcation along with its involvement and management, surgical and non-surgical management of periodontal



Photos: DT Pakistan



facilitated by Dr. Muhammad Haseeb BDS, MDS, MCPS (Perio), MFGDP and Asst. Professor of HOD of Periodontic, University of Lahore.

Dr. Haseeb elucidated participants how to recognize the periodontal disease, its signs, and symptoms and also emphasized on the probes that are used. Types of periodontal surgeries, indications for periodontal surgery and differentiation between periodontitis and gingivitis were comprehended to the participants.

disease, including regenerative therapy, guided tissue regeneration, bone grafting procedures, gingivectomy, periodontal restorative interactions, ferrule effect, and periodontal flap therapies were taught to the participants. Dr. Haseeb also explained periodontal esthetics including essentials of smile and causes of a gummy smile.

The participants were assigned two case studies to disseminate new knowledge and problems

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new

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Dr Faizan awarded coveted Diplomate status of ICOI

KARACHI - Dr Syed Muhammad Faizan, a renowned name in the field of Oral Implantology in Pakistan, was awarded the Diplomate status of the world's largest implant organization, the International Congress of Oral Implantologists (ICOI), in Frankfurt, Germany.



The ICOI, founded in 1972, is not only the world's largest dental implant organization, but also the largest provider of continuing dental implant education. The Diplomate Status is the highest honor that the professional society ICOI can bestow on a dental professional involved in Oral Implantology. Dr Faizan achieved it through efforts in advanced education, research, and actual clinical experience.

Dr Faizan completed his Masters in Oral Implantology from the prestigious Goethe University of Frankfurt, Germany, and is a Fellow of ICOI as well. He has been working as the Founder and Director of Vanguard institute of Oral Implantology in Karachi. **-PR**

Dr Zahid appointed as president, PARD 2020 Cabinet

KARACHI - Dr Zahid Iqbal has been appointed as the president of Pakistan Association of Restorative Dentistry (PARD). As per the new cabinet

on board as advisors.

Dr Zahid recently presented at two esteemed international caliber conferences- 7th Pakistan International Orthodontic Conference



(2020), Dr Robia Ghafoor assumed the office of Vice President; Dr Farhana Raza Khan, General Secretary; Dr Haroon Ashraf, Finance Secretary; Dr Javeria, Dr Dil Rasheed, Dr Abrar Ali, and Dr Amin were taken

and 6th Annual IADR. His presentation was on the topic: Local Research on effect of different irrigants and intracanal medicaments on endodontic microbes: From laboratory to clinical. **-PR**

Pakistani authors cited in JDR's centennial series

DT Staffer

KARACHI - The Journal on Dental Research completed its 100 years in 2019. Complementing JDR's Centennial Celebration an article was recently published in the journal by the title: Periodontal Medicine: 100 Years of Progress. The researchers and authors for the paper, including J.D. Beck, P.N. Papanou, K.H. Philips, and S. Offenbacher, selected 29 total studies that were the "first" of their kind to discuss, in depth, periodontal medicine research done over the past 100 years, with particular focus on the effects of periodontal disease on 3 pathological conditions: cardiovascular disease, diabetes mellitus, and adverse pregnancy outcomes.

The researchers belonging to University of North Carolina School of Dentistry and Columbia University College of Dental Medicine, USA, organized the selected 29 studies in an overview timeline and broken down into timelines by topic: cardiovascular disease (n = 10), diabetes (n = 12), and adverse pregnancy outcomes (n = 7). Among the researches, selected to study the relation between periodontics and cardiovascular diseases, was one by Pakistani authors, titled: Non-surgical periodontal therapy reduces coronary heart disease risk markers: a randomized controlled trial. The authors Syed A. H. Bokhari, Ayyaz A. Khan, Arshad K. Butt, Mohammad Azhar, Mohammad Hanif, Mateen Izhar, Dimitris N. Tatakis.

It is a matter of pride for the dental research sector of the country that our researchers are gaining not only visibility but also acknowledgement and appreciation on a global level.

Oral health promotion program by Dow Dental College

KARACHI - The Department of Community and Preventive Dentistry and the Department of Oral Biology of the Dow Dental College recently conducted a combined oral health promotion program in collaboration with the Colgate Palmolive Company at Hoor Bai Hajiani Girl High School located at Ghazdarabad, Garden East. The trip was planned under the supervision of Dr Adnan Sukkurwala, Dr Muhammad Taqi, and Dr Syed Jaffar Abbas Zaidi. They were accompanied by students of third and first-year BDS, and trained lecturers, including Dr Babar Zia, Dr Amber Saeed, Sanam Faheem, and Rimsha Qasim.

The purpose of this visit was to promote oral health awareness among school children while bringing early clinical exposure to first-year dental students. The intraoral examination was performed by third-year dental students on 200-250 students while being assisted by first-year dental students. The data was recorded on WHO dental forms.

The BDS students imparted information regarding brushing techniques using models and charts, instructing the children to maintain their basic oral hygiene.

At the end of the session, kits, including



toothpaste, toothbrushes, and brushing charts, by Colgate were distributed among children to encourage them to improve their oral health. The administration of the schools appreciated the efforts of the dental team and ensured their full cooperation in continuing the program with the Dow Dental College in the future.

Early clinical exposure of the first-year dental students with

peer-assisted learning and mentoring from third-year students is in line with PMDC's latest standard of curriculum aimed at bringing social accountability to dental colleges along with increased student motivation and confidence. The Dow Dental College has taken this unprecedented initiative in bringing dental curricular reforms to address societal needs. **-PR**





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The long-overdue shift in the paradigm of Pakistani dentistry is essential; Dr Mahmood Shah

By Dr Hira M. Khan

Dr Syed Mahmood Shah became president of the Pakistan Dental Association in 2017 but has been working with the association for over a decade. Dental Tribune International spoke to him about his contribution to the dental profession and community, in Pakistan, from his position of power.

Dr Mahmood Shah was also elected as Chairman of Oral Diseases Commission, Asia Pacific Dental Federation (APDF) at APDF Elections held during 40th APDC. He told Dental Tribune International about his efforts toward positive representation of Pakistan on global dental platforms.

After completing BDS and residency at Liaquat National Hospital, President Pakistan Dental Association Dr Syed Mahmood Shah moved to Ireland for his Diploma in Dental Health from Trinity College, University of Dublin. On returning, he joined Sindh Government Service. Later, he got admission in University of California, Los Angeles, in an Orthodontics program. On completion of his foreign degree, he resigned from government service and devoted himself to fulltime practice. For over 20 years, Dr Shah practiced at private dental hospitals before he finally established his own dental clinic.

The excerpts of the interview are as under:-

Dental Tribune Pakistan: Please tell us about yourself, why you chose to become a dentist and an orthodontist?

Dr Syed Mahmood Shah: Dentistry was not my first choice. After I did my intermediate in pre-medical from St. Patrick's College, I went on to pursue admission in MBBS program at Dow Medical College. I could not get in at that time and decided to opt for dentistry. Back in the days, Liaquat Medical College was the only institute offering dental program in Karachi. To date, I am unable to fully express enough gratitude for this turn of event. Dentistry has given me the status and prominence that could not have been possible in the medical field.

About how I stepped into the Orthodontic specialty: I spent many years in government service after graduation; during that time the practice was mainly about minor oral surgery. Most of the cases were of RTA or extractions, which led to the exhaustion of my interest in oral surgery. I applied for admission in endodontics and orthodontics programs in a foreign university and got accepted for both. However, I had begun finding

Orthodontics as a very exciting field, and I still think it is an extremely interesting specialty. I feel that maxillofacial surgery and orthodontics are the only two main specialties in dentistry, because other procedures, including RCT, restorations etc., are very commonly performed by general dentists as well. But orthodontics is a specialist's field and, therefore, I chose it.

DTP: Introduce PDA, its vision, its objectives, and the role played by its office bearers?

MS: Pakistan Dental Association (PDA) was formed in 1960 and has been representing the entire Pakistani dental community ever since. We have a Central Office, which represents the entire country; I am currently the President of that. Then we have 5 further divisions, each for the 4 provinces and the federal capital. These are called zones. These zones are further subdivided into branches established in all major cities.

The PDA network functions to safeguard the interest of the dentist, to promote oral and dental health, and to advise the relevant bodies on what should be the policy institutions and policy matter as PDA sees it. PDA's major role is also to represent Pakistan in the global dental community. I am proud to state that Pakistan is a very active member of the World Dental Federation (FDI), which has representation from around 200 countries

Over the years, PMDC has derailed from its regulatory responsibilities and has turned into "Private Medical and Dental Colleges Recognition Council".

worldwide. The FDI President on a couple of occasions has asked for an invitation to Pakistan. They want to visit our country. Similarly, we have represented Pakistan well at the Asia Pacific Dental Federation. I am currently the Chairman Oral Disease Commission of APDF.

DTP: What achievements do you count as PDA's greatest? Please specify the achievements under your specific tenures.

MS: Unfortunately, I cannot name an achievement of PDA that brought a significant paradigm shift in dentistry in Pakistan, and there are reasons for that. But to highlight a few achievements let's start with the Asia Pacific Dental Conference, which was held in Karachi in 2006. 28 countries took part in the conference, for which I was the patron. In 2012 and 2015, again, international conferences were organized in Pakistan. I was the patron of these as well.

During my current tenure as the President PDA (Center), my most notable achievement is the revival of the branches. Despite challenges, I managed this uphill task, by conducting elections in 19 cities of the country where PDA branches

were either inactive or absent. I am of the viewpoint, the task of organizing conferences and symposiums should now be handled by these branches, now that we have activated them. The Central Council of PDA mainly participates in presenting policy matters.

DTP: In your view, what are the main problems that agitate the dental profession?

MS: The problems are varied because the field of dentistry itself is. We have academicians, private practitioners, and young dentists. Then there is another category of postgraduate students and another of undergraduate students. All these groups are facing different problems. What I see as the leading problem in dental field is the overproduction of dentists in Pakistan, especially in the urban areas, which is giving rise to unemployment; whereas, the rural areas are not producing enough dentists. This mismatch will amount to a significantly problematic situation if government does not intervene with effective policies.

DTP: Your contribution to dentistry in Pakistan as chairman of oral disease commission APDF and other similar positions held in the past?

MS: Yes, I have held a similar position in the past as well; I was the Vice-President of APDF. The protocols and responsibilities change with ranks. As APDF officers, we have to carry out tasks aligned with the targets assigned to us by APDF.

Unfortunately, I cannot name an achievement of PDA that brought a significant paradigm shift in dentistry in Pakistan.

For example, we are currently working on a report on the prevalence of dental caries in the Asia Pacific region, which will also include data from Pakistan. The report will have recommendations on how to fight and limit the prevalence and incidence of dental caries in this region.

APDF is not like FDI where you are given grants, but you might be allotted conferences via which revenue is generated, especially by the hosting country. Pakistan last hosted APDC in 2006. We have made all possible efforts to bring the Conference back, but remain unable due to the order situation in the country.

But now, APDF has tentatively allotted Pakistan the APDC in 2022, which will be an immense achievement if we can execute it.

DTP: Why is it that female dentists are hardly represented in PDA, while they outnumber male dentists?

MS: About females in Dentistry, I am of the opinion that the reason that dentistry is still thriving

in Pakistan is because of the female dentists. It is kind of a paradox. Let me explain: 80% of the admitted candidates in dental colleges are females, out of which 80% of the graduating females never practice, or leave practice after spending a year or two in it. (This is a guesstimate.) The practicing dentists left behind are few and mainly male. Despite that the unemployment rate for dentists

Dental colleges no longer involve PDA in conferences.

is high. Imagine if 100% of the graduating lot was to enter the workforce, we would have a crisis. Due to lesser working women in the field we see lesser female representation in associations like ours.

DTP: What are your comments on PMDC, its role, and the new ongoing changes?

MS: Aha! PMDC is my favourite subject to speak on. Over the years, PMDC has derailed from its regulatory responsibilities and has turned into "Private Medical and Dental Colleges Recognition Council". And so instead of promoting general and oral health, PMDC has become more interested in raiding colleges. PMDC used to be an effective body when its roles were well-defined. It would take notice of significant matters like quackery

According to PDA's current stance, all dentists, new and senior, are considered part of the Association.

and different epidemics. Due to the underperformance of PMDC, Pakistan has become one of the unfortunate countries where we do not have proper data on disease prevalence; we are clueless in terms of numbers about our dental caries prevalence, periodontal index, and oral cancer spread. We do not even have a plan to limit these conditions. When you do not have the diagnosis, how will you draft a treatment plan? This is one of my main questions for PMDC.

Currently, PMDC is running on Ad hoc- and individual-based policies. A new candidate would come into power and, instead of working on inherent issues, would start doing things their way. There are no concrete, long-term policies, which leads to the Council's faltering time and again, whereas the real healthcare issues remain unresolved and are left to multiply. Despite having around 50 dental colleges in the country, the trend of oral diseases is still on the rise, which does not make sense. Something somewhere is very wrong.

After discussion with my council I drafted a letter and shared it with President Dr Arif Alvi. In the letter I pointed out the flaws in PMDC; the Council runs on revenue collected from doctors and dentists, yet the new ordinance promoted a selected council instead of one produced after fair elections between representatives of the same field.

The solution is simple; there is no need to reinvent the wheel. The PDA has suggested it and would consider it their most impactful delivery to the dental field if a separate Pakistan dental council was made. There are separate councils for Nurses, Homeopaths as well as Tib, then the forced unification of medical and dental council makes no sense. There are over 30,000 dentists and around

50 dental colleges in the country, yet the dental council is attached to the PMDC like an appendix. The need for separation is based on the fact that the woes and challenges, and, therefore, the solutions, of dentistry in Pakistan, are different.

Secondly, I want to request the President of Pakistan to form a steering committee with MNAs from PTI, PML-N, PPP, and representation from PMA, PDA, and PAMI. These are the 6 major stakeholders of the future of medicine and dentistry in Pakistan. A PMDC draft that is unanimously agreed upon by this committee should be passed in the National Assembly. This should be a smooth process considering all parties were involved in the decision-making. If need be an expert health planner should be involved since PMDC should be a healthcare-specific council. I believe that the subsequent bill will win without opposition. Short-cut ordinances that are reinvented and introduced after every few months carry no promise but the promise to relapse.

Secondly, there also needs to be a Dental Act, which will specify standards for dental practice. Mandatory specifications of dental units, radiology

Dentistry in Pakistan is thriving because of female dentists. It is a paradox! Let me explain...

units, etc.; creating a system for an organized dental structure and addressing tier-based problems, all come under Dental Act.

PDA has been striving for the introduction of, both, Dental Council and Dental Act and will continue to do so.

DTP: According to the updated PDA constitution, the new president will assume office on January 1st, 2020. Is that right? What are your comments?

MS: When constitutions are formed, tentative

DTP: Please comment on the smartphone Authentik's its anti-quackery. Do you think in this digital age it is the right step forward in the fight against the menace of bogus healthcare services?

MS: Oh yes, absolutely! The App fulfils the patient's right to complete transparency. An individual must be aware of the genuineness of their healthcare provider's qualification, and Authentik allows that. With this App, you can know within seconds whether your dentist, gynaecologist or general physician is registered or not. On feeding the name of the doctor, the Authentik App will produce all their degrees registered with the PMDC. And so, a quack's name will not appear on the application, hence saving you from their trap of malpractice. Additionally, you will also save yourself from contagious diseases, which are commonly acquired from quack's clinics, since they rarely practice proper sterilization. So I would say that Authentik is providing an effectual strategy in safeguarding the wellbeing of the general public.

dates are added. January 1st is mentioned as the first calendar year, but the current PDA office did not assume charge on that date. Our elections were held in August, so you can well imagine that if the tenure did not start on January 1st, it will not end on it. There are other dates mentioned for important events as well, but they are tentative and are not always met. PDA is at liberty to make alterations in dates if the need arises and the change is not in violation of the constitution.

Having said that let me assure you that the next elections for PDA center will be held in 2020. And it will be a year of change in PDA.

DTP: Do you suggest that fresh dental graduates should seek PDA's membership, and why?

MS: As the president, I would say yes, every dentist should be a member of the PDA. However, according to the current stance of PDA, all dentists, new and senior, are considered part of the Association. Reason for which is the lack of defined

differences between a member and nonmember. Ideally, a PDA member should receive benefits like discounted fee structure for PDA conferences and CDE programs in return for an annual membership fee.

PDA is planning a membership drive, especially for young dentists, with the assistance of our longtime media partner- Dental Tribune International. For this drive, we are designing a

APDF has tentatively allotted Pakistan the APDC in 2022.

package of incentives for the members. However, our registered core members do receive relief. The 13% tax on dentists imposed by Sindh Revenue Board was waived due to the struggle of my predecessor, former-PDA President Dr Saqib Rashid. This relief is only for dentists registered with PDA.

DTP: Do you think that PDA is engaging enough with young dentists?

MS: PDA was very active in dental schools when there were lesser of them. For example, Karachi started off with just one dental college and now there are several, which in my opinion sets a counter-productive narrative for PDA. Now, these colleges organize their conferences and symposiums without needing PDA's involvement. The better byproduct of this, however, is the formation of specialty associations like those for maxillofacial surgery, orthodontics, operative dentistry, etc. These associations have more to do with academics; they have PG students as members, either by choice or compulsion. So, they are far more visible and active.

PDA mainly works for the general dentist for now, and unfortunately has lesser penetration in dental schools. This will change with the introduction of more CDE programs in the future.

DTP: There are several issues of youth as well as some seniors in dentistry that PDA has failed to take up; the unconstitutional stipend situation being one example. How would you respond to this?

MS: I am not going to say that these issues are not our responsibilities, but you have to understand that we do not have the authority to act; our limited to highlighting dental community, and

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The advertisement for the Authentik app features a background image of a doctor in a white coat holding a stethoscope. The text is prominently displayed in the center, with 'SAY NO TO QUACKERY' in large, bold, red letters. Below this, it says 'VISIT PMDC REGISTERED DOCTORS ONLY' in black. Further down, it encourages users to 'DOWNLOAD AND VERIFY YOUR DOCTOR' with 'DOCTOR' in green. A QR code is provided for scanning, with the text 'SCAN QR CODE' underneath. The Authentik logo, which includes a green 'A' and the tagline 'Buy the Real Thing!', is positioned at the bottom left. At the bottom right, there are logos for the App Store and Google Play, along with their respective download links.