

DENTAL TRIBUNE

— The World's Dental Newspaper · ASEAN Edition —



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EDITOR'S MESSAGE

Happy New Year 2022 to all of our readers! The first issue of *Dental Tribune ASEAN* is finally here. We've compiled interesting news and interviews for your pleasure reading this new year. With nearly two years in the pandemic, we have seen the first-hand aftermath of the virus on people's dental health. The first wave of the pandemic has forced dental practice to close due to fear of infection. Most countries were also following the standard operating procedures (SOPs) that have been set by the governments.



Susan Tricia
Editor

We have shifted and gone through various SOPs and variants, from the temporary closure of dental clinics to opening only for urgent treatments. As we reach endemic, the SOPs have been lenient to dental practices in most countries. People have started to go back to their regular appointments and routine check-up. Due to pandemic that causes people to postpone or avoid visiting the dentist, complications and severe cases of toothaches arise.

According to World Health Organization oral health services were among the affected during the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic. Although the government has set up policies

for dental services to follow and practices, the fear of getting infected to some people is still high as of today. With people taking booster shots successfully, let's be hopeful that 2022 will bring a stroke of luck.

Dental Tribune ASEAN will be circulated in dental exhibitions, seminars, and even webinars across ASEAN providing additional mileage for advertisers of the magazine and reaching out to new subscribers. Visit our website at asean.dental-tribune.com for more updates. Let's do our part and get vaccinated.

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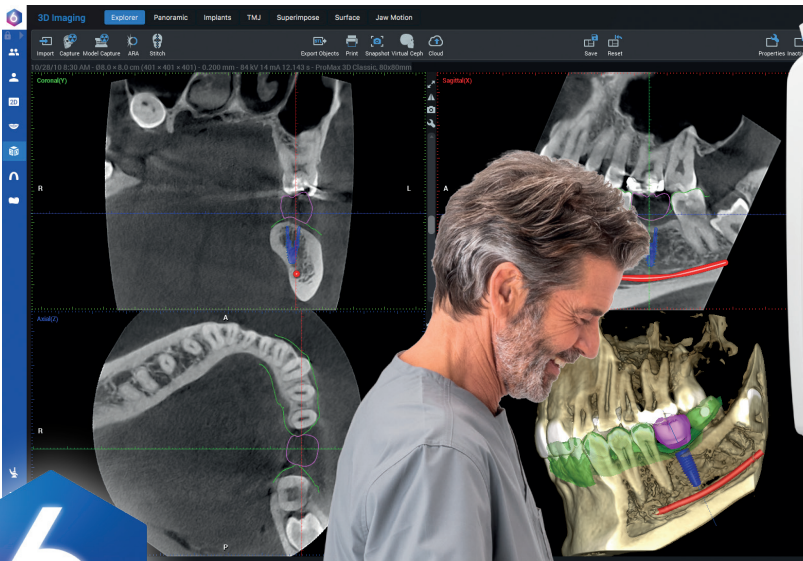
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Dentsply Sirona and 3Shape expand their strategic partnership

By Dental Tribune International



3Shape Dental System users can now receive intra-oral scans from Dentsply Sirona's intra-oral scanners, Primescan and Omnicam. (Image: 3Shape)

Dentsply Sirona and 3Shape have recently expanded their partnership to provide seamless and secure integration of Dentsply Sirona's Connect Case Center with 3Shape's Dental System software. Users who upgrade to Dental System 2021.2 software can now connect to the Dentsply Sirona Connect Case Center to receive intra-oral scans from the company's intra-oral scanners, Primescan and Omnicam.

"I always want to give a patient the treatment I feel is best for them. When companies like Dentsply Sirona and 3Shape choose to work together, it gives all dentists and lab owners more opportunities, and that means better outcomes for our patients," Dr Alan Jurim, owner of integratedDENTAL, a dental practice in New York, said in a press release.

As a result of this agreement, 3Shape Dental System users will no longer need to download cases via the Connect Case Center platform or any other channel in order to receive cases from Dentsply Sirona intra-oral scanners. Instead, they will be able to receive these digital impressions directly in their 3Shape Communicate account after updating their system to Dental System 2021.2. This will allow them to receive both 3Shape TRIOS and Dentsply Sirona intra-oral scanner cases in the same inbox, 3Shape noted.

According to Dentsply Sirona, integrated hardware and software will help dentists to efficiently plan and execute even highly complex treatments and will simplify digital workflows.

This, in turn, will improve the relationship between dentists and laboratories.



Dentsply Sirona's Primescan intra-oral scanner. (Image: Dentsply Sirona)

"Digital impressions facilitate communication. After scanning I can discuss the digital model directly with my patient. And because I now can communicate with the lab technician seamlessly, I can share the planned outcome with my patient much quicker—and that is a benefit to the patient that matters," Dr Sabrina Hoffmann, a dentist in Bürstadt in Germany, commented in the same press release. "What we are experiencing today is truly the dentistry of the future," she added.

Last June, both companies announced an agreement aimed at improving digital dentistry and oral health, intending to support the dental community through the evolution of efficient, simplified, and digitally-oriented workflows for dentists and dental technicians. Users of 3Shape's TRIOS intra-oral scanner already have access to Dentsply Sirona's SureSmile clear aligners platform, and the companies are now working on further expanding customer access to a range of technological choices.

Omicron and NHS targets: Dentists in England struggle to restore services

By Iveta Ramonaite, Dental Tribune International



The rapid spread of the Omicron variant in England and the start of the winter season mean that the new standard operating procedures for dentists are unlikely to restore patient access to services. (Image: StepanPopov/Shutterstock)

Since the English government has decided to ease some of the COVID-19 restrictions just as the winter season has arrived, some professional bodies, including the British Dental Association (BDA), are questioning the timing of the decision. In light of the arrival of the Omicron variant and unattainable National Health Service (NHS) targets, the BDA believes that the new standard operating procedures for dentists will not help improve access to dental care in the country. This is also reflected in a recent survey that has highlighted issues about the restoration of services in the country.

According to the BDA, over 37 million NHS appointments have been lost since lockdown solely in England, including over 11 million lost appointments for children. The new standard operating procedure model, which was introduced at the end of November, is based on the likelihood of a patient carrying respiratory infection and places them on two pathways, respiratory and non-respiratory. Patients who are placed on the non-respiratory pathway can be managed in line with pre-COVID-19 standard infection control precautions, whereas those placed on the respiratory pathway are subject to enhanced precautions, including fallow periods of up to 60 minutes between treatments.

In a recent survey of high street dentists in England, nearly a third of dentists (33%) said they have no intention of relaxing COVID-19 precautions, mostly owing to the arrival of the Omicron variant in England. Since winter is also often referred to as the cold and flu season and may cause a surge in respiratory illnesses that will automatically put patients on the respiratory pathway, 62% of the respondents believe that the changes to COVID-19 restrictions will have little to no effect on the patient volumes in dental clinics.

The data has also revealed that, owing to the current pressures on the service, over 40% of dentists are likely to change careers or seek early retirement in the next 12 months. Additionally, more than half of the respondents stated that they are considering reducing their NHS commitment, and one in ten foresees practice closure in the next 12 months.

The majority of the respondents, 72%, stated that the lack of clarity over the activity targets, which were imposed by the UK government and are expected to increase on 1 January 2022, is affecting their confidence. Similarly, 70% of respondents believe that the uncertainty over the direction of pledged reforms to the service is undermining their morale, and nearly two-thirds of practices (62%) estimate that they are still operating under 70% of their pre-COVID-19 capacity.

Commenting on the situation, Dr Eddie Crouch, chair of the BDA's Principal Executive Committee, said in the BDA's blog: "We have long pressed for a roadmap to safely ease COVID restrictions in dentistry. Yet the timing of this move, relaxing many key measures in practice just as Government moves to tighten others in wider society, has left some members struggling with the mixed messages." He added that, as a result of the introduction of new standard operating procedures, the arrival of Omicron and the imposed activity targets, dentists are now faced with many unanswered questions regarding the safety of teams and patients, as well as practical issues such as the need for personal protective equipment supplies, proper air ventilation and capital funding.