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Dentistry Unplugged 2025: Transforming the future of dentistry in Southeast Asia

by Dental Tribune ASEAN

Dentistry Unplugged 2025 stands as a landmark moment in the evolution of dental education and community building across Southeast Asia. What began as an ambitious vision, to create a platform that breaks away from conventional formats and truly resonates with modern clinicians became a powerful reality in November 2025. Over three days, more than 3,000 dentists from across the region gathered, united by a shared desire to learn, connect, and push the boundaries of what dentistry can be.

The idea behind Dentistry Unplugged was never about hosting another conference. It was about rethinking the entire experience. Traditional lecture formats, while valuable, often create a passive learning environment where participants sit through hours of presentations with limited engagement. Dentistry Unplugged set out to challenge that norm by designing an environment that was immersive, interactive, and deeply human.

At the core of this transformation was the 360-degree podium concept. This was not just a visual innovation, it was a philosophical shift. By placing speakers at the center and surrounding them with participants, the event dissolved the invisible barriers that often exist between lecturer and audience. Learning became a shared experience rather than a one way delivery of information. Delegates were able to engage more closely, observe details from multiple perspectives, and feel genuinely connected to the discussions taking place.

Prof. Angelo Putignano delivers a keynote on the evolution of bonding and adhesive restorations at Dentistry Unplugged 2025, sharing insights with an international audience.

This format also demanded a different calibre of speakers. Dentistry Unplugged carefully curated a lineup of world-class lecturers who were not only experts in their respective fields but also educators who understood the importance of relatability and clarity. These were clinicians who could translate complex theories into practical applications, bridging the gap between knowledge and execution.

Across the three days, the programme covered a wide spectrum of topics, reflecting the evolving needs of modern dentistry. From direct composite artistry and anterior aesthetics to comprehensive treatment planning and indirect restorations, each session was designed to provide actionable insights. The emphasis was always on real-world application and how clinicians can take what they learn and immediately integrate it into their daily practice.

Organisers of Dentistry Unplugged 2025, alongside sponsors and leading figures in the dental field, mark the official opening of the event in a ceremonial launch highlighted by a pyrotechnic display.

What made the content particularly impactful was the balance between science and artistry. Dentistry today is no longer just about function; it is equally about aesthetics, communication, and patient experience. The lectures reflected this shift, encouraging participants to think beyond technical procedures and consider the holistic journey of their patients.

However, the success of Dentistry Unplugged was not defined by its scientific programme alone. One of its most significant achievements was the sense of community it fostered. Dentists from different countries, cultures, and professional backgrounds came together in one space, creating an environment rich with diversity and shared purpose.

For many attendees, this was more than just a learning opportunity, it was a chance to reconnect with the passion that brought them into dentistry in the first place. In the midst of busy clinical schedules, administrative responsibilities, and the pressures of running a practice, it is easy for clinicians to lose sight of that initial spark. Dentistry Unplugged reignited that energy.

Conversations extended beyond lecture halls. Informal discussions, spontaneous meet ups, and shared reflections became just as valuable as the ses-

sions themselves. These interactions allowed participants to exchange experiences, discuss challenges, and learn from one another in ways that no textbook or lecture could replicate. It reinforced the idea that growth in dentistry is not only about individual learning but also about collective progress.

A defining highlight of the event was the Asian Dentistry Awards Night which was a segment that carried deep emotional significance. While dentistry is a profession built on precision, dedication, and care, many clinicians work tirelessly behind the scenes without recognition. Their contributions, though impactful, often go unnoticed beyond their immediate circle of patients.

The awards night sought to change that narrative. It was a celebration of clinicians who have consistently delivered excellence, often without the spotlight. These were individuals who embody the true essence of dentistry, putting patients first, striving for the highest standards, and continuously improving their craft.

The atmosphere during the awards night was both celebratory and reflective. Each recognition represented not just an achievement, but a story of perseverance, growth, and commitment. It was a reminder that success in dentistry is not solely defined by accolades, but by the lives impacted and the standards upheld over time.

For many in attendance, this segment became one of the most memorable aspects of the entire event. It resonated on a personal level, reinforcing the value of the work they do every day and the importance of acknowledging those efforts.

Another key element that contributed to the success of Dentistry Unplugged was the attention to detail in its execution. From the flow of the programme to the design of the venue, every aspect was thoughtfully planned to enhance the overall experience. The goal was to create an environment where participants felt comfortable, inspired, and fully engaged.

The seamless integration of different components of scientific sessions, networking opportunities, and celebratory moments, ensured that the event maintained a dynamic energy throughout the three days. There was a constant sense of momentum, with each segment building upon the previous one.

Feedback from participants reflected this impact. Many described the event as refreshing, inspiring, and unlike anything they had experienced before. The 360-degree format, in particular, was frequently highlighted as a game-changer, setting a new benchmark for how dental education can be delivered.

The hosts formally introduce distinguished VIP guests at the ASEAN Dentistry Awards 2025, opening an evening dedicated to recognising excellence across the region's dental profession.

Beyond individual experiences, Dentistry Unplugged also signalled a broader shift in the region's dental landscape. Southeast Asia is home to a rapidly growing community of clinicians who are increasingly seeking high-quality education and opportunities for collaboration. Events like this play a crucial role in meeting those needs and driving the profession forward.

By bringing together such a large and diverse group of dentists, Dentistry Unplugged created a platform for regional integration. It encouraged cross-border collaboration, knowledge exchange, and the development of a more connected dental community. This has long-term implications, as stronger networks often lead to better standards of care and more innovative approaches to treatment.

The event also highlighted the importance of adaptability in modern dentistry. As technologies evolve and patient expectations change, clinicians must continuously update their skills and perspectives. Dentistry Unplugged reinforced this mindset, encouraging participants to embrace change and remain open to new ideas.

Looking back, the success of Dentistry Unplugged 2025 can be attributed to its clarity of purpose. It was never about scale alone, although hosting over 3,000 participants is a significant achievement. It was about creating meaningful impact be it on individuals, on the community, and on the profession as a whole.

It demonstrated that when education is delivered in a way that is engaging, relevant, and human-centered, it has the power to transform not just knowledge, but attitudes and behaviours. It showed that recognition and celebration are just as important as learning, and that building a strong community is essential for sustained growth.

Most importantly, it proved that dentistry is not just a profession but it is a journey. A journey of continuous learning, constant refinement, and unwavering dedication to improving the lives of others.

Dentistry Unplugged 2025 did more than meet expectations; it redefined them. It set a new standard for what dental conferences can achieve and created a blueprint for future events in the region. The impact of those three days will continue to ripple through practices, clinics, and communities across Southeast Asia.

As the profession moves forward, the legacy of Dentistry Unplugged serves as a reminder of what is possible when vision, passion, and execution come together. It is not just about what was achieved, but about what it has inspired, a new way of thinking, a stronger sense of community, and a renewed commitment to excellence in dentistry.

We look forward to welcoming you again in November 2027 for another outstanding edition of Dentistry Unplugged. Stay tuned for more exciting updates, we can't wait to share what's ahead.

The official backdrop of the ASEAN Dentistry Awards 2025 welcomes guests upon arrival, setting the stage for an evening of recognition and excellence in dentistry.

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ASEAN Dentistry Awards 2025: Celebrating excellence, inspiring the future of ASEAN dentistry

by Dr Nurul Huda Hasan, Editor-in-Chief of Dental Tribune ASEAN

Dr. Stefen Koubi (left) and Dr. Galip Gürel (right) address the audience with words of appreciation for the organisers before presenting an award at the ceremony.

The ASEAN Dentistry Awards 2025 marked a defining moment for the dental profession across our region. Held in conjunction with Dentistry Unplugged in November 2025, this inaugural celebration of clinical excellence brought together a remarkable community of clinicians, educators, and innovators under one roof. As Editor-in-Chief of Dental Tribune ASEAN, and as part of the organising team behind both Dentistry Unplugged and the Awards, it was both a privilege and a deeply meaningful experience to witness the calibre of talent that continues to shape dentistry across Asia.

From the very beginning, the vision of the ASEAN Dentistry Awards was clear, to create a credible, inspiring, and regionally significant platform where clinicians could present their finest work, exchange ideas, and be recognised for their dedication to excellence. What unfolded exceeded all expectations. With 22 carefully curated categories and over 350 submissions, the Awards reflected not only the diversity of clinical practice but also the shared commitment to raising standards across the profession.

Participation extended across nearly all ASEAN countries and reached beyond into the wider Asian region. This breadth of representation brought forward a rich spectrum of cases, each telling a story of precision, innovation, and patient-centred care. From beautifully executed direct composite restorations to highly complex multidisciplinary aesthetic rehabilitations, the level of detail, planning, and execution presented was truly inspiring. It was evident that clinicians across Asia are not only keeping pace with global standards, but in many instances, redefining them.

One of the most compelling aspects of this year's Awards was the authenticity of the work presented. These were not staged or idealised cases, but real clinical challenges approached with skill, creativity, and a deep understanding of biological and aesthetic principles. The submissions reflected a profession that is evolving rapidly, where digital workflows, advanced materials, and interdisciplinary collaboration are becoming integral to everyday practice.

The judging process was both rigorous and thoughtful, guided by a panel of respected clinicians and experts who share a passion for education and excellence. Each case was evaluated not only on the final outcome, but also on diagnosis, treatment planning, execution, and the ability to communicate clinical reasoning. This ensured that the Awards remained grounded in meaningful clinical value rather than superficial appeal.

To all the winners of the ASEAN Dentistry Awards 2025, heartfelt congratulations. Your work stood out among an already exceptional pool of submissions, and your dedication to your craft is evident in every detail of your cases. You have not only achieved personal milestones but have also contributed to elevating the standards of dentistry across our region. Your efforts will undoubtedly inspire many others to pursue excellence with the same passion and integrity.

At Dental Tribune ASEAN, we believe that recognition should go hand in hand with education. In line with this, we are proud to announce that winning cases from all 22 categories will be progressively showcased in upcoming editions of Dental Tribune ASEAN. This initiative is

A vibrant opening performance inspired by The Greatest Showman sets the stage for the ASEAN Dentistry Awards 2025, captivating guests with a spectacular display of music, dance and theatrical flair.

designed to extend the impact of the Awards beyond the event itself, allowing clinicians across the region and beyond to learn from these outstanding cases. Each feature will highlight the clinical thought process, techniques, and materials involved, providing valuable insights that can be translated into daily practice.

This commitment reflects our broader mission to serve as a platform not only for news and updates, but for meaningful professional growth. By sharing these cases, we hope to foster a culture of continuous learning and open exchange, where clinicians feel encouraged to both contribute and learn from one another.

A dazzling scene unfolds at the ASEAN Dentistry Awards 2025, as guests gather amid a spectacular stage setup, complete with vibrant lighting and celebratory confetti.

Looking ahead, the success of the ASEAN Dentistry Awards 2025 sets a strong foundation for future editions. We warmly invite dental clinicians from across Asia to take part in the next Awards. Whether you are an experienced practitioner or an emerging talent, this platform offers an opportunity to present your work to a regional audience, gain recognition, and be part of a growing community that values excellence and innovation.

Participating in the Awards is more than a competition, it is a journey of reflection, refinement, and growth. Preparing and presenting your cases encourages a deeper evaluation of your own clinical approach, while also opening doors to new connections and opportunities. For many, it can serve as a meaningful step forward in their professional pathway, particularly within the dynamic and rapidly evolving landscape of Asian dentistry.

Dentistry Unplugged itself provided the perfect backdrop for the Awards. With over 3,000 clinicians gathered for three days of forward-thinking lectures, discussions, and collaboration, the energy and enthusiasm throughout the event were palpable. The integration of the Awards into this environment created a powerful synergy, where knowledge sharing and recognition of excellence came together seamlessly.

As we reflect on what has been achieved, there is a strong sense of pride, not only in the success of the event, but in the collective spirit of the dental community across ASEAN and Asia. The willingness to share, to learn, and to support one another is what truly drives progress in our field.

We extend our sincere appreciation to all participants, judges, partners, and supporters who made the ASEAN Dentistry Awards 2025 possible. Your contributions have laid the groundwork for what we believe will become a long-standing tradition in our region.

Once again, congratulations to all the winners. Your work represents the very best of what dentistry in Asia has to offer, and we look forward to sharing your achievements with the wider community in the months ahead.

As we move forward, we remain committed to building on this momentum, creating more opportunities for clinicians to connect, to grow, and to be recognised. We eagerly anticipate the next edition of the ASEAN Dentistry Awards in November 2027 and invite you to be part of this journey.

Dr. Kavin Sothirasan, lead organiser of the ASEAN Dentistry Awards 2025, delivers his opening address before an audience of international dental professionals, marking the official start of the ceremony.

ASEAN Dentistry Award 2025 winners showcase: Best Case for Coltene

by Dr Meiken Hayashi, Japan

Case description

Chief complaint: The patient requested treatment for dental caries.

A cavity was observed, likely due to inlay dislodgement, and caries was also detected on the mesial surface. As an emergency measure, the cavity was temporarily sealed with carboxylate cement, with definitive restorative treatment scheduled for a later date.

Fig. 1: Preoperative clinical presentation demonstrating multiple defective posterior restorations with fractured tooth structure and restoration failure prior to definitive adhesive rehabilitation.

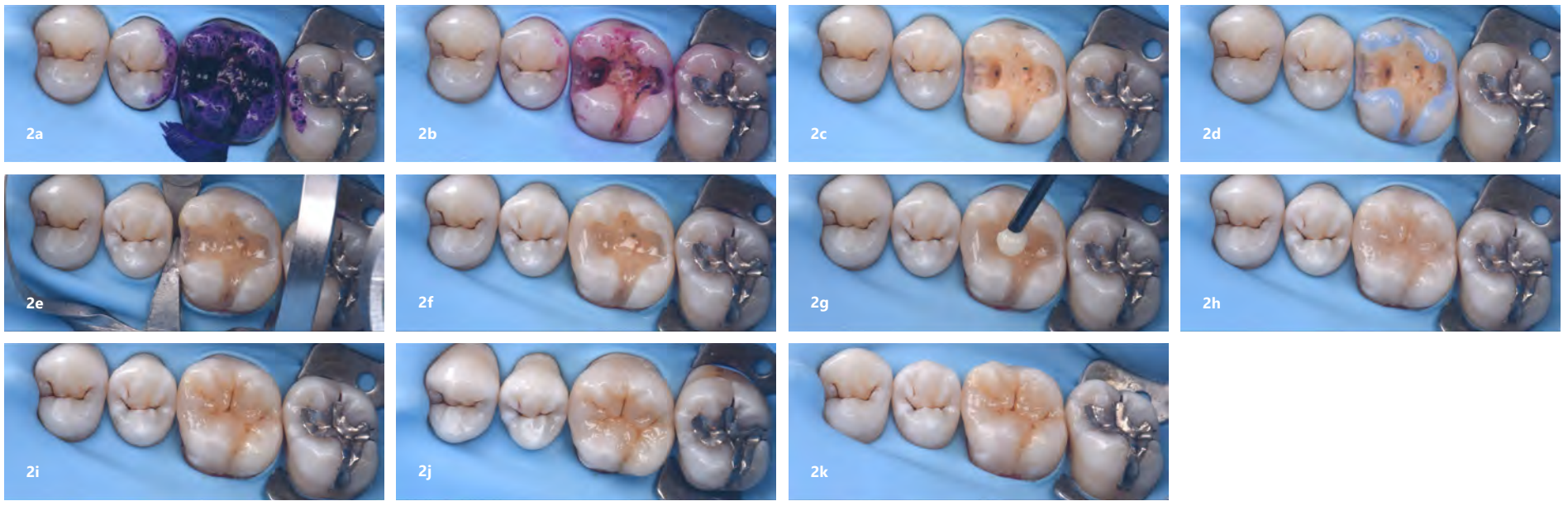

Fig. 2a: Isolation with rubber dam followed by removal of the existing defective restoration and carious tooth structure. **Fig. 2b:** Cavity preparation completed with complete caries excavation and assessment of the remaining tooth structure. **Fig. 2c:** Adhesive procedure performed and the cavity restored using a direct resin composite technique. **Fig. 2d:** Initial finishing of the composite restoration to establish the primary occlusal anatomy. **Fig. 2e:** Gross contouring and occlusal refinement performed after removal of excess restorative material. **Fig. 2f:** Further anatomical characterization of the occlusal surface using finishing burs. **Fig. 2g:** Fine adjustment of pits, fissures, and occlusal grooves to enhance anatomical morphology. **Fig. 2h:** Occlusal anatomy completed with improved cusp definition and natural surface texture. **Fig. 2i:** Sequential polishing initiated to smooth the restoration and blend the margins with the surrounding enamel. **Fig. 2j:** Final polishing completed to achieve optimal surface gloss and anatomical integration. **Fig. 2k:** Final postoperative view demonstrating a well-contoured, highly polished direct composite restoration with harmonious occlusal anatomy and seamless marginal adaptation.

Fig. 3a: Immediate postoperative occlusal view demonstrating the completed direct composite restorations with restored anatomical form and occlusal morphology. **Fig. 3b:** Postoperative view from the buccal aspect showing harmonious integration of the restorations with the adjacent dentition. **Fig. 3c:** Oblique postoperative view highlighting the natural occlusal anatomy and seamless marginal adaptation of the restorations. **Fig. 3d:** Final clinical view confirming functional occlusion, anatomical contour, and excellent aesthetic integration following treatment. **Fig. 3e:** Fluorescence evaluation under ultraviolet illumination demonstrating the optical properties and aesthetic blending of the composite restorations with the natural tooth structure. **Fig. 3f:** Final postoperative view under rubber dam isolation prior to removal, confirming complete restoration of form, contour, and occlusal anatomy.

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ASEAN Dentistry Award 2025 winners showcase: Endodontic treament

by Dr Chun-Pei Lin, Taiwan

Case description

Complaints:
Referred from a general dentist for further treatment of tooth #48.

History of complaints:
The patient went to a general dentist due to dull pain over lower right posterior region for one week. However, after the endodontic emergency treatment of tooth #48, the patient was referred for further management of tooth #48 due to the curve roots.

Medical history :
Denied any major systemic diseases and had no drug or food allergies.

Dental history :
The 31-year-old female patient was referred to our clinic for tooth #48 root canal treatment due to curved root canals. She received tooth #46 extraction and full mouth orthodontic treatment two years ago. After tooth #46 extraction, teeth #47 and #48 were moved medially to close the space by her orthodontist.

Extra-oral examination:
No abnormal findings.

Intra-oral examination:
Tooth #48 was status post previous initiated therapy, with occlusal coronal temporary restoration and mesio-occlusal composite resin filling.

• Abscess (-) / sinus tract (-)
• Percussion pain (-), palpation pain (-)
• Probing depth : within normal range.
• Mobility : within normal range.
- Radiographic findings:
• Tooth #48 with curved root canal toward distal side could be identified.
• A 6mm x 4mm periradicular radiolucent lesion was noted at apical third.
• A radiopaque image was found at mid-root level, an intra-canal separated instrument was highly suspected.

Differential diagnosis:
Based on the clinical and radiographic findings and according to the American Association of Endodontists Terminology, the diagnosis of tooth #48 was:
• Pulpal diagnosis: Previously initiated therapy.
• Periradicular diagnosis: Asymptomatic apical periodontitis.

Treatment planning:
• Non-surgical root canal treatment of tooth #48 was planned.
• Attempt to bypass or remove the separated instrument.
• Tooth #48 crown fabrication after root canal treatment.

Management:
Tooth #48 nonsurgical root canal treatment was performed under dental operating microscope. After root canal treatment was completed, then referred to a prosthodontist for crown fabrication. Regular follow-up was arranged to monitor the healing process of the apical lesion.

(1) Management of separated instruments:
• START-X #3 canal opening scouter ultrasonic instrument was applied for straight line access under dental operating microscope.
• After removed the dentinal triangle, the coronal part of the separated instrument was exposed.
• Bypassed the separated instrument with #10 K-file and enlarged the pathway with #15 and #20 K-files.
• ET25 ultrasonic instrument was applied with counterclockwise rotation around the separated instrument to remove it.

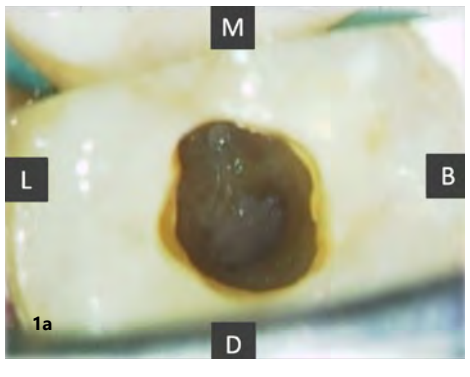
(2) Management of curved canals:
• The canal curvature angle of D canal was 45^0 and ML canal was 61^0 measured by Schneider's method. Both were belong to severely curved group.
• Negotiated the root canal to working length with pre-curved #10 K-file.
• Glide path established with PathFiles in the sequence of #13/.02, #16/.02 and #19/.02 to working length.
• ProTaper NEXT X1(#17/.04) and X2(#25/.06) Ni-Ti rotary files were used for root canal cleaning and shaping.

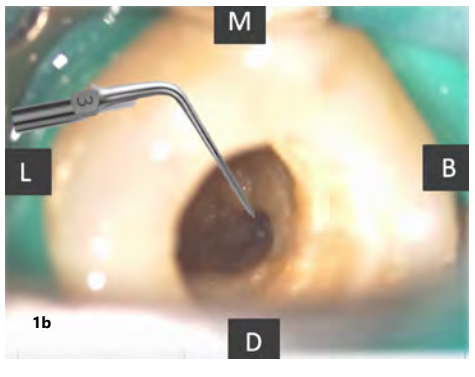
(3) Cleaning and shaping of the c-shaped root canal system:
• Shaping: The instruments were all used with X-Smart Plus endodontic motor with the settings of the manufacture's recommendations.
* ML: 20 mm, IAF: #10, MAF: PTN X2 (#25/.06)
* B: 18.5 mm, IAF: #10, MAF: PTN X2 (#25/.06)
* D: 18 mm, IAF: #10, MAF: PTN X2 (#25/.06)

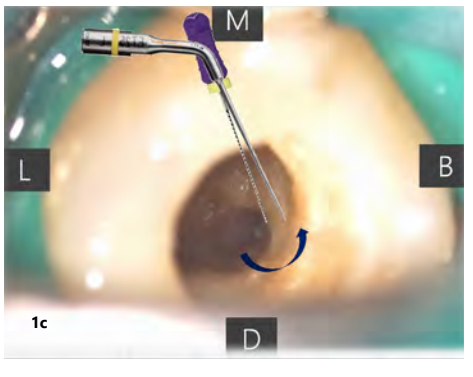
• Irrigation method: 2.5 % NaOCl and 17% EDTA irrigation were performed. Passive ultrasonic irrigation was performed.
• Calcium hydroxide as intra-canal medicament was applied to the root canal.
• Caviton and IRM were applied as coronal temporary sealing.

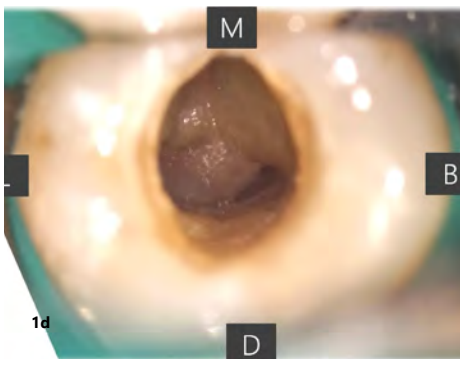
(4) Obturation and coronal sealing of the c-shaped root canal system:
• Pre-curved ProTaper NEXT Gutta-Percha X2 as master cones.
• Canals sealer with vertical compaction and thermoplastic injection techniques were performed to obturate the root canal.
• SDR and composite resin composite resin were placed for coronal restoration.
• The obturation and restoration procedures were operated under the microscope.

Definitive treatment:
(1) Post-treatment four-month follow-up
• No clinical symptoms and signs were observed.
• The periradicular lesion decreased in size bone density.
• The patient was referred to a prosthodontist for crown fabrication.
(2) Post-treatment eight-month follow-up
• No clinical symptoms and signs were observed.
• The periradicular lesion decreased in size bone density.
(3) Post-treatment 15-month follow-up
• No clinical symptoms and signs were observed.
• The periradicular lesion completely healed.









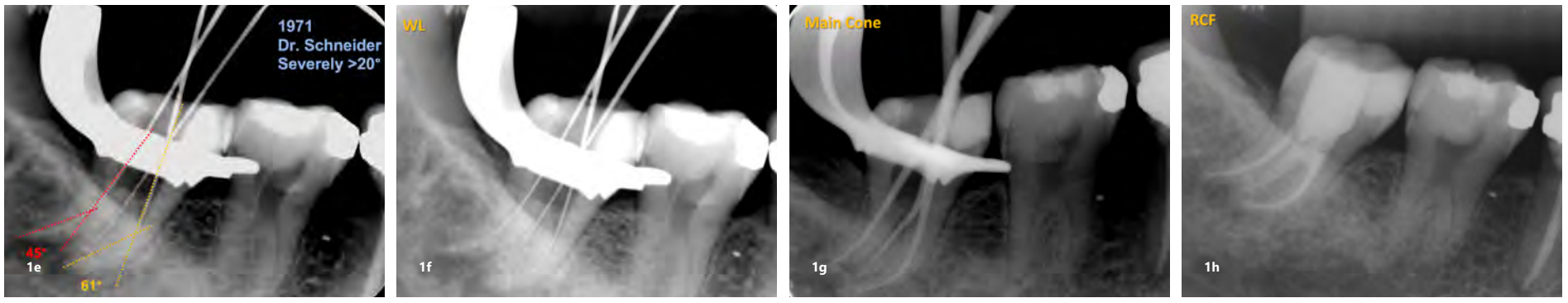


Fig. 1a: Preoperative microscopic view of the pulp chamber showing a separated endodontic instrument obstructing the canal orifice. **Fig. 1b:** Straight-line access established under the dental operating microscope, with the coronal portion of the separated instrument exposed after removal of the dentinal triangle using the START-X #3 ultrasonic tip. **Fig. 1c:** The separated instrument was bypassed with a pre-curved #10 K-file to establish a negotiable pathway before retrieval. **Fig. 1d:** Following successful bypass, the separated instrument was retrieved using an ET25 ultrasonic tip with counterclockwise activation under microscopic visualization. **Fig. 1e:** Radiographic assessment demonstrating severe canal curvatures of the distal and mesiolingual canals measured according to Schneider's method prior to canal preparation. **Fig. 1f:** Working length radiograph confirming successful negotiation of the severely curved root canals with endodontic files. **Fig. 1g:** Master cone radiograph verifying the adaptation of pre-curved ProTaper NEXT X2 gutta-percha cones prior to obturation. **Fig. 1h:** Postoperative radiograph demonstrating satisfactory obturation of the C-shaped root canal system and successful completion of nonsurgical root canal treatment.

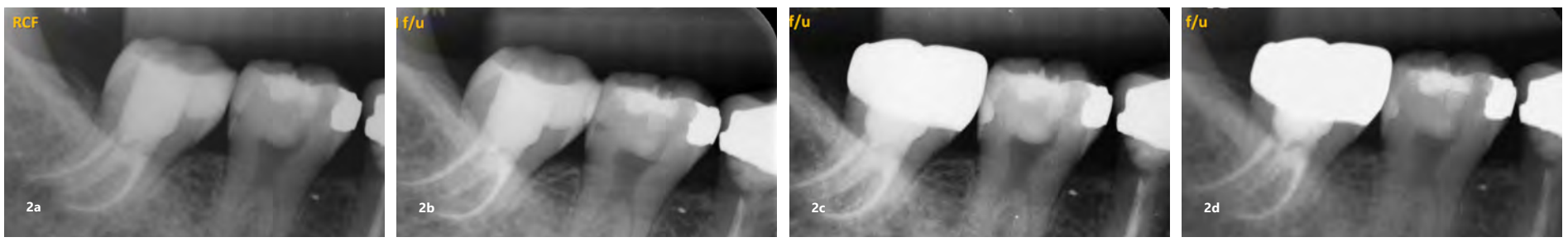


Fig. 2a: Immediate postoperative periapical radiograph demonstrating satisfactory obturation of the C-shaped root canal system and coronal restoration following nonsurgical root canal treatment. **Fig. 2b:** Four-month follow-up radiograph showing reduction in the periradicular radiolucency with increased bone density, indicating favorable periapical healing. The tooth remained asymptomatic and was referred for definitive crown fabrication. **Fig. 2c:** Eight-month follow-up radiograph after crown placement demonstrating continued osseous healing and further reduction of the periradicular lesion. The tooth remained clinically asymptomatic. **Fig. 2d:** Fifteen-month follow-up radiograph demonstrating complete periapical healing with normal bone architecture and successful long-term treatment outcome in the absence of clinical signs and symptoms.

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