

# DENTAL TRIBUNE

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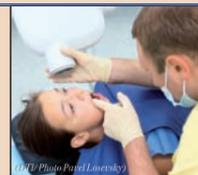
**Customised abutments**  
Improving implant-supported restorations

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**Severely atrophic maxilla**  
An implant-prosthetic rehabilitation

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**Paediatric Tribune**  
News & trends from the field of paedodontology

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## Dental hospitals in Pakistan are significantly polluted with mercury

### New tests confirm lax attitude towards amalgam use and management

Daniel Zimmermann  
DTI

**ISLAMABAD and RAWALPINDI, Pakistan:** The results of nationwide tests conducted throughout Pakistan have raised the alarm over the high levels of mercury pollution in dental hospitals. In some of the tested sites in the twin cities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi, the amount of the toxic metal detected in the air was found to be up to 20 times higher than acceptable levels.

According to the monitoring team from the Sustainable Development Policy Institute, an independent development and policy analysis organisation in Islamabad, dental personal working in the affected facilities were recently informed about the results and given recommendations about a number of safety measures. They were also advised on how to reduce the use of mercury in dental practice in general.



Amalgam remains the most widely used dental restorative in Pakistan. (DTI/Photo Szasz-Fabian Jozsef, Romania)

Despite the availability of alternative filling materials such as composite resins, amalgam remains the most widely used dental restorative in Pakistan. Waste management of the ma-

terial, however, has traditionally been poor. According to the results of a study conducted in 2007 by researchers from the Riphah International University's dentistry college, over

90 per cent of dentists in the country still dispose of used amalgam through regular waste or the waste-water system. Only

→ DTI page 5

## Legal battle over dentist's death continues

The death of an Indian dentist in Ireland, which caused diplomatic rows in both countries, could soon end up in European courts, as the family of Savita Halappanavar, who died after miscarriage of her baby in a hospital in Galway last October, is considering taking the case to the European Court of Justice in Brussels in June, the newspaper the *Irish Independent* has reported.

The medical incident has been the subject of ongoing debate in the ultra-Catholic country, as well as internationally, owing to the circumstances of Halappanavar's death, which, according to reports, has largely been blamed on medical personnel denying her a termination of pregnancy over the course of several days owing to the country's very strict abortion laws. Since then, the government in Dublin has drafted a bill to be put before Parliament that could make abortion by Irish doctors legal when the life of the mother is at risk. DTI



A hands-on workshop at this year's International Symposium of the Osteology Foundation in Monaco. The organisation celebrated its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary meeting this year. (DTI/Photo courtesy of Osteology Foundation, Switzerland) ▶ WORLD NEWS, page 6

## DT expands to South Africa

With Modern Dentistry Media in Cape Town, another publisher has recently joined the Dental Tribune International Publishing Group. The first *Dental Tribune South Africa* edition is going to be released in June together with Modern Dentistry Media's flagship publication International Dentistry South Africa. DTI

## Dentophobia passes generations

Parents can pass dental anxiety on to their children, which may prevent them from attending routine dental check-ups later in life, research from the US suggests. In a survey conducted on over 900 primary caregivers, the percentage of children with dentophobia was higher when parents already suffered from the condition. DTI

## India hosts FDI congress in 2014

In anticipation of this year's congress, which will be hosted by the Turkish Dental Association in Istanbul, the FDI World Dental Federation has disclosed the venue for the event next year. According to a press release by the organisation, its 102<sup>nd</sup> Annual World Dental Congress will be held in New Delhi from 11 to 14 September next year, exactly ten years after the congress took place there in 2004.

The event will be hosted by the FDI in collaboration with its national member, the Indian Dental Association, which currently has over 50,000 members and operates through 28 state branches, more than 350 local branches and one defence branch. DTI



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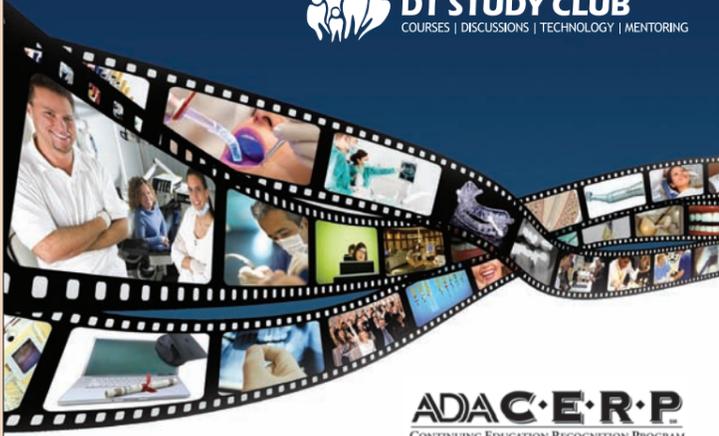
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Steven A. Guttenberg, DDS, MD  
07:00 PM (EST)

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## EVALUATION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE PATIENT WITH ORAL PRECANCER AND CANCER

Brian Schmidt, DDS, MD, PhD  
8:00 p.m. (EST)

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# Japan begins standardisation of dental records with trial

DT Asia Pacific

**TOKYO, Japan:** The Japanese Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare is reported to have released funding for a pilot project that aims to standardise the format of electronic records in dental practices nationwide. If successful, the measure is supposed to improve the identification of victims of crime or mass disasters such as the March 2011 earthquake.

According to reports by the Tokyo newspaper *The Mainichi Shimbun*, the ministry has allocated ¥21 million (approximately US\$160,000) from its budget for the project over the next fiscal year. The new format will be introduced in several dental clinics by the beginning of 2014, it said.

A review panel will be also set up in June to discuss the further standardisation of record formats for body identification.

Dental records in Japan have been primarily stored on paper or film thus far. This made victim identification difficult for forensic experts when archives were swept away or made unusable by the tsunami following the March 11 earthquake. In the coastal town of Minamisanriku north of Fukushima, for example, all dental clinics, along with their patient files, were destroyed (as reported by *Dental Tribune* in September 2011). Electronic records existed before the disaster but they were often stored in different formats,



Relief workers surveying destruction in Minamisanriku. All dental clinics including records were destroyed. (DTI/Photo courtesy of AmeriCares, USA)

which made accessing the data in the aftermath laborious because it first had to be converted.

Overall, dentists were still able to identify 14 per cent of the 8,719 bodies through forensic examination, which according to the President of the Japan Dental Association, Dr Mitsuo Okubo, proved significantly more effective than DNA or fingerprint matching. In a recent interview, he told *Dental Tribune Asia Pacific* that a new system could expedite the identification process dramatically through automated dental matching tests. A full-fledged system is most likely to be implemented within three to five years, he predicted.

Owing to its close proximity to the boundary of two tectonic plates, Japan experiences between 1,500 and 2,000 earthquakes of different magnitudes per year.

With over 140,000 casualties, the most deadly occurred in the Kantō region in the early 1920s. The March 11 earthquake is currently estimated to have killed almost 16,000 people and destroyed or damaged one million homes.

According to recent probability predictions by geological experts, another magnitude 7.0 earthquake could strike the southern part of the country as early as next year. [DTI](#)

## International Imprint

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## DENTAL TRIBUNE

The World's Dental Newspaper - Asia Pacific Edition

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# Singapore to extend subsidised dental health care

Daniel Zimmermann  
DTI

**SINGAPORE:** Singapore's health minister Gan Kim Yong has recently announced incentives to encourage more dental clinics and practices to sign up for the Community Health Assist Scheme (CHAS), which provides subsidies for the treatment of medical and den-

tal conditions. In response to questions from members of parliament last month, Yong revealed that another 50 dental health care facilities are expected to join the scheme this year.

Since the introduction of the programme in January last year, the number of dental clinics participating in the scheme

has risen to 295, according to Yong, an increase of over 20 per cent compared with last year.

He added that the ministry aims to focus on underserved areas in the context of the expansion but will continue to maintain an equal geographical spread of clinics participating in the scheme nationwide to make sure that the maxi-

mum of people are able to claim benefits.

According to the ministry's latest figures, over 200,000 people were eligible for subsidy under CHAS by the end of 2012. A replacement of the Primary Care Partnership Scheme, it allows Singaporeans over the age of 40 with low income and disabled people

to seek medical and dental treatment in private clinics or practices.

Persons who are fully eligible for CHAS are able to claim up to S\$240 for each dental treatment, for example.

Singapore currently boasts more than 700 dental clinics and practices nationwide. **DTI**

AD

← **DTI** Page 1

1 in 20 dentists is reported to have an amalgam separator installed in their practice, mainly owing to financial constraints or a lack of knowledge regarding such measures.

Although studies in Europe have indicated that regular use of amalgam and its disposal do not pose significant health risks to dental personal, exposure to high levels of mercury has been proven to damage kidneys, the nervous system and the gastrointestinal tract.

"The health of staff working under these conditions will be impaired in the same way as that of dental nurses in Norway and New Zealand, for example, who were using copper amalgam a few decades ago," commented



A SDPI monitoring team testing mercury levels with a Lumex Mercury Analyser in a dental clinic. (DTI/Photo courtesy of SDPI, Pakistan)

amalgam expert Lars Hylander from Sweden. "Also, a recent EU study indicated substantial loss of IQ in European dentists due to mercury exposure."

Final results from the project are expected to be published later this year after the testing in several cities has been completed. A first in Pakistan, the project seeks to provide reliable data on indoor and outdoor mercury pollution throughout the Western Asian country. The project is being conducted in collaboration with the European Environmental Bureau and the Zero Mercury Working Group, a coalition of non-governmental organisations aimed at the reduction of mercury worldwide. In addition to dental offices, the project has been targeting light manufacturing facilities, among others. **DTI**

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# Dear reader,



Daniel Zimmermann  
DTI

Early childhood caries is among the greatest challenges that dentist have to face today. According to latest figures of the World Health Organisation, infection rates with the *Streptococcus mutans* bacterium exceed 70 per cent not only in poor countries but also in some parts of the developed world. New detection technologies like laser fluorescence have become available in recent years, but the condition remains a complex clinical problem boasting a multitude of factors.

In our first *Paediatric Tribune*, which is included in this edition of *DT Asia Pacific*, Dr Man Wai Ng from the Boston Children's Hospital in the US is discussing a new chronic disease management approach that has proven successful to address the process of the disease. Along with her article, you will also find more insights in other current issues in paediatric dentistry such as the risk of radiation exposure and the treatment of special care patients. I wish you an interesting read with this edition. [DTI](#)

Yours sincerely,

Daniel Zimmermann  
Group Editor  
Dental Tribune International

Dental Tribune welcomes comments, suggestions and complaints at [feedback@dental-tribune.com](mailto:feedback@dental-tribune.com)



## A complex clinical situation



Dr Sushil Koirala  
Nepal

I have noticed in my practice that the demand for treatment of worn smiles has increased dramatically over the past decade. Redesign of worn smiles is one of the most complex clinical situations in dentistry and requires detailed examination and evaluation of several factors.

There are various clinical techniques in oral rehabilitation. In my practice, I use resin composites in the majority of worn smile redesign cases and I follow the MICD full-mouth rehabilitation protocol. Once I have restored the smile aesthetics and built up the posterior teeth supports, I customise case finishing. First, I perform the necessary aesthetic finishing, as it is visible to others and can be most appreciated by the patient, then in order to harmonise the occlusal force component I perform digital occlusal analysis and the force finishing of the case. The final step entails rechecking for the absence or presence of para-functional habits (bruxism and clenching) by asking the patient to wear a BruxChecker for three to four nights. After this period, if grinding patterns are visible on the BruxChecker, I always suggest wearing a thin night guard to the patient. I think the reader will find these simple clinical steps for redesigning worn smiles with minimal biological cost useful. [DTI](#)

## Tooth regeneration: news and hurdles



Dr Jeremy J. Mao  
USA

Recently, Prof. Cheng-Ming Chuong's group at the University of Southern California demonstrated a specialised stem cell niche that appears to enable repetitive renewal of alligator teeth. These findings, along with several other important reports in the past two years or so, will continue to enrich our understanding of stem/progenitor cells and regulatory molecules that are pivotal to tooth development and regeneration.

Translation of experimental findings to therapeutics that lead to human tooth regeneration is a lengthy process. An important contribution from Prof. Takashi Tsuji's group at the Tokyo University of Science has shown that em-

bryonic tooth germ cells can differentiate into tooth-forming cells and a regenerated tooth. Recently, Prof. Paul Sharpe's group at King's College London showed that a combination of embryonic tooth germ cells and postnatal cells also led to regenerated tooth organs.

The remaining tasks for regenerating human teeth however are many: how to replace embryonic tooth germ cells with adult stem/progenitor cells and how to enable alligator tooth succession signals in humans.

The field of tooth regeneration has diverged into two subfields: first, a near-term goal to regenerate functional tooth roots that integrate with the alveolar bone via a periodontal ligament, and, second, a long-term goal to regenerate an entire tooth, with enamel, dentine, dental pulp and cementum, that also integrates with the alveolar bone via a periodontal

ligament. These two goals were delineated in a recent article in *Cell Stem Cell*.

Undoubtedly, new discoveries will advance experimental approaches step by step towards regeneration of tooth roots or entire teeth in patients. The question is not *whether* (for stem cells do form teeth during development), but *when* we will be able to understand and manipulate stem cells to form teeth in adult patients. The timeline depends on not only scientific progress but also regulatory approval processes. [DTI](#)

### Contact Info

Dr Jeremy J. Mao is currently Edwin S. Robinson Professor of Dentistry at Columbia University in New York City, USA, and an expert on dental stem cell research. He can be contacted at [jmao@columbia.edu](mailto:jmao@columbia.edu).

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# Researchers investigate regenerative potential of alligator teeth

DTI

LOS ANGELES, USA: Regrowing a tooth might be a concept years away from realization, but scientists in the US and Asia have reported the discovery of a new source of cells that could help to stimulate the renewal of dental cells in humans in the future: alligators.

Similar to most mammals, these cold-blooded animals have the ability to replace lost teeth by simply regrowing new ones. What made them particularly interesting for the researchers was the fact that unlike sharks, whose regenerating teeth are just an extension of their skin, the structure of an alligator's dentition is very similar to humans' dentition, with teeth implanted in the sockets of the jawbone.

Both humans and alligators also possess a band of epithelial tissue, which, after having investigated it using microscopy imaging techniques, the researchers believe to contain cells that trigger the permanent replacement of teeth in the animals.

While alligators can replace their teeth throughout their lives through this dental lamina, tooth development in humans usually stops with the adult teeth, except for the condition of hyperdontia or supernumerary teeth, which has been related to congenital disorders, among other causes. The research team, which consisted of researchers and clinicians from the Keck School of Medicine of the University of Southern California (USC) and other institutes in the US, Taiwan and China, is now planning to isolate those cells and investigate their potential for use in regenerative medicine. They aim to gather more information about the molecular networks that are behind the renewal process.

"Ultimately, we want to identify stem cells that can be used as a resource to stimulate tooth renewal in adult humans who have lost teeth. But, to do that, we must first understand how they are renewed in other animals," said Cheng-Ming Choung, head author and USC pathology professor.

Alligators are estimated to be able to replace their teeth up to 50 times during their lifetime. Although specimens of 100 years and older have been reported by zoologists, the reptile lives an average of between 40 and 50 years. The species, whose origins can be traced back to over 65 million years ago, inhabits only parts of China and the US.

Prior research in tooth regeneration has focused on using or reprogramming nondental cells, as stem cells derived from human

dental tissue have not proven to be a substantial source for tooth bioengineering yet. In recent experiments, however, scientists from the Dental Institute at King's

College London reported the successful combination of isolated adult human gingival tissue from dental patients with tooth-forming cells from mice. [DTI](#)



This Chinese alligator can renew its 80 teeth up to 50 times during its lifetime.

AD

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Photographs courtesy of Dr. Sushil Koirala

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# Replacing toothbrush after sore throat may be unnecessary

DTI

WASHINGTON, USA: Researchers from the US have found that it may not be necessary to discard children's toothbrushes upon diagnosis of *streptococcal pharyngitis*, as is commonly advised. Their study showed no evidence of increased bacterial growth on the toothbrushes of infected children.

In a preliminary experiment, the researchers grew group A *streptococcus* (GAS), the bacterium that causes strep throat, on tooth-

brushes in the laboratory. They observed that the bacteria remained on the toothbrush for at least 48 hours. However, GAS also grew on new control toothbrushes that had not been exposed to the bacterium but had been removed from their sterile packaging.

In the subsequent human study, 14 patients diagnosed with strep throat, 15 patients with sore throat and 27 healthy individuals aged 2 to 20 were instructed to brush their teeth for more than one minute using a new toothbrush. When testing for bacterial growth, the re-

searchers found GAS only on one toothbrush, which had been used by a patient without strep throat.

"The study supports that it is probably unnecessary to throw away your toothbrush after diagnosis of strep throat," said Dr Judith

L. Rowen, co-author of the study and associate professor at the University of Texas Medical Branch's Department of Pediatrics, which conducted the research. As the current study only involved a small sample size, larger studies are needed to confirm that GAS does not grow on toothbrushes used at home by children with an infection, she added.

The findings were presented at the annual meeting of the Pediatric Academic Societies in Washington, DC, in May. [DTI](#)

AD

## US adults delay dental care

DTI

SYRACUSE, NY, USA: A survey of more than 1,000 US adults has revealed that 36 per cent have delayed or would delay dental treatments owing to their current financial situation. Although more than 80 per cent knew about the long-term financial implications of neglecting oral health, many people seemed to put dental care off until they experienced significant pain or had a dental emergency, the investigators said.

The survey involved 501 men and 504 women aged 18 and older. It was conducted as a telephone survey by market research agency ORC International on behalf of Aspen Dental, one of the largest networks of dental care providers in the US, between 28 Feb and 3 March.

Overall, the results were in line with other studies that found a general decline in health care spending. More than 50 per cent of the people surveyed reported that their net salary was lower this year than in 2012. Moreover, 44 per cent had no dental insurance. The number was especially high among those with an annual income below US\$35,000 (61 per cent), the investigators said.

They also found that only 1 in 10 agreed that routine dental visits were critical to their overall well-being.

"Since the recession began five years ago, the patients who walk through my doors have been increasingly stressed out about whether they can afford the care they need," said Dr Nathan Laughrey, who runs a number of Aspen Dental practices. "The survey is a stark reminder of the need to improve public understanding about the importance of dental care to overall health, as well as create a better understanding about the long-term effects of ignoring dental visits, including the link between gum disease and other serious conditions such as diabetes and stroke." [DTI](#)

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# Bupa takeover of Dental Corporation is close to completion



Dean Holden (DTI/Photo Bupa, UK)

DT Asia Pacific

**MELBOURNE, Australia/LONDON, UK:** The Supreme Court of Victoria in Melbourne, Australia, last month approved Bupa's acquisition of Dental Corporation (DC) from Fortis Healthcare International in Singapore. The British company is expected to become sole owner of Australia and New Zealand's largest dental chain by the end of May.

In a press release, Managing Director of Bupa Australia and New Zealand Dean Holden said that his company will be focusing on aligning both businesses seamlessly over the next few months. To this end, it will con-

sult closely with DC's senior management and staff.

Representatives of DC confirmed that the majority of its shareholders had agreed to the owner change.

The acquisition is Bupa's first venture into the dental health care business. In addition to insurance, the company offers a number of other health-related services to 13 million customers in Europe, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East.

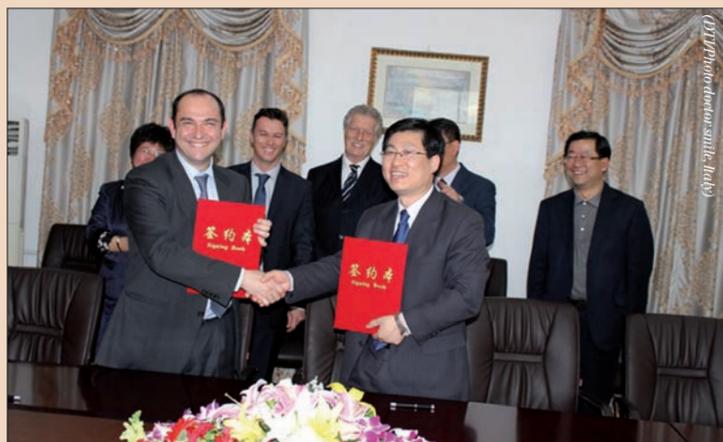
Fortis's Singapore subsidiary divested its 64 per cent majority stake in DC at the end of last year, saying that it needed to cut debt

in its global business. According to Bupa, it will pay more than A\$370 million (US\$385 million) for the transaction, of which the Indian health care giant will receive 72 per cent or A\$270 million (US\$261 million). The remaining A\$100 million (US\$97 million) will be paid to DC employees directly over the course of the next three years, according to the company.

DC currently employs more than 2,500 people, including 560 dentists in Australia and New Zealand. For the last fiscal year, the chain reported net revenue of A\$359 million (US\$328 million) from its dental businesses in both markets. [DTI](#)

## Italian-Chinese collaboration agreement signed

### Capital Medical University's School of Stomatology partners with University of Genoa



Prof. Stefano Benedicenti (left) from the University of Genoa's laser dentistry department and Dr Yuxing Bai from the Capital Medical University's School of Stomatology.

DTI

**BEIJING, China/GENOA, Italy:** On 10 May, Dr Yuxing Bai, Vice Dean of the Capital Medical University's School of Stomatology, and Prof. Stefano Benedicenti, Dean of the University of Genoa's laser dentistry department, signed an international collaboration agreement on higher education in Beijing to boost scientific exchange between both institutions.

The agreement is aimed at developing research and training programmes of mutual interest to each institution.

The programmes organised within this agreement will award degrees from each university and courses will be held in both countries to increase the exchange of scientific concepts and experiences, which is especially important when complex equipment such as lasers is involved.

The immediate result of this collaboration is the first International Fellowship in Laser Dentistry Postgraduate Diploma, which is being promoted in China. The course's first module was offered to a selected number of doctors. However, a greater number of participants will be able to enrol for the July and August modules. In September, a Chinese delegation from Capital Medical University and all fellowship participants will travel to Italy, where the participants will sit the examination and receive the University of Genoa diploma.

This fellowship offers an important opportunity to obtain high-level medical training in laser dentistry, a growing field that requires in-depth knowledge, experience and proper equipment.

Dental laser manufacturers Beijing Tongxin Technology & Trading and doctor smile (LAMBDA SpA) coordinated the event at which the agreement was signed. [DTI](#)

## With growth in China, GlamSmile targets expansion

Dental Tribune Asia Pacific

**BEIJING, China:** Cosmetic dentistry provider GlamSmile continues to grow in China. According to the Beijing company, it generated more than 4.5 million in revenue in local currency from its four veneer studios last month. It has also announced that it is currently in the process of hiring new staff for the three new studios it intends to open later this year in several cities in south central China.

Construction work for studios in Guangzhou, to be located in the city's International Finance Centre, and Wuhan commenced recently. A studio in Shenzhen is currently in predevelopment, GlamSmile has reported.

According to the company, its current flagship studio in Beijing will be moved from its current location to the central business district of the capital and be expanded in order to accommodate up to 15 chairs.

This was the first studio run by GlamSmile in China when it opened in 2008.

"We are confident that our revenue will grow by leaps and bounds, since dental care expenses per person in China are still very low compared with other countries. There is a lot of room for growth in the near future," commented CEO David Lok on the plans.



(DTI/Photo courtesy of GlamSmile, China)

Dental veneers are part of China's booming cosmetic surgery market, which is estimated to be worth more than US\$2.4 billion. Lok told *Dental Tribune Asia Pacific* that his company aims to increase its current staff by more than 40 per cent for the expansion. Besides its studio in Beijing, it maintains three operations in Shanghai, Wenzhou and the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.

GlamSmile studios have been put into operation in over 40 cities around the world since the concept was launched in Europe and the US in 2007. In Asia, franchise studios have been opened in Malaysia and Taiwan. The system developed and distributed by Remedent is based on a one-at-a-time veneer placement method that, according to the Belgian company, involves a proprietary fabrication technique and a single-motion placement tray. It is supposed to allow dentists to seat ten veneers within an hour. [DTI](#)

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