

# President's Column

## NEVER STOP LEARNING



*Dr. Louis Dubé*

**B**usy workdays prevent many dentists from finding the time to participate in continuing education (CE) programs, even though dental regulatory authorities (DRAs), local dental societies and study clubs offer more such programs every year.

I believe that ongoing training is critical to ensuring a continued high standard of dental care. In today's world, there is no excuse for not being able to maintain this quality of care. DRAs are providing hands-on courses that allow dentists to keep up with the times. Certified courses are also offered by multimedia providers via the Internet and DVDs. But, there is one major source of training and CE that in my view tops all the others, and that is the annual conference of the Canadian Dental Association (CDA).

Every year, CDA collaborates with a corporate member to set up a convention program that can provide excellent training. From March 4 to 6, 2004, CDA is co-hosting the Pacific Dental Conference (PDC) with the Association of Dental Surgeons of British Columbia (ADSBC). Lecturers and keynote speakers from around the world will present the state-of-the-art on clinical and management subjects, for dentists and the entire dental team.

Most DRAs request that 30 credit hours be accumulated every year. During this conference alone, one could obtain half a year's worth of credits, try the newest devices and materials on display in the exhibition hall, and purchase a few essential items too.

It will be a pleasure for CDA and ADSBC representatives to welcome all of you to this major event in Vancouver. You may register on-site for the conference and for CE programs. Attending the PDC is a great way to exchange ideas with colleagues, while meeting friends and exploring one of Canada's most majestic cities. There is even an opportunity to support a great cause by participating in the Aurum Ceramic/Classic Golf Tournament for the benefit of the Dentistry Canada Fund.

Notwithstanding the importance of the annual CDA convention, I encourage all dentists to attend the different provincial meetings and conferences that are set up throughout the year. Nor should one underestimate the role of local dental societies in providing CE to dentists. Having been involved a few years ago in preparing and coordinating CE programs in my local dental society, I have witnessed the dedication of those volunteer dentists out there who give of their time and energy so that we can continue to stay up-to-date

with current trends in dentistry and practice management. Don't hesitate to participate by attending these lectures or by helping to organize lecture programs. Why not give a lecture yourself or participate in group sharing of dental cases in study clubs?

Again, we all benefit — DRAs and associations, practising dentists and their dental teams — but, in the end, it is our patients who benefit the most by having access to world-class oral health care.

CDA is committed to promoting CE as a way to ensure that Canada's dentists remain leaders in their profession, continuing to provide optimal oral health care. Once PDC 2004 is behind us, and I can assure you that it will be a great success, CDA will not rest on its laurels; it is helping to organize another major event — FDI World Dental Federation's 2005 congress in Montreal. Over 15,000 delegates from around the world are expected to attend. Many affiliated dental organizations will schedule their meetings to coincide with FDI 2005, which is aimed at all members of the dental team. To be held August 24–27 at the newly renovated Palais des congrès de Montréal, FDI 2005 will also serve as the venue for Canada's largest dental trade show of the year, a gala soirée and a Canadian Theme Night.

What an exciting prospect! Meanwhile, we can all look forward to the upcoming PDC. Having attended many international congresses over the years, believe me when I say that PDC 2004's extensive educational program can compete with the best of them. See you in Vancouver!

À la prochaine... in beautiful British Columbia!

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