

# Guest Editorial

## LET'S SHOW THE WORLD!



*Dr. Burton Conrod*

Co-hosted by the Canadian Dental Association and the Order of Dentists of Quebec, the FDI Annual World Dental Congress is coming to Montreal from August 24–27. I hope that all Canadian dentists will make an effort to attend this prestigious event, to host fellow dentists from around the world.

There are global challenges facing dentistry. Canadian dentists can benefit from examining how professionals from other countries address challenges such as access to care for seniors and the disadvantaged, expansion of scope by other provider groups, electronic health records, qualifying foreign graduates, interference of third-party payers in treatment planning and environmental issues in dentistry. National dental associations regularly exchange views on such matters, but it is also important for individual dentists to network and discuss these issues with colleagues.

The FDI Congress offers a variety of formats in which to learn, discuss and socialize. The scientific program includes a stellar cast of presenters from around the world, highlighted by many prominent Canadian lecturers, clinicians and researchers. In addition to traditional lecture presentations, there are symposia with panel discussions of hot topics in oral health as well as poster presentations and 10-minute free communications from individual dentists presenting on current dental issues and research.

These different formats promote interaction among dentists, as practitioners from other countries and cultures offer first-hand accounts of the state of global oral health. Some of my favourite activities are the FDI workshops, comprised of small seminars conducted by FDI committee members and other recognized experts in their fields. The workshops take place in an intimate setting, which encourages lively discussion about today's dental research advances and how they impact your own work.

Of particular interest this year are workshops on evidence-based dentistry, biofilms, the oral health team and the financing of oral care. Evidence-based dentistry is a prime example of dentists worldwide working together to improve our collective knowledge regarding patient care. The work is carried out to the same high standard in each country for the benefit of all. Canada can be proud of the excellent work accomplished by the Canadian Collaboration on Clinical Practice Guidelines in Dentistry, which uses limited resources to contribute toward the global body of knowledge. I encourage you to participate in this workshop, not only to see Canada's contribution but to glimpse at the future impact of evidence-based dentistry within the dental practice.

The FDI Congress is an ideal meeting place for dental students, who are far more mobile than students from my time in university. Students from Canadian dental faculties can “compare notes” with their counterparts from other countries or meet the lecturers and researchers whose work they are studying. A Young Dentist Program offers recent graduates a chance to meet with other new professionals and discuss the issues that affect the transition from school into professional life.

Students, young dentists and established practitioners alike can visit the World Dental Exhibition — the largest trade show of dental materials, devices and equipment ever held in Canada. Distributors and manufacturers from the host nation will proudly display products alongside companies from around the world. You can meet suppliers, manufacturers and designers of dental equipment and inspect the latest developments from the dental industry aimed at helping you provide optimal oral care.

Although we have specifically organized Canadian content into the scientific program, social events and trade show, the success of the event is largely dependent upon a significant attendance of practising dentists, academics and researchers from Canada. This will provide our guests with a truly Canadian perspective at this international gathering. I hope to see you in Montreal this August as you meet and interact with dentists from around the globe. Dentistry is an important part of health care in Canada and we should be proud of the advances we have made in dental education, research and clinical care. Let's show the world!

*Burton Conrod, DDS  
FDI councillor and CDA past president*