Dubai, UAE: From the vision of HH Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoom, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, came the creation of Dubai Healthcare City in Dubai, UAE. The well reputed Professor David Wray comes to the UAE to spearhead the creation of the new Dubai School of Dental Medicine located at Dubai Healthcare City.

Dental Tribune Middle East & Africa: Welcome Professor David Wray, we come across you here at the first ‘Fujairah International Dental Conference’ at the booth of Dubai School of Dental Medicine. How are you doing?

Professor Wray: I’m very well thank you very much, a pleasure to be here.

Professor Wray, could you tell us about yourself, your presence here in Dubai and the opening of the new Dental School of Dental Medicine?

Well, I am Professor David Wray, I’m a UK trained doctor and dentist who’s previously been Dean of the Glasgow Dental Hospital and School in Scotland. And in the middle of the summer of this year [2012] I came to Dubai to open the ‘Dubai School of Dental Medicine’. The Dubai School of Dental Medicine is part of Dubai Healthcare City which, in turn, is the idea and the vision of HH Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoom, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, who decided that Dubai, as it emerged into a strong nation, required a strong healthcare infrastructure and hence, created Dubai Healthcare City, and the Dubai School of Dental Medicine is one of the products of that vision. What we have been charged with is setting up the Dental School to train postgraduate students in all the dental specialties, and we have started that process and are taking in our first postgraduate students in January of 2013. We will be offering specialty dental training programs in all the recognized dental specialties. We will be offering specialty dental training programs in all the recognized dental specialties in the first instance. During 2013 we will be offering Oral Surgery, Orthodontics, Pediatric Dentistry and Endodontics, and then in addition to this we will be offering Prosthodontics and Periodontics as Dental specializations. The thing which is unique about this new Dubai School of Dental Medicine is that the students will, like many other places, be embarking on a three year intensive clinical training program with a clear didactic component and a research dissertation. In addition to that, the students will get an MSc which will complete the course—but as well as that, we are in the final stages of negotiation to allow our students to simultaneously graduate with a membership from the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh in the UK, a diploma which can subsequently be converted into a fellowship so that students will be graduating with both an academic qualification in the form of an MSc and also an internationally recognized clinical qualification, which would ultimately be a fellowship from the Royal College of Surgeons in Edinburgh. Therefore, our graduates would have the same specialty qualifications, clinically, as those colleagues who are consultants and professors within the UK. And that influence of the Edinburgh College extends both to the Middle East, the Far East and Australasia, and of course they also examine in North America where they have joined exams with some of the American boards as well. So we’re offering our students a unique package and they are going to be taught by an international faculty in a state of the art dental school and a dental clinical facility which will be completed during 2014, and we anticipate during 2015 that we will have 150 dentists working within the Dubai School of Dental Medicine either teaching or training. Congratulations on the new project, an interesting initiative. With your vast experience in the UK, what can you say about the Middle East market in terms of dentistry? Did you market Research the region before moving here and taking on the task to open the school?

Well there was pre-existing market research, which is but a few years old, which indicates that there is, very much, a demand for postgraduate dentistry specialization within the Gulf region. To give you an example, within the UAE itself we have very nearby undergraduate dental schools which will produce in excess of 250 dental graduates per annum. But these graduates have no mechanism, except for a very small number of places, currently to get postgraduate education to specialist level within the Gulf region. Therefore they are bound to go either to North America or the UK in order to get specialist training. The problem with that, if you take the UK as an example, and indeed the same occurs in North America, the students go over there at a significant expense because not only do they have tuition fees, but they have the cost of travel, accommodations and the cost of living within these countries as a foreign national. And these individuals then get an academic qualification from the host university, but don’t get anything to indicate that they’ve had a formal clinical training—and indeed they don’t get a formal clinical training within these institutions. So not only are we providing a homegrown opportunity for these students to get a postgraduate education to specialist level without having to leave the Emirates, which is certainly an advantage to some of the female graduates that we have here, but in addition to that they are getting a clinical qualification which will allow them to have a clinical license within the Gulf and, in fact, one which is internationally recognized. Based on what selection criteria will you accept your students? And the program will be offered in which languages?

Well in line with the rest of the tertiary education facilities here these courses will be taught exclusively in English and our selection criteria demands are very clearly set, because of that our students must be proficient in English and reach the necessary grade of understanding English in order to participate in the course. However in addition to that, they need to be the top students forming their graduating dental schools, they need to have had a few years’ experience: one, to cement and seal their clinical competence as a General Dentist and also an opportunity to figure out for themselves which area of dentistry they’d like to specialize in. And we then take them on a competitive basis after an interview process and the usual admissions criteria, and the students are then brought in and are encouraged to develop the ability to have lifelong learning when they leave, and also they will be subjected to a very stringent, postgraduate training program where there will be a maximum class size of six students and any one cohort being taught by, as I said previously, the international faculty. So it will be very much, all small groups teaching, which we anticipate will produce not only students who are highly competent, but the clear intention is that they will be specialists who will be able to practice autonomously and provide high quality specialist advice. In addition also serve as ambassadors for the new Dubai School of Dental Medicine as it increases in its scope and in its influence within the Gulf region because, of course, it’s going to end up being the largest dental healthcare facility within the region. Lastly, as a parallel aspiration of this school, because we will be a large specialized unit we hope to be able to provide tertiary care for patients with complex and difficult problems. And hopefully we will very soon become a significant referral base for both the dental and the medical professions within the Gulf States.

Regarding your lecturers and educators, based on what criteria do you select them?

Well clearly when one has the opportunity to start a new school and has a blank sheet of paper with which to create fairly easily, the curriculum, etc. one starts with the very highest expectations and I’m glad to say that my experience today has exceeded my expectations. What we have been charged with is selecting our lecturers and educators based on what criteria do you select them?

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expectations and that I have not been merely taking what was available but have been able to recruit the highest caliber academicians from around the globe—senior academicians who are experienced in teaching postgraduate courses and who are also research active on an international level. The local licensing authorities within Dubai Healthcare City are very strict and they demand that, in addition to an academic qualification, like an MSc or a PhD and research activity, academic staff must also have a clinical qualification which is largely regarded as either an ability to get on the Specialist list within the UK or board certification within North America. And of course that would be a minimum standard that we demand for ourselves anyway, it means that out of all the senior academics who inquire about the opportunity of coming to join our faculty, a number of them are disappointed because they don’t have the qualifications necessary to make the cut. But there seems to be plenty of people, not only prepared to come to Dubai to participate in this exciting innovation, but also very keen to come when they see the basis on which the school is being set up and the confidence that they have in coming to an institution where education and standards for both academia and medical care are the priorities. This, of course, exists because this is a government initiative which is not profit making in its aspirations. 

Students will be keen to know the tuition fees, what are the packages which you will offer? The tuition fees in the first instance have been set at a competitive rate which, currently within the region, is $55,000, equating to AED 200,000, per clinical year over a 3 year period. But of course, this is a very reasonable investment because the 3 years in the Dubai School of Dental Medicine is going to be a springboard of which our graduates will launch a successful career either in specialist practice or within academia. And of course a large number of students are obtaining scholarships from various sponsoring organizations. Unfortunately, as things stand at the moment, a number of scholarships are only available to students who are prepared to go overseas to get a suitable postgraduate dental training but that, of course, is a regulation issue which was set up when there were no significant opportunities for postgraduate education within the region, and now that Dubai Dental School of Dental Medicine is up and running we feel confident that those scholarships will be extended to other graduates to come here to the Dubai School of Dental Medicine, having been sponsored by various individuals with a scholarship.

Professor David Wray, a pleasure to speak with you and thank you very much. We wish you all the best with the Dubai School of Dental Medicine.

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Dubai School of Dental Medicine

Dubai School of Dental Medicine, an institution of the Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Academic Medical Center, is a newly established home-grown dental school at Dubai Healthcare City.

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September 2013

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Dubai School of Dental Medicine

Dubai School of Dental Medicine (DSDM) is a newly established home-grown dental institution launched to support the UAE community with the finest quality of dental care services and education. Dubai School of Dental Medicine is an institution of the Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Academic Medical Center at Dubai Healthcare City.

VISION

Dubai School of Dental Medicine will set the standard of excellence and be recognised as a leader in dental education, research and clinical practice.

MISSION

Dubai School of Dental Medicine aims to provide internationally recognised student centred dental education programs that combine advanced didactic, clinical and research training designed to prepare the candidate for a career at the specialist level.

The School opens doors in January 2013

by Dental Tribune Middle East & Africa

Dubai School of Dental Medicine (DSDM) is a newly established home-grown dental institution launched to support the UAE community with the finest quality of dental care services and education. Dubai School of Dental Medicine is an institution of the Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Academic Medical Center at Dubai Healthcare City.

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Academia is the place for creative minds

Dr. Khaled Abdullah Balto, Professor of Endodontics and Consultant of Micro-Endodontics in King Abdulaziz University (KAU) in Saudi Arabia (Photo courtesy of DTMEA)

DUBAI, UAE: Dental Tribune Middle East & Africa interviews Dr. Khaled Abdullah Balto, Professor of Endodontics and Consultant of Micro-Endodontics in King Abdulaziz University (KAU) who shares his invaluable insight into the world of education, dentistry and both of their relation to the Middle East.

Dental Tribune Middle East and Africa: Welcome Prof. Khaled Balto, please share with us a little bit about your origin and your many responsibilities in the Middle East?

Prof. Khaled Balto: I graduated in 1994 as the first batch from KAU. The dental program there has 7 years long and includes considerable portions of basic science, as well as one year of internship training. Following my graduation I worked as a clinical instructor at the University [KAU] for one year. After that I did my post graduate studies and clinical training at Harvard University. I returned back to Saudi Arabia in 2001 and since then have become a full time staff member and hold my own private practice, limited to Micro-endodontics.

My responsibilities are vast, at the local level I am the manager of the endodontics department at KAU as well as for the Saudi Boards in the western region. I also manage the National Research Center for Osteopo-rosis as Deputy Director for Research Af- fairs and am heavily involved in lecturing and conducting hands-on training courses, not only in the Middle East, but elsewhere in the world. I have an interesting piece of history when I was managing the Saudi Dental Society in the period between 2002 - 05 when I arranged 10 conferences and was member of the Gulf Arabic Countries for Dental Education. On the level of the KAU and the Ministry of Higher Education in Saudi Arabia, I contributed to the academic assessment activity as Vice Dean, for quality assurance, which concluded a successful peer visitation by the Association of Dental Education in Europe as the first country outside Europe to pass this. Also, I managed academic assessment on the level of high- er education in the university for three years and laid down the foundation for the National Accreditation System for Medical and Dental Science via the Ministry of Higher Education. Having such an extensive background, what would you say influenced your decision to pursue a career in education?

Academia is the place for creative minds, and this was the driving force in my decision. To contribute on large scale you need both the logistics that enable you to do so, and an academic atmosphere supports that to a large extent. Also, being a teacher, amplifies your scientific and moral messages across generations. So what you do with one patient in a clinic, could be applied to thousands and maybe millions throughout the years by teaching it to various generations. What do you consider an important region specific factor that contributes to the health of the dentistry scene in the Middle East?

As far as the Middle East is concerned, the two biggest factors that would contribute to the dental health are: public awareness and preventive measures. What have you learned from your current position as an educator that you would impart onto other practicing dentists?

I have learned several things, among which are:

- Having the ability to alleviate human suffering gives great value to life, and thus acquiring skills in stress and pain manage- ment in the dental chair should be an ongoing practice for all dentists.
- The most powerful driving force to learn, and to continue to learn, is to share every- thing you know with others. You will be surprised to the amount of new knowledge that you receive.
- Customizing your dental treatment according to patient needs, including stress man- agement, is one of the golden keys for suc- cess.
- Doctor, what can you tell us about what to expect from KAU in the future? What are your plans for growth and how are you planning to improving the Dentistry scene in the University?

KAU’s Vision Statement is to be a leading university in the Middle East. Based on this vision we are always striving to monitor our performance in accordance to the most modern developed practices across the world. Therefore, the practice of academic assessment is an ongoing one. Amongst the indicators is the recent integration of micro-dentistry into the teaching curricula. What would you say makes your school most unique? What makes it different?

Well, I do not think comparing my school to others would be fair. What makes KAU unique? It is offering an academic vision that does not only cater to the number of academic institutes that produce dentists, but focuses on the level of standards of education. In this path, I am only concerned with the rising interests in dental education in the region, and believe all dental practices will be offered via micro-clinical approach in 15-20 years from now.

Diary of Endodontics and Micro-Dentistry states that the micro-clinical approach in 15-20 years from now will be fully implemented. It is the same when we talk about emerging tech- nologies in the dental field. As an endodontist, I am not involved in the teaching of prosthetics, but I told you how motivating it is to impart onto other practicing dentists that the micro-dentistry is the future of dentistry.

That is where the role of formulating Dy- namic Vision Statements comes into play. As well as that of those creative minds that we talked about before. Studying and an- 

ticipating the direction of developments in the field, and incorporating them in the strategy of administration is a golden key in the path.

What have you learned about the Den- tal scene in the Middle East region, the changes you have seen and your insight on changes to come?

It is very impressive, and rather surprising, the changes that are taking place in the dental scene in the Middle East. In this part of the world we came long way for- ward in a very short time. An important in- dicator for such advancements is the emer- gence of specialty based practices to the market of several countries. Public aware- ness is on the rise as well as the number of well-trained dentists – not to mention the number of academic institutes that provide solid dental education. I anticipate the next change and challenge is going to be coping with the technical advances, in- cluding biologic (stem cells lines) and tech- nologic (computer assessed applications and devices).

And with this rise in both public aware- ness and well-trained dentists, how is the rising interest in the Dental education in the region affecting the scene?

Definitely, the rising interests in dental ed- ucation is pushing standards forwards, but only if these dental education institutes monitor their performance against realistic and real pre-set standards of education. As in any medical related field, the indus- try of dentistry is always changing. Espe- cially considering a trend that the world is seeing now with an emphasis on the in- tegration of CAD/CAM dentistry being pushed further than it has before in the way that a lot of professionals and clinic- 
s are constantly changing the way they completely perform. How has this affected the curriculum, or the way you teach your students?

What are you doing to keep up with these changes?

Throughout human history, changes have taken a long time to happen. It’s the same thing when we talk about emerging tech- nologies in the dental field. As an endodontist, I am not involved in the teaching of prosthetics, but I told you how motivat- ing it is to impart onto other practicing dentists that the micro-dentistry is the future of dentistry. I believe all dental practices will be offered via the micro-clinical approach in 15-20 years from now.

As Al-Khaimah, UAE: Every long journey begins with a single step. Workshop on Computer Guided Implantology and 3d imaging us- ing AccuGuide® Software was organized by RAK College of Dental Sciences, RAKMHSU on 17th January 2013. The work- shop was organized as a part of Continuous Medical education (CME) program and was accredited by Ministry of Health, UAE. It also provided meaningful coverage on ba- sics, concepts and controversies related to Computer Guided 3D Implantology. The opening ceremony for the workshop was attended by Dr. S.Gurumadivava Rao, Vice Chancellor of RAKMHSU and Dr. Ja- meela Alawadi, Vice President of Emirates Dental Society and the deans of the constituent colleges. The event started with a lec- ture on “Surgical Principles in Oral Implan- tology” by Dr. Vladimir Kokovic, ITI Fel- low and Associate Professor of Oral Surg- ery at RAKCODS followed by hands on training workshop on Computer Guided Impa- lmentation by Dr. Philippe Tardieu, Ad- junct Associate Professor New York Uni- versity College of Dentistry, Inventor of the SAFE System® and inventor of the Immedi- ate Smile® protocol and components. Pres- ident of Unique Dental and Implantolog- ist in Dubai.

During this one day workshop Dr. Philippe Tardieu informed dentists how to use and work on the AccuGuide® program and highlighted all the useful tools to include in an everyday practice. AccuGuide® soft- ware program is an open program; it is a new and has innovative suite of modules in the field of Computer Guided Implantology and diagnosis. This software includes mod- ules for image treatment, implant planning and design surgical guides.

This workshop was attended by private- 
ly practicing dental specialists and GP’s, who wish to start working in Computer- guided Implantology to improve their skill in this field. Apart from this the work- shop was also attended by Dental Interns and students. At the end both the speakers were awarded with mementos by the Dr. Mustahsen Rahman, Dean of RAKCODS and Dr. S.Gurumadivava Rao, Vice Chancel- lor of RAKMHSU.

RAKCDOS is planning to organize similar workshops and CME activities in near future at advanced level for dentists, interns and students. Furthermore as a part of Con- tinuous Medical Education (CME) program another Hand on workshop on Implantology and remotely assisted surgery was planned. The next day dental conference will be organized in the Mid of March by RAKCODS for all the dental specialties, interns and students.

Report Submitted by: Dr. Ebadullah Shafi
Member of the Organizing Committee

A step towards a brighter future in the world of Dentistry
"It is expected that European University College will evolve into European University with the addition of at least two more colleges"
Aim high, acquire additional knowledge and training, go for a specialty.

Dr. Ahmed Al-Kahtani: I am Dr. Ahmed Al-Kahtani, Associate Professor of Endodontics and Head of the Division of Endodontics in the Department of Restorative Dental Sciences at the College of Dentistry in King Saud University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. I am also the President of the Saudi Dental Society.

Please tell us about you as President of the Saudi Dental Society? Including upcoming SDS events, courses, plans for the coming year and relationship with other dental societies and associations in the Middle East?

SDS continuously hold monthly activities for its members whereby a dental specialist or a dental company is invited to give a seminar on a particular topic of major dental interest. In this way, members gain additional knowledge and also interrelate with each other on a professional level. In January 28th-30th 2013, we will be holding the 24th Saudi Dental Society International Dental Conference at the Riyadh International Convention and Exhibition Center in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. The three full-day program will feature oral presentations and continuing educational courses given by renowned international speakers. You are all cordially invited to participate in our big event which is held annually.

What about the role SDS plays in the Saudi Dentistry scene? The Saudi Dental Society is a community of dental professionals. Its mission is to disseminate dental knowledge and concerns and promote scientific research and establish a closer relationship amongst its members locally and internationally.

As Associate Professor and Consultant and Head of the Endodontic Division in the College of Dentistry, you must be very busy! I have always enjoyed my role as academician and play a vital role in the society. I believe there are more or less 100 dentists operating in Saudi Arabia more or less?

I believe there are more or less 100 dental companies alone in Saudi Arabia. They or manufacturing locally materials or products used in dentistry. I have always enjoyed my role as academician and play a vital role in the society. I believe there are more or less 100 dentists operating in Saudi Arabia more or less? Yes, I believe there are more or less 100 dentists operating in Saudi Arabia.

How important is King Saud University for the Saudi Dentistry? King Saud University is the first university in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and it has always provided the best education and quality training to almost all the dentists in the Kingdom. Together with the Ministry of Higher Education, it has always been supportive in providing quality instruction in the different fields of arts and sciences. They have continually supported its graduates in their pursuit for advanced specialty training abroad and numerous valuable researches. How does the University differ from others in Saudi universities and the region? King Saud University is the first in its rank in the kingdom and also in the middle east. What do you consider an important regional specific factor that contributes to the health of the dentistry scene in the Middle East?

In the Middle East, not only in Saudi Arabia, more programs are needed to support the growing needs of the community for quality dental services, providing other facilities and extend health care support in other locations especially for low income regions and population especially the living in countries in the Middle East who are currently facing conflicts and crisis. They are in deep need of medical and dental care. What have you learned from your current position in Dentistry which you would impart to other practicing dentists?

Dentistry in general is a dynamic health profession. For my colleagues, my advice is that they should not be contented with just being a general dentist. Aim high, acquire additional knowledge and training, go for a specialty. I have learned that it is difficult to assess the effectiveness of teaching endodontics which is my specialty. It is important to increase the student’s enthusiasm and understanding first prior to putting it into actual training and practice. Some examples of community events you have any goals for the university to achieve in the next 5 to 10 years - either large scale or small?

The College of Dentistry of King Saud University in particular not only established several research programs that aims to produce innovative methods and quality researches but with the support of the University now has build the first Dental Hospital in the Kingdom that will continually provide excellent dental health care and community services for the citizens of Saudi Arabia. The construction of the Dental Hospital is underway and will soon be finished. We are anticipating that the University will continually support our goals. How is the school adapting to the changing professional market?

The Kingdom never cease to encouraged more Saudis to pursue careers in the health care that is why King Saud University provided free education to develop and train competent dental professionals. How big is the influence of the Dental Industry in Saudi Arabia?

There is a big influence of the dental industry in Saudi Arabia equally to that of the medical industry. This is why the University supported the College of Dentistry in establishing the Dental Hospital which will serve the public very soon. This is only in addition to the huge number of private Dental Clinics all over the regions that cater to the public who could not all be served in the dental clinics of the College of Dentistry and several other hospitals. How many companies are there in Saudi Arabia more or less?

I believe there are more or less 100 dental companies alone in Saudi Arabia. They are either companies officially distributing dental products and materials abroad or manufacturing locally materials or products used in dentistry. How many dentists operate in Saudi Arabia and how high is their level?

In the Saudi Dental Society membership was established in 1401H (1981G). Its temporary headquarter is at King Saud University. The University shall see to the realization of the Societies’ objectives and shall financially and morally support the Society. The Society is directly related to His Excellency the President of the University. Dental Tribune Middle East interviews Dr. Ahmed Al-Kahtani, President of the Saudi Dental Society and much more...

Dental Tribune Middle East & Africa: Welcome Doctor, please if you can give us a short introduction about yourself and your experience in dentistry?
record. I believe all these dentists are at par with other dentists around the world. Aside from the advance education courses the Society provides during our monthly meetings and dental conferences, the University supports our dentist pursuit for advance learning and additional training abroad.

How many Dental Technicians do you have in Saudi Arabia and how high is their level?

Currently, our membership records shows that we have 667 dental technicians registered. This does not include those who are working outside Riyadh who did not register yet. During our dental conference, we make sure that we offer courses and training specifically for dental technicians so that they could further enhance their skills.

How do you look to improving the quality of the dentists and dental technicians in Saudi Arabia in the coming years?

The Saudi Dental Society in cooperation with the College of Dentistry and the support of the King Saud University goes hand in hand in training our dentists and dental technicians and in developing research ideas, innovations and technologies that will aid them in their occupation.

What have you learned about the dental scene in the Middle-East region, the changes you have seen and your insight on changes to come?

Saudi Arabia has succeeded in establishing the most sophisticated and specialized health care services system. They have also provided it free to the general public. Our government through the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Higher Education sponsors a wide range of social services programs that will ensure our citizen a healthy living.

How do you see CAD/CAM & Digital Dentistry playing a role in Dentistry?

The properties of dental materials like strength of all ceramic restorations are highly influenced by the fabrication procedure and the skills of the individual dental technicians. With the introduction of the CAD/CAM systems in dentistry, the behavior of the material properties have been controlled and allowed using these materials that cannot be used by conventional dental processing techniques. These resolved the dentists’ problem in searching for an ideal restorative material. With the introduction of the digital system, it made dentistry more convenient, precise and accurate.

Thank you Dr. Ahmed Al-Kahtani, we wish you all the best.