

DENFAC IN CHINA

Following a request from Professor Ge Lihong of Peking University for the Dentists For All Children (DENFAC) to hold a workshop in China, Professor Gerald Wright, Secretary general of IAPD and Dr. Richard Widmer, Chair of the Education Committee, met with paediatric dentists representing ten Chinese universities. Altogether, there were approximately 40 persons in attendance. The meeting was held at Peking University in Beijing on September 17-19. The objectives for the visit were to focus on the level of the teaching of paediatric dentistry, meet those involved, make a general assessment of language capabilities and do an on site inspection of the facilities before planning additional workshops.

The program began with an introduction to IAPD. The Secretary General explained the goals of IAPD, different membership categories and that IAPD was the only organization to represent paediatric dentistry globally. He also explained the history of the DENFAC project and how it functions. He pointed out that the DENFAC workshops were tailored to the needs of individual nations and those needs have to be determined during the visit.

The scientific program began with a presentation on pulp therapy in the primary dentition. This was followed in an afternoon session by trauma to the primary and immature permanent dentition. It was apparent that the audience had a good knowledge of the subjects and they posed very interesting questions. Although translation was provided, functioning in English was not a problem. All of those in attendance from the Chinese universities had some English language facility.

The Chinese participants previously had been asked to discuss their university undergraduate programs. Presentations of about 15 minutes in length were made from the following universities: Peking, Wuhan, Hebei, China Medical, Harbin, Sun Yat-Sen, Capital Medical, West China, Shanghai Jiaotong, and Shandong. All presentations were high quality and made with power point. There were marked consistencies between the presentations. Dentistry was a five-year curriculum followed by a period of clinical internship before obtaining a national license and the title dentist. Most universities had large masters classes that led to specialization. Master programs were an additional two years followed by another three years to PhD degrees. Most schools seemed numerically well-staffed and had good facilities as evidenced by their presentations.

Most schools had excellent laboratory facilities and most students were trained with simulation programs. Most undergraduate clinical teaching occurred in years 4 and 5. The amount of clinical teaching varied from a few weeks to considerably more. Some schools taught bilingually. The size of many of the universities was far greater than is common in the west. For example, west China University having 60 undergraduates per class has 261 dental chairs, 40 beds and treats 40,000 outpatients annually. Peking University Paediatric Dentistry clinic was visited and students were observed with clinic patients. It was apparent more could be learned about four-handed dentistry chair side techniques. There also appeared to be a deficiency of certain supplies.

IAPD: DENFAC PROGRAM

Following these observation and several comments assessing the situation, the university participants were asked to meet and discuss the following:

- a) Is there a need for another DENFAC workshop?
- b) If there is a need to have another program in China, what is that need?

Another DENFAC workshop was requested. They asked for instruction in:

- Preclinical laboratory courses. The request was for presentation on course outlines and descriptions, educational objectives, criteria for evaluation and assessment procedures.
- Problem based learning. The request was for a description of problem-based learning, a workshop to develop problems, how it is introduced into a curriculum and how student evaluation occurs.

The intention is to have a follow up workshop in Beijing in September-October, 2007.

Gerald Wright



Fig. 1: Group photo DENFAC in China



Fig. 2: DENFAC Class



Fig. 3: Professor Ge Lihong



Fig. 4: Professor Ge Lihong makes a presentation to Sec. General G. Wright