Towards Continuing Oral Health Improvement in Asia: Issues and Challenges

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POSTER NO: 147
Government Dentists’ Experience and Barriers in Providing Domiciliary Oral Health Care (Dohe) for Elderly People
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Introduction: The number of elderly people requiring domiciliary dental care is increasing as a result of a growing population of elderly who are functionally dependent and who retain an increasing number of natural dentition. At the same time little attention has been given to the way in which dentists think about elderly patients or to the difficulties associated with the provision of treatment outside the normal environment of a dental practice. Aim: To assess government dentists’ experience and their perceived barriers in providing DOHC service for elderly patients. Method: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted using self-administered questionnaire targeting government dentists working in Peninsular Malaysia. Results: In total, 711 out of 962 government dentists responded with response rate 74.0%. Only 257 out of the 711 respondents (36.1%) reported having experience in providing domiciliary oral health care for the elderly in the past 2 years with a majority (75.9%) had mean total number of visit per year of 1. The types of care mostly performed were check-ups (96.9%), followed by oral health education (87.2%), simple extractions (73.9%) and new dentures (60.3%). Main perceived barriers to effective service were patients’ complex medical history (74.1%) and poor attitude towards oral health services (67.5%), dentists’ unfavorable working conditions (64.4%), high workload at work (54.3%) and lack of commitment and cooperation from care givers (51%). Conclusion: The majority of Malaysian government dentists had not been involved in such care which suggests that the barriers of doing so are substantial in Malaysia and there are also many competing issues that appear to deserve more attention. Overall, the significant barriers that impact on the provision of DOHC for elderly patients are required to improve the service.

POSTER NO: 148
Assessment Oral H₂S, CH₃SH and (CH₃)₂S in a General Population
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Introduction: It has been confirmed that volatile sulfide compounds (VSCs), in particular hydrogen sulfide (H₂S), methyl mercaptan (CH₃SH) and dimethyl sulfide [(CH₃)₂S] contribute to malodour prominently. However how each of the VSCs components relate with the malodour is not well understood. This study aims to identify the relationship between the three VSCs components and oral health condition. Method: 306 volunteers aged 18-40 participated in this study. Caries, Plaque index, calculus index, bleeding index, pocket depth, attachment loss, tongue coating were evaluated by three dentists who have been calibrated prior to the study properly. Oral malodour was measured with Oral Chroma™ (Abilit Co. Japan) and organoleptic score. Two-sample t-test and Bonferroni multiple comparisons were done to analyze the data. Results: The prevalence of halitosis is 48.9% in this population. The results revealed that female has higher (CH₃)₂S concentration than male, but no significant difference on H₂S and CH₃SH between them. Value of H₂S, CH₃SH, (CH₃)₂S increased in older and periodontitis subjects, but no statistical significance was found. Subjects whose tongue coating is thicker or covers more surfaces had higher H₂S concentration, CH₃SH and (CH₃)₂S concentration are not significant in subjects with different tongue coating conditions. Conclusion: Findings from this study find that the prevalence of halitosis was higher in these subjects. Education and treatment should be conducted in the population. Tongue coating maybe the main cause of halitosis in the subjects with higher H₂S value only. Subjects with periodontal problems have more chance to arrive higher H₂S, CH₃SH and (CH₃)₂S value. Higher (CH₃)₂S values suggest that systemic condition sources should be considered first.