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Editorial

Strengthening oral care

Dental training in our country has improved by leaps and bounds in the past two decades. The upsurge of knowledge through teachers who have visited state of the art dental centres in the more developed countries has brought about a positive change in our institutions. However, as I ponder, I realize, it might now be worthwhile to encourage the training of the dental technical support staff.

Whereas the dental specialist is ready to perform the latest available procedures on patients, most effort loses its quality when the dental technician does not perform as well. The net result is therefore, not entirely satisfactory. At present the story is the same, be Orthodontics & Dentofacial Orthopaedics, Maxillofacial Surgery & Prosthodontics etc. I appeal to all the planners of dental and oral health programmes to lay serious emphasis on the training of dental technicians and the setting up of state of the art dental technical labs and facilities, to at least match those available in the best centres in the world.

It may be worthwhile asking funding agencies like the World Health Organization, the British Council, American and Japanese agencies to finance technical staff from good centre abroad to help us develop our labs and technical knowhow in the various specialities of Dentistry.

Another area of serious concern in our country, except for a handful of places, is the quality of cleanliness and hygiene of our work places and sterilization of equipment and materials. Most of our cleaning staff need hands on training in the maintenance of the above. A single institute, a particular clinic, or an individual teacher might be doing wonders in teaching and maintaining good standards of hygiene and sterilization, but these are exceptions, not the general practice. It is time to demonstrate and train as matter of routine the health care personal and cleaning staff in various hospital and health clinics etc across the country. This could be done by involving private companies which manufacture various cleaning and sterilization chemical and equipments.

These are the crying needs of today in our setup and I hope that some of us who are at the helm of health affairs rise to the occasion and bring about the change in our attitude towards these two very basic needs – dental technical training and training of cleaning staff. I hope this issue is given due priority. Also, it might be worth including, occasional, papers on these subjects in some of the issues of this prestigious journal.

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