

“We aim to develop and strengthen lasting relationships”

On 3 and 4 October, dental professionals from around the world will gather in Tokyo in Japan for the sixth GC International Dental Symposium. Organised as part of GC’s 105th anniversary activities, the two-day scientific and educational programme is being extended into “One Week of Excellence” through unique local tours and networking opportunities. Ahead of the event, Dental Tribune International spoke with Makoto Nakao, chairman of the board of GC Holding, and Dr Per Falk, CEO of GC Holding, about the company’s long-standing commitment to clinical education and the role of the International Dental Symposium in supporting professional exchange and learning.

GC has long positioned itself as being highly dedicated to serving the dental profession. What are the company’s key operational responsibilities?

Nakao: As a manufacturer, our responsibilities are threefold: first, developing new technologies and products and delivering them to customers; second, ensuring consistent supply in terms of quality, cost and delivery; and third, supporting customers as technology and methodologies become more complex, including in the areas of software, training and support.

Education has always been central to GC’s global activities. Why do you believe that continuing education is not only a professional obligation but also a strategic responsibility for an industry leader?

Dr Falk: Supporting continuing education is a strategic responsibility for healthcare companies. Patients cannot choose dental products themselves; these decisions are made by dental professionals. For that reason, dental professionals must have



access to proper education and a shared scientific understanding to make the best choices for their patients.

At GC, we consider education fundamental to how we operate. We continue to fulfil our responsibility by training our staff and by making education one of our core activities for the dental community. For example, through the GC International Dental Symposium, we provide an important platform for professional interaction and knowledge exchange.

The symposium has become a recurring global event. Why was the event originally launched, and how has its purpose evolved?

Nakao: The first GC International Dental Symposium was held in 1996, at a time when GC was striving to become a truly international company. One of the key objectives of launching the symposium was to build a global network of speakers and advisers. Through the international symposium, we aim to develop and strengthen lasting relationships with clinicians and researchers around the world. This year, the sixth GC International Dental Symposium is being held in collaboration with the GC Membership Society, which is celebrating its 70th anniversary. The GC Membership Society was established in 1956 based on the belief that manufacturers must work closely together with their customers, like the wheels of a carriage, which move forward only when turning together. From the beginning, the aim was to create a strong and close link between clinicians, researchers and manufacturers. Over the past 70 years, the society has grown continuously, expanding its membership across many countries worldwide.

What will distinguish the forthcoming edition from other scientific or industry-led dental events?

Nakao: Under this year's theme– "Gather Knowledge, Create '8 billion' Smiles!"– we have prepared several unique activities that go beyond a traditional congress format. For example, the programme includes hands-on courses both before and after the congress, allowing practitioners to actively participate and gain practical



experience. To further encourage exchange and interaction, we're also hosting a special networking party at the end of the first day. As more than 2,000 participants are expected, the party will provide a valuable opportunity to gather, share experiences and exchange opinions in an open and engaging environment. In addition, we have organised an official guided tour of GC's factory in Oyama, near Mount Fuji, that will give participants direct insight into our manufacturing philosophy.

GC is known for fostering close collaboration between clinicians, researchers and industry professionals. How is this multidisciplinary exchange reflected in the programme and speaker selection for this year's symposium?

Dr Falk: We aim to foster vibrant and lively interactions. The programme brings together highly experienced and knowledgeable dental professionals who are willing to share clinical cases and real-world experience, allowing others to actively participate and learn.

Beyond the formal presentations, we recognise the value of informal and interpersonal exchange. Given the breadth and diversity of the participants, the symposium is intended to provide an open scientific forum in which ideas can be exchanged freely with the common goal of advancing dentistry through collaboration.

From a leadership perspective, how do global educational initiatives such as this symposium contribute to shaping the future of dentistry beyond individual products or technologies?

Dr Falk: Individual dental products address specific clinical needs and cases, but it is important to recognise dentistry as a holistic discipline. Oral health is closely linked to human physiology, and each product plays a role in supporting this; however, the overall impact comes from a comprehensive approach.

The symposium allows us to take a broader perspective on oral health and discuss what still needs to be improved to achieve better outcomes globally. Innovation is



not only about products; it is also about improving access to care. Improving access is one of the biggest challenges in dentistry worldwide, particularly in less developed areas, where affordability is a critical part of whether care can be delivered at all. Beyond technology, platforms such as the symposium help by bringing together different stakeholders to discuss how to improve care globally. In this context, initiatives such as the Nakao Foundation, which is dedicated to worldwide oral health, play an important role as vehicles to initiate dialogue between the public and private sectors. GC aims to be a forerunner in this discussion and an example to others in contributing to improved global oral health.

Quotes:

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Editorial note:

More information about the symposium can be found at www.gcdentalcampus.com/en/the-6-th-international-dental-symposium.

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