

# HKU Faculty of Dentistry to launch research project providing free implant treatment for facial defects

The HKU Faculty of Dentistry has been awarded a project grant from a local charity to investigate the use of a modern method to artificially replace missing facial parts, such as eyes, ears, or nose, while helping Hong Kong residents who are financially challenged. The research team will hold a media briefing about the project on 9 October 2012 (Tuesday). A patient who has received the implant treatment will also be in attendance.

The project will use metal implants and computer-assisted design and manufacturing technology to improve the retention of artificial replacements (protheses) in local patients who come from lower-income families and who have a facial defect due to congenital conditions, traumatic injuries, burns, or surgical removal of tumours. The grant of HK\$ 2.13 million from the S.K. Yee Medical Foundation will allow clinicians in the Faculty's Discipline of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery and co-investigators at the Prince Philip Dental Hospital and United Christian Hospital to provide free implant-supported facial protheses for 60 adults.

Treatment will involve attaching a facial prosthesis to one or more titanium posts to be implanted into the patient's bone. With time, the implant will permanently fuse with the bone. This strategy of prosthetic attachment has advantages over traditional methods such as applying medical-grade skin glues or solvents, or attaching a prosthesis directly to bony or soft tissue.

"Unfortunately, traditional treatments often have difficulties with retention, stability, discoloration, inconvenient use, and lack of acceptance," explains Professor Cheung Lim-kwong, Chair Professor of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, who is the principal investigator of the funded project. "Past research by us and others has shown that the use of implants in providing retention to craniofacial protheses minimizes most of these disadvantages. Furthermore, the use of digital colouring can improve the matching of the prosthesis to facial skin colour."

A special hotline will be set up by the project group for the enrolment of potential patients and to answer public queries about the treatment. Prospective patients will be asked to attend a screening appointment to assess eligibility and they will be informed of the project details and possible risks and benefits.

The formal announcement of the project launch and full patient recruitment procedure will take place at a media conference.

Media representatives are cordially invited. The media conference details are as follows:

**Date:** 9 October 2012 (Tuesday)  
**Time:** 11:00 am  
**Venue:** Lounge, 7/F Prince Philip Dental Hospital, 34 Hospital Road, Sai Ying Pun  
**Organiser:** HKU Faculty of Dentistry  
**Faculty media contact:**  
Ms Sau-wan Cheng (Tel: 2859 0410), e-mail: [dentke@hku.hk](mailto:dentke@hku.hk)

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#### **About the Faculty of Dentistry, The University of Hong Kong**

Established in 1982, the Faculty of Dentistry at The University of Hong Kong is located in the Prince Philip Dental Hospital, Sai Ying Pun. Currently studying at the Faculty are 324 undergraduates, 114 taught postgraduates, and 71 research postgraduates from 22 countries. So far, 1432 undergraduates, 582 taught postgraduates, and 116 research postgraduates have graduated from the Faculty, and more than half of Hong Kong's registered dentists are Faculty alumni. Helping the Faculty fulfil its missions of education, research, patient care, and knowledge exchange are a team of 56 full-time and 81 part-time staff from 15 countries, as well as honorary and visiting personnel. Most of the Faculty's staff are internationally recognised for their achievements in clinical work, research, and dental education, and have won local and international awards. In 2012, the Faculty celebrates its 30th anniversary. For more information about the Faculty, please visit <http://facdent.hku.hk> (Facebook: [www.facebook.com/facdent](http://www.facebook.com/facdent))

Prepared by Dr Trevor Lane, Knowledge Exchange Unit, HKU Faculty of Dentistry. Although every care has been taken to ensure the accuracy of the contents of this news release, they do not necessarily reflect the official policies of the Faculty or University and are intended for informational or educational use only; the copyright owner accepts no responsibility for errors or omissions.



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