
Meeting Review

Meeting of the French Dental Association (ADF) November 23–27, 2011 Paris, France

The French Dental Association (ADF) is the largest organization for continuing education devoted to French-speaking dental practitioners and dental nurses, a large majority of whom work in private offices. A meeting in Paris has been organized every year since 1972. It has become the primary event in dental continuing education. Because it offers a general overview of the main interests of the French-speaking dental community, it provides a good opportunity to observe the level of interest for orofacial pain and related topics. One hundred thirty-one communications and conferences were presented to the attendees. Twenty-six focused on a topic related to the usual fields of the *Journal of Orofacial Pain* but only three talks were strictly focused on pain. One was about the use of analgesics and was called “Can Analgesics be Harmful?” Another one was included in a basic session and was entitled “Peripheral and Central Gustato-trigeminal Interactions.” The third one consisted of a new form of communication which was proposed by P. Pionchon and J. F. Lалуque. Together, they spent 2 hours in a free interaction with the audience. The title of the session was “The Dentist in Front of a Pain Patient.” It was aimed at having a dialogue about the problems involved in diagnosing chronic pain conditions that may not be of pure dental/oral origin. Other questions were about the doctor’s initial responses including, first, reassurance for the patient, proposal of nonsurgical therapy, and referral to a specialized unit. The non-formal feature of the event was much appreciated because the audience could intervene easier than during a usual session made up of several conventional talks.

The 23 other communications/conferences were not directly focused on pain. Six were devoted to common problems in dentistry in which acute pain

was the main problem, such as in dental emergencies, residual dentinal pain after composite restorations, or difficulties with local anesthesia. Interestingly, a full session made up of three talks was devoted to anxiety and its control with the help of different forms of sedation. Three communications were devoted to the management of disabled persons. “Occlusion,” as usually understood in dentistry, constituted a large group with eight talks about the management of tooth-to-tooth occlusal contacts in prosthetic, restorative, and periodontal therapies. Three more talks were influenced by the ambiguous concept of dysfunction; one was devoted to the sleep apnea syndrome and another to the interaction between occlusion and body posture in athletes.

This meeting program indicated a balanced content. Pain induces an interest for some professionals. For practical reasons, acute pain more than chronic pain raises the dentist’s interest. However, it must be noted that a session especially devoted to chronic pain found an audience of general practitioners who are not specialized but who try to obtain information about a demanding clinical problem. It must be emphasized that a full session devoted to pain has been organized every year for the last decade and was duplicated in some years. Knowledge about occlusion is still an obvious need in dental therapies independent from pain. Another notable point is the development of interest for new means for controlling anxiety in relation to acute pain, especially with dependent patients. The title of the meeting was “Patient’s Well-being,” suggesting a trend toward a switch from a mechanistic focus to more patient-focused dentistry.

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