

Periodontics in Nepal: Where Have We Reached?

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ABSTRACT

Periodontics is that speciality of dentistry which encompasses the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of diseases of supporting and surrounding tissues of the teeth or their substitutes; the maintenance of health, function and aesthetics of these structures and tissues; and the replacement of lost teeth and supporting structures by grafting or implantation of natural or synthetic devices and materials. The quality field of Periodontics started in Nepal after 1999. The postgraduate studies in Periodontology and Oral Implantology have been running for a decade. Specialists in significant numbers are providing services throughout the country. Scientific researches and academic activities have been organised. Nepalese Society of Periodontology and Oral Implantology (NSPOI) has become a forum that is gaining recognition in the nation and on a global scale with the successful organisation of annual conferences, annual clinical meetings, postgraduate conventions and participations in international conferences since its establishment in 2014. The journal of the society (JNSPOI) is being regularly published since 2017. Societies in India and abroad have expressed good wishes and have contributed to the society regularly.

Keywords: History; Nepal; oral implantology; periodontology.

INTRODUCTION

Periodontal disease is defined as the chronic inflammatory diseases of bacterial aetiology that affect the tooth-supporting soft and hard tissues. Gingivitis and periodontitis, are among the most prevalent diseases of humankind, with severe periodontitis being the sixth most prevalent disease worldwide, affecting nearly 800 million individuals.¹ Even though it is largely preventable, periodontal disease remains a major public health issue in all countries around the world. Periodontal disease is one of the most common non-communicable diseases of mankind in the world due to poor oral hygiene, smoking, stress, alcohol and systemic diseases. Periodontal disease shares many risk factors with other non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and can adequately be addressed through a common risk factor approach (CRFA). Periodontal disease is both preventable and treatable through adequate prevention and treatment strategies.²

Untreated periodontitis leads to tooth loss and, with it, masticatory, phonetic, aesthetic and social impairment; periodontitis is also associated with various co-morbidities like diabetes.³ The direct and indirect costs of periodontitis are substantial.⁴

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Citation

Pradhan S, Koirala PK. Periodontics in Nepal: Where Have We Reached? J Nepal Soc Perio Oral Implantol. 2019;3(5):38-9.

Prevalence of periodontal problem is high in Nepal. It occupies the second place among the oral health problems in our country. Due to the lower socio-economic status of the general population, regular oral health care has not been given priority, majority of people in rural area are away from qualified personnel and standard treatment.⁵

Along with the education and growing knowledge and experiences people are getting quality services in dentistry with specialists.

POSTGRADUATE EDUCATION IN PERIODONTICS

The field of Periodontics has taken shape after the postgraduate (PG) studies started in National Academy of Medical Sciences (NAMS) Bir Hospital under the co-ordination of the First Periodontist of Nepal, Dr. Shaili Pradhan. Dr. Ranjita Shrestha (2009-2012) was the first postgraduate student in NAMS. The seven batches have successfully completed under the guidance of Professor (Prof.) Dr. Shaili Pradhan with the production of 11 postgraduates, Master of Dental Surgery (MDS) in Periodontology and Oral Implantology.

The second Periodontist of Nepal Dr. Rita Singh is a successful private practitioner and is immediate past president of NSPOI.

Peoples Dental College has run PG program regularly since 2010 under the preceptor Prof. Dr. Surendra Man Shrestha with the production of five batches of PGs under the affiliation of Tribhuvan University. Prof. Dr. Surendra Man Shrestha is one of the pioneers of Periodontics in Nepal. He is heading the NSPOI team currently as the third president of NSPOI.

B.P. Koirala Institute of Health Sciences (BPKIHS) has been running PG program in Periodontology and Oral Implantology since September 2011. The College of Dental Surgery, BPKIHS has come into existence on August 1999 as a pioneer of Dental Education in Nepal. Prof. Dr. Shiva Lal Sharma is the head of the department of Periodontics and preceptor of MDS Periodontology and Oral Implantology.

Universal College of Medical Sciences was established in the year 1998 in the western region of Nepal. It is located in Rupandehi district and 15 kilometers away from the birth place of Buddha, Lumbini. It has got the recognition of being an important and pioneer institution of the country where medical and dental courses are offered. It started MDS courses in 2010.

Kathmandu University School of Medical Sciences (KUSMS) has started PG program in Periodontology and Oral Implantology under the able guidance of Associate Professor Dr. Manoj Humagain.

Kantipur Dental College Teaching Hospital and Research Center (KDC-THRC) was established in 2007 with an aim to provide quality dental education and service in Nepal. It is the first dental college of Kathmandu University. It has established department of Periodontology and Oral Implantology under Associate Prof. Dr. Bhageshwar Dhama and postgraduate program started since 2018.

PROFESSIONAL SOCIETY: NSPOI

Nepalese Society of Periodontology and Oral Implantology (NSPOI) has become a forum that is gaining recognition in the nation and worldwide with the successful organisation of annual conferences, annual clinical meetings, postgraduate conventions and participations in international conferences.

Nepalese Society of Periodontology and oral Implantology (NSPOI), a non profit organisation of all the periodontist was founded on 8th January 2014. NSPOI aims to promote periodontal and peri-implant tissue health in Nepal. It is heading ahead with the purpose to improve the awareness regarding Periodontology and Oral Implantology in the general public and to conduct relevant programs to keep updated regarding latest technologies on regular basis.

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Table 1. Presidents of NSPOI

Dr. Shaili Pradhan	2014-2017 (Founder President)
Dr. Rita Singh	2017-2019
Dr. Surendra Man Shrestha	2019-2021

Table 2. The founder members of NSPOI

Dr. Shaili Pradhan
Dr. Rita Singh
Dr. Surendra Man Shrestha
Dr. Durga Pun
Dr. Shiva Lal Sharma
Dr. Sameer Aryal
Dr. Manoj Humagin
Dr. Bhageshwar Dhama
Dr. Priti Shrestha
Dr. Junima Rajkarnikar
Dr. Ameena Pradhan
Dr. Dharendra Kumar Giri
Dr. Ranjita Shrestha.

NSPOI has successfully organised five annual conferences, six clinical meets and five PG conventions with common efforts of executives and 36 life members.

Journal of the society of NSPOI (JNSPOI) is the major development in the field of Nepalese Periodontics in which specialists and researchers can publish their works. NSPOI has brought four issues of Journal of Nepalese Society of Periodontology and Oral Implantology (JNSPOI): Jan-June 2017 Volume 1 No. 1 to July-December 2018 Volume 2 No. 2. This is a medium of dissemination of information and recognition to authors. Research activities and publications have become regular practices.

CONCLUSION

Knowledge and best practices in this field are constantly changing with new research and experience broadening our understanding. In the coming days more and more people will get quality of services with the growing number of periodontists. NSPOI has become one of the most active dental subspecialty society performing various activities and timely publications.