

## **Dental Industry Group October Newsletter**

Now that the NZDA conference is behind us, our attention has started to shift towards next year. And for many DIG members, the biggest event of 2026 will be the newly coined Dental Congress in August 2026. A quick Q&A to get you planning for next year:

### **What is Dental Congress?**

This event offers an amalgamation of three of the largest dental professional groups – NZDA, NZOHA and NZIDT – all having their conference at the same time and under the same roof. And all supported by one exhibition space for the industry. This concept has been tested before, but has never been taken to this level.

### **What's the background?**

This is an idea that's been discussed for quite some time. Some of you will have heard of, or perhaps even been to, the Chicago Midwinter conference, which is one of the key global dental conferences. What's different about this event is that so many of the dental bodies – general dentists, specialist groups, dental technicians, etc – all have their own individual conferences at the same time, all in and around central Chicago. And that in turn gives great opportunities for exhibitors, who can reach so many of their key customers through one exhibition. Many dental manufacturers save their major launches to Chicago Midwinter as they know they'll get the best bang for their buck at this time. And we expect that the Congress should be similar.

### **So how will Dental Congress work?**

All three organisations will run their separate events, which just happen to be at the same place (**Auckland International Convention Centre**) and time (**27-29 August**).

Two things that I believe are particularly exciting with this event:

1. The chance to have cross-functional lectures, where dental professionals from different disciplines can all attend the same lecture and learn together. Imagine a lecture around latest advances around lifetime placement and management of dental implants: side by side you have the oral surgeon, periodontist, general dentist, dental technician and hygienist all taking in the same information about best practices at different stages of the patient's journey. The opportunity for inter-collegial communication is something that could benefit dentistry across NZ.
2. From an industry perspective, the opportunity to not have to attend so many conferences could help to focus our limited funds. Each time we attend another conference, the cost of transporting products and people,

accommodation and food, cost of having people away from their regular job, plus wear and tear all add up. Having these different conferences come together and only have one venue means that we don't have to stretch so far and can concentrate our funds towards the one event. Whether you want to put all that same money into the one event, or reduce your overall budget is up to you.

### **What will happen after 2026?**

This is intended to be a biannual event in alternate years to Expo, and at this stage is expected to remain in Auckland. 2026 is really a "proof of concept" for all involved – one of the key issues through the planning stage has been generating enough profit for each of the organisations to make it worth their while. Assuming all does go well in 2026, then there will be an opportunity to expand this further in future events. I personally would like to get some of the specialist organisations also coming under the same umbrella in future years, both to expand the intercollegiate nature and to further reduce number of events in those years.

### **Key Takeout for 2026**

This is a proof of concept, everyone will watch carefully to see performance of numbers of attendees and financial returns for all parties. For reasons above I believe it's in the industry's best interests to make this work, so we can look at expanding it further in coming years. The DIG board will continue to work closely with NZDA / NZOHA / NZIDT to make this as attractive as it can be for their members; for each individual company I'd encourage you to get behind this both in terms of your direct financial support, and also by promoting this to your customers. If we can help to increase attendance for all three groups then we will be in really good position to seek further consolidation in future years.

If you do have any questions on this, feel free to contact any of the DIG board. Or come along to the AGM on the 20th November and we can discuss it together!

Contact [sandy.astridge@mtanz.org.nz](mailto:sandy.astridge@mtanz.org.nz) for further information.

Best regards

Nick

The logo for Ivoclar, featuring the word "ivoclar" in a lowercase, sans-serif font. The letter "i" is blue, and the remaining letters "voclar" are green.

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