How Dental Stem Cells Will Impact Our Future – Q&A with BioEden Executive, Tony Veverka

November 11, 2015 By [Cade Hildreth (CEO)](http://www.bioinformant.com/author/infobioinformant-com/)

***Interview:***  This is a question  and answer (Q&A) interview with Tony Veverka, Chief Group Executive of BioEden,  a global stem cell storage company with laboratories in the UK and USA and sales operations in 19 countries.  BioEden is the worlds first international biobank company to collect, assess and cryogenically store living stem cells from deciduous baby teeth.

**Question 1: How did the dental stem cell industry come into existence?**

**Tony Veverka:**  In 2003, dentist and desearcher Dr. Sontago Shi discovered stem cells within the pulp of his daughters naturally shed baby tooth.  He wrote about this, which caught the interest of a number of parties. By chance, he also met Mike Byrom, the current Chief Science Officer at BioEden, during a stem cell lecture tour in the U.S.  Mr. Byrom had read various articles about this discovery, but as a result of this meeting developed a commercial process for harvesting stem cells from teeth that was later commercialized into BioEden’s technologies. Therefore, BioEden became the worlds first dental pulp stem cell bank in 2006.  Since that time, the market has slowly gathered momentum, and other entrants have joined both the industry, both within the U.S., Europe and Asia.

**Question 2: How did you become involved with BioEden and dental stem cell biobanking?**

**Tony Veverka:**  As mentioned, Mr. Byrom founded BioEden in Austin, Texas, as a result of this development.  Today, BioEden operates in 25 countries and has members in over 60 countries.  I became involved with BioEden and dental stem cell banking around 2 years ago when I invested in the business and joined the board as CEO.  My background is a commercial one, having been a CEO/General Manager with a marketing background for a number of years, predominately in health care services.  BioEden interested me because I thought it was such a compelling proposition that has huge potential globally.

**Question 3: What are the advantages of dental stem cells relative to other stem cell types?**

**Tony Veverka:**  Stem cells harvested from the dental pulp within teeth have many advantages over other types of stem cells. They are not limited to the amount collected from the tooth, because they can be expanded in a laboratory or medical facility. They have the ability to ‘morph’ into many other cell types and in this regard have far greater potential application than most other cell types.  Cells harvested from baby teeth particularly are at their optimum best,  given that they have been harvested when young, vibrant and healthy, full of functionality.  Finally, harvesting from the tooth provides the only non-invasive method of collecting stem cells, as no medical or dental intervention is required as the tooth can be exfoliated naturally.

**Question 4: What do you see as the future or dental stem cells 5 to 10 years from now?**

**Tony Veverka:**  I am constantly asked, ‘When will a therapy for xyz become available?” If I had a crystal ball, I would purchase a winning lottery ticket. It is impossible to say when something will become available, because there are too many unknowns in the process and most of the unknown are outside of our sphere of influence. Regulatory considerations by country, funding issues, patent and other intellectual property rights, therapeutic partners, approval by insurance companies for treatment, and hundreds of other issues must all be addressed.  Regardless, I know that stem cells harvested from teeth are capable of amazing things, things that currently seem impossible to achieve. In this context I believe that we will see a continual string of new approved therapies for the treatment of conditions with the use of stem cells, including those harvested from teeth, over the next 10 years and beyond. People will become accustomed to their use and will look to stem cells as their treatment of choice for many conditions.

**Question 5: How are dental stem cells currently being explored in clinical trials?**

**Tony Veverka:**  There are a significant number of clinical trials taking place using tooth derived stem cells  –  I have listed some of them in this list of [peer-reviewed publications highlighting the use of dental pulp stem cells (DPSC)](http://www.bioinformant.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Publications-on-Therapy-DPSC-20151.pdf), although this is by no means an exhaustive list.

**Question 6: BioEden recently released a dental stem cell unit for use in treating a diabetic patient. Could you share more about this landmark event?**

**Tony Veverka:**  I’m including a [summary document about the treatment and outcome](http://www.bioinformant.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Diabetes-Mellitus-Patient-who-Received-a-Dental-Stem-Cell-Treatment.docx) for the first diabetic patient treated with dental stem cells stored by BioEden. It is the story of his recovery and improvement following treatment with his own cells.

**Question 7: What are advantages of storing dental stem cells with BioEden and what markets do you serve?**

**Tony Veverka:**  BioEden was the world’s first tooth cell bank, and is recognized and accepted, as the leading specialists in the field.  BioEden hold a patent on the process in the U.S. and has more samples under storage, by a significant margin, than any other provider.  Accordingly, BioEden has more experience and expertise with which to provide this service.  All samples are stored in duplicate in separate locations for the purpose of additional security and safety.  A member also knows that they are storing viable stem cells, because all samples are tested prior to cryopreservation to ensure functionality. Therefore, it is known that the material will be useful for therapeutic intervention should it be required in the future.

BioEden also has more pricing plans than any other provider, offering a greater degree of flexibility, ensuring that we can be true to our company mission of helping personalized stem cell therapy be affordable for all.  As noted earlier we operate in 25 countries.  We have laboratories in the US (Texas), Europe (UK) and Asia (Thailand).  In addition to these hubs our primary markets are in Latin American, Europe (where we have just announced a significant strategic alliance with the major medical group Medicover) and Asia (soon to be launching our service in India).