

NEWS RELEASE

University of Pretoria orthodontics registrars to be trained on the latest treatment techniques



Unveiling of the partnership plaque: Prof P Hlongwa (UP), Mr A Canfor-Duma (AT), Prof SL Shangase (UP), Dr J Tete (AT), Prof V Steenkamp (UP), Mr J Ferreira (AT) and Prof F Senkubuge (UP)

PRETORIA - The University of Pretoria has partnered with a Switzerland-based technology company, Align Technology, to train postgraduate students on the latest advances in digital orthodontic treatment.

The Align Academic Programme, will see the University's Master of Dentistry (MChD) Orthodontics registrars trained on the latest clear aligner treatment techniques.

"It's exciting that the University is the first in South Africa to train and teach this programme to the postgraduate students because Align Technology just launched their SA chapter in June 2023. This will have immense public benefit because this type of treatment is user friendly to patients as opposed to braces that are cemented to the teeth," said Phumzile Hlongwa, Professor and Head of Orthodontics at the University of Pretoria.

Align has developed an orthodontic technique which uses a series of clear, removable appliances that move teeth in small increments from their original state to a treated state, known as the Invisalign system.

“Unlike with braces, patients can remove the appliance and still brush their teeth,” Prof Hlongwa explained. “Align has also developed ClinCheck software, a proprietary system for treating malocclusions, or the misalignment of teeth, which depicts the patient’s tooth movement from the beginning stage to the final position.”

The Align Academic Programme consists of theoretical and practical sections which will equip registrars with the latest developments in clear aligner techniques without extra costs to the University or the registrars during this Align Education Programme.

“The programme is aligned with the University's vision of the 4th Industrial Revolution and the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and cutting-edge digital technology in teaching and learning,” said Prof Sindisiwe Londiwe Shangase, Chair of the School of Dentistry, University of Pretoria.

She added that the programme will also offer continuous education to University’s clinical teaching staff to keep them updated with latest clinical innovations.

Alex Cantor-Dumas, the 1st Vice President of Align Technology Africa said: “Align Technology Ltd is dedicated to improve dental excellence worldwide and is entering a very exciting next phase in its journey.”

“Our partnership with the University of Pretoria’s School of Dentistry will be pioneering the first of the Align Technology academic partnership programme, one that will begin to empower clinical professionals in Africa with the best in learning technology and innovations.”

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Media enquiries can be directed to Mr Sashlin Girraj - Public Relations & Events Manager

Email: sashlin.girraj@up.ac.za | Cell: +27(0)72 447 3784

ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

The University of Pretoria (UP) is one of the largest contact and residential universities in South Africa, with its administration offices located on its Hatfield Campus in Pretoria. This 115-year-old institution is also one of the largest producers of research in South Africa.

Spread over seven campuses, it has nine faculties and a business school, the Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS). It is the only university in the country with a Faculty of Veterinary Science, which is ranked the best in Africa. UP has 120 academic departments and 92 centres and institutes, accommodating more than 56 000 students and offering about 1 100 study programmes. It has the most academic staff with PhDs (70%), NRF-rated researchers (613).

The 2024 Times Higher Education subject rankings placed UP first in South Africa in the fields of Law, Veterinary Science, Accounting and Finance; Agriculture and Forestry and Electrical and Electronic Engineering. Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) ranked the University among the top five in Africa, as part of their

2024 World University Rankings (WUR). UP was the only South African university featured in the 2023 World University Rankings for Innovation (WURI), falling within in the 101-200 range of innovative universities.

For more information, please go to www.up.ac.za