

PRESS RELEASE

Tuesday, June 13, 2017

Contact lens world comes together in Liverpool

The past, present and future of contact lenses were put into sharp focus as practitioners from across the world with a “passion” for the subject came together for the industry’s leading flagship event.

Dry Eye, OrthoK and Myopia were high on the agenda as three days of sharing innovation, the latest research and best practice took place at the 40th anniversary conference of the British Contact Lens Association (BCLA).

Hundreds of delegates descended on Liverpool’s ACC for the 2017 for the organisation’s Clinical Conference and Exhibition in what represented a “comprehensive exchange of knowledge”.

Leading experts contributed to lectures, workshops and discussions all focused on driving up standards of care at the showcase event, which ran from Friday, 9 June, to Sunday, 11 June.

Cheryl Donnelly, chief executive of the BCLA, said: “The role of the BCLA is ensuring that everyone has access to the very latest research and technology to allow patients to receive the most up-to-date care available to them.

“Our 40th anniversary conference not only allowed us to facilitate a comprehensive exchange of knowledge, the conference also provided an opportunity to celebrate our proud 40-year anniversary. We have been at the heart of many advances in our industry over the last four decades and will keep to push over the next four decades as contact lenses continue to advance.”

Long-standing BCLA member and new president Keith Tempany said: “The sterling leadership of Brian Tompkins has seen the BCLA go from strength to strength, now it is my role to continue to strive for excellence.

“I share a passion for contact lenses with Brian and will take this forward with the aim of inspiring others to fit contact lenses for as many people as possible. I am also proud to lead a unique multi-disciplinary, multi-national and multi-cultural organisation.”

Leading lights in both myopia control and Dry Eye tackled both conditions with lectures on the latest thinking and research and expert panels on both subjects fielding questions.

With the topic of myopia management high on the agenda, the conference was the perfect platform for opinion leaders to showcase their current thinking and to reveal the latest research.

A range of new techniques were discussed, with detailed explanations of the apparent benefits of outdoor play and the impact this can have on slowing the rate of myopia in children.

The results of the 'three-year effectiveness of a Dual-Focus 1 Day Soft Contact Lens for Myopia Control' study were revealed while findings from the TFOS DEWS II™ study were also presented.

Associate Professor Jennifer Craig, from the University of Auckland in New Zealand teamed up with Professor James Wolffsohn to share the new definition and classification for dry eye disease developed as part of the project.

The first ever 'live' dry eye assessment was performed from the podium, giving delegates a unique insight into best practice.

A series of rapid-fire presentations enabled delegates to digest a wealth of information on a range of subjects, including contributions from members of the European Dry Eye Network (EDEN).

There was also a OrthoK Symposium with a full day and a half of lectures, workshops and live, hands-on, fitting routines with volunteer patients, providing novices with information and competencies to embark on 'in practice' routines.

More advanced practitioner benefited from pearls of wisdom and useful tips from globally-recognised leaders in their respective areas of expertise.

Dr Janis Orr of Aston University discussed the technique and its importance in myopia management and Professor Randy Kojima (Pacific University) highlighted the applications of corneal topography with interpretation of resulting imagery.

Professor Pauline Cho (Hong Kong Polytechnic University) presented on necessary safety and compliance routines and former BCLA President Shelly Bansal considered patient preparation and communication. Shelly will also discuss business and commercial applications.

Afternoon sessions were devoted to 'hands on' fitting of ortho K lenses, with a range of industry experts providing delegates with an opportunity to experience a variety of fitting methods for the ortho K neophyte.

Practitioners were able to observe, discuss and reflect on communication and expectations with 'real' patients then assessed the following day.

Speaker Professor Lyndon Jones, of the University of Waterloo, discussed the potential for contact lenses to be used for drug and cell delivery in a fascinating keynote presentation. Professor Jones concluding that: "Ocular drug delivery by contact lens is here to stay."

Successes and excellence in the industry were also celebrated through a series of awards presented throughout the three days, including:

BCLA Awards:

- Dry Eye Practitioner of the Year: Nick Dash
- Young UK Contact Lens Practitioner of the Year: Laura Reece:
- Industry Award: Paul C Nicolson
- President's Award: Kate Gifford

BCLA Medal for outstanding contribution to contact lenses.

- Professor Michel Guillon

BCLA Dallos Award

- Jaya Sowjana Siddireddy

BCLA Irving Fatt Award.

- Fabrizio Zeri

BCLA posters and The Diane Gould Photographic awards:

- Photographic winner: Antonio Calossi,
- Photographic first runner up: Susan Bowers
- Photographic second runner up: Boris Severinsky
- Posters winner: Debby Yeung
- Posters first runner up: Carlos Carpena-Torres
- Posters second runner up: Stefan Bandlitz

The International Association of Contact Lens Educators (IACLE) presented their Awards, delegate attendance supported by the BCLA:

- IACLE Travel Award: Kristina Mihić
- Contact Lens Educator of the Year Award, Americas: Professor Jan Bergmanson
- Contact Lens Educator of the Year Award, Europe/Africa-Middle East: Dr Yazan Gammoh
- Contact Lens Educator of the Year Award, Asia: Professor Koon-Ja Lee

For more information about the conference, visit www.bcla.org.uk.

Notes to editors

- For interviews, call Daniel Owens from Orange Juice Communications on 07909 916668 or email daniel.owens@ojpr.co.uk.