

Morale booster

A reminder of the basics that make up the foundation of our day-to-day workings in practice was just what the dentist ordered, according to Tomasz Skibinski

As a recent graduate and young dentist, it is imperceptibly difficult to see where and when one wants to turn in relation to advancing their career, especially in these times of austerity and so-called recession.

The basics of what is done in our practising lives, day in day out, are what we can build on to improve our successes as well as ultimately providing the best possible care for our patients. Of course as we all know, as long as our patients are happy, we too are happy.

The study day, based in the heart of London by Dawood and Tanner at The Medical Society of London, set out to cover these in a day titled, What's hot and what's not.

As an NHS practitioner, faced with the realities of a very poorly constructed and demoralising contract, the profession is in need of a morale boost.

The day began with recent developments at The Dawood & Tanner Practice in Wimpole St W1.

Following on from this, a short but succinct talk on advances in early detection and holistic treatment of oral cancer, with emphasis of the speaker's charity – dads@savingfaces.co.uk, was given by Professor Iain Hutchison. Although we would like to think we are experts in various fields of dentistry, oral cancer remains a topic that many practitioners (myself included) approach with caution and distance, in relation to diagnosis and management as well as dialogue with the patient. The converse, however, should be true. I certainly felt more confident following the seminar, and especially look forward to the charity information packs due to come to all dental practices across England soon.

Dr Susan Tanner followed with prosthetic planning for full arch implant treatment. With an array of fantastic pre- and post-operative photos, and all the stories behind them, as a young practitioner, it is great to see how we as practitioners can turn around people's looks, confidence and literally give them their smiles back – truly inspirational.

Paedodontics again for many practitioners is an area that we continue to be a little distanced from. Behaviour management of children, oral hygiene, diet advice and a fantastic overview of the most recent techniques & materials being used, as discussed by Dr. Sara Johnstone,



Mark Kent and Tom Bereznicki

provided a thorough albeit brief refresher of the basics of paediatric dentistry. It is remarkable how much one can, not necessarily forget, but “store away” as information, which we simply do not use on a day to day basis. A quick reminder of the basics from industry experts is a truly brilliant way of maintaining a firm foundation of knowledge which can then be built up on.

Tannaz Joorabchian, a hygienist and therapist at the practice, discussed the topic of optimal hygiene maintenance for implant patients – a key element in the maintenance of such restorations, and one that may be overlooked to a degree by practitioners. The role of the hygienist is critical in this field.

Endodontics - an incredibly technique sensitive and tricky for some to say the least, simplified by Dr Shannon Patel in the discussion regarding current concepts in endodontic practice. What was interesting to hear was that the crown down shaping technique has become the accepted gold standard, along with the use of hypochlorite for as long as 30 minutes to irrigate each canal! Patience truly is a virtue! A few interesting cases displayed radiographically highlighted where dentists continue to make mistakes in relation to access and canal location. The use of CBCT was discussed which inevitably will soon be an invaluable tool in achieving endodontic success, as practitioners will no longer have to work ‘blind’ or ‘by touch’ but will have an insider's view of even the most complex root canal systems.

Paradoxically tricky

Dr Andrew Dawood, discussing ‘simple’ implant treatment

seemed paradoxically tricky when discussing zygomatic implants. The thrust of his presentation was to show how using extraordinary technology, and carefully selected implants and prosthetic components he could make the prosthetic stages of treatment really straightforward. This was demonstrated by the cases presented that were all restored by his referring dentists. The recent advances in this field continue to fascinate me personally.

A series of talks on periodontal aesthetics and aesthetic single tooth and short span implant restorations, focusing on the anterior segments by Drs. Fiona MacKillop and Dr Tom Bereznicki respectively, reveal that in these fields advances as being gained exponentially, not necessarily through research in labs consisting of teams of several people, but through the ingenuity of certain individuals. The attention to detail highlighted in the creation of the gingival emergence profile to give a truly life like appearance in cases with a high lip line, brought to life further by some excellent photographs, resulted in restorations and associated mucosal arrangements, including life like gingival crevices and papillae that would fool anyone into believing that these were the patient's natural teeth.

Future concepts in oral surgery, particularly treatment of oral cancer with the photosensitive drug Foscan, discussed by Mr. Colin Hopper, although quite technical and falling on tired ears after a whole day of absorbing information, provided an insight into just that.

The final talk by Dr. Mark Kent brought to light the management side of practice. Theory done, now onto the administration. However, key elements relating



Fiona MacKillop



Andrew Dawood, Susan Tanner and Fiona MacKillop from left

to pricing, discussion with patients, taking the time to allow patients to feel at ease and think through their treatment options and finances provided what was essentially a patient's view of what we do. Quite interesting, as we seldom think of how we appear in the patient's eyes,

usually because we simply do not have the time.

Certainly, one can now reflect on how to improve the management of their practice, despite a ruthless economic climate, to ensure all the hard work put in by the whole dental team reaps rewards.

Tom Bereznicki graduated from Edinburgh Dental Hospital and School in 1976. He moved to London and, after various house surgeon appointments at Guy's Hospital and the Royal Dental Hospital, he entered general practice and started his own private practice in Queensgate, London, in 1982. His area of special interest is the creation and duplication of the created emergence profile in conventional and implant retained crown and bridgework. For more information, email tom@tombereznicki.co.uk or visit www.tom-bereznicki-queensgate-london.com. Tom will be joining the Dawood & Tanner Dental practice in Wimpole Street W1 as a restorative dentist in late autumn.