



IACLE members step up to the stage at Malaga 2013

IACLE played an active part in last month's Malaga 2013 event in Spain, which brought together over 300 eye care professionals from more than 40 countries.

Hosted by the European Academy of Optometry and Optics (EAOO) from 19th to 21st April, the event also incorporated meetings of the World Council of Optometry, European Council of Optometry and Optics, and Spanish General Council of Optometry.

Presentations highlighted the contrasting status of optometry and scope of practice around the world, and discussed the different approaches to meeting the challenges facing global optometry.

FIACLE Eef van der Worp delivered one of two keynote speeches at the EAOO conference, on fitting contact lenses to irregular corneas. He attributed the renewed interest in scleral lens fitting to improved manufacturing, better designs and materials, and a new understanding of ocular shape beyond the corneal borders.

At the IACLE Members' Meeting on the opening day, Eef discussed differences in contact lens education between the US and Europe. Having spent nearly 10 years based in Washington DC, he recently returned to the Netherlands where he is affiliated to the University of Maastricht.

During his time in the US, Eef had lectured at 11 optometry schools across North America. In education, there was increasing emphasis on medical topics and less attention to the technical side of contact

lenses, particularly RGP fitting. But US optometrists were generally more enthusiastic about scleral lens fitting than their European colleagues. 'In terms of science, there's a lot of good work in contact lenses in US schools but technical teaching is better in Europe,' he observed. Optometry education across Europe was very diverse, whereas North America was more uniform in contact lens education.



Eef, Judith and Abbas at the IACLE meeting

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Members' Meeting Malaga May 2013

EAME Regional President Judith Morris presented an update on IACLE's activities in the region, where it currently has 151 members. Priority countries were Russia, Germany and Poland and there was a need to attract more ophthalmologists to join in countries where contact lenses were predominantly fitted by this group. With FIACLE Caroline Christie (pictured), Judith presented a poster on the teaching and fitting of RGP lenses in 50 educational institutions in 15 countries across Europe. FIACLE Abbas Ali Yekta, Professor of Optometry at the Mashhad University of Medical Sciences, Iran attended the Members' Meeting and also presented a poster, on the epidemiology of eye disease in the elderly of Sari, Iran. Abbas reported that there were now four optometry schools in Iran and a PhD program had recently been established at Mashhad.



At the EAEO conference, IACLE President Dr Shehzad Naroo led a discussion on introducing specialist services, such as therapeutic prescribing, into routine practice.



Caroline Christie was among seven EAEO members awarded Academy Fellowship at the Malaga meeting, in recognition of her achievements in optometric education. IACLE member Andrea Müller-Treiber (2nd left) and FIACLE Rossella Fonte (3rd left) also received Academy Fellowship for their contribution to training and eye care provision in Switzerland and in Italy. Professor Brien Holden was named winner of the World Council of Optometry's Distinguished Service Award.

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