Education tools to enhance *contact lens teaching*

The need to impart students with clinical experience of contact lenses, constitutes, in the main, the major task which contact lens educators the world over, face today. That this can be taken head-on by the increased use of technology, was what speakers at the recent four-day Third IACLE World Congress, held at the University of Manchester, the UK, felt. In all 107 educators from 30 countries came together to share their experiences and learn about the role of classroom technology in shaping the future of contact lens education.

The educators were from all three of IACLE's global regions: Asia Pacific, Europe and Africa – Middle East and Americas. Representatives of The Association of Optometric Contact Lens Educators and British Universities Committee of Contact Lens Educators also participated in this event.

Senior industry figures from Congress Sponsors Alcon, Cooper Vision and Johnson & Johnson Vision Care, played an active, collaborative role at a special business session examining the role of educators in growing global contact lens penetration. Worldwide IACLE members also participated via a live online broadcast.

Virtual and augmented reality devices that could create authentic learning opportunities using computer simulations, were discussed. The University of Houston, USA, is already using a Simulation Lab to demonstrate refractive techniques to students, and in schools in China a virtual fitting centre is among the technology now in use.

In teaching, the iPad could be used to 'flip' the classroom, transform the learning space and create ePub content with rich media and interactive features. Learning management systems such as Blackboard, collaboration tool Nearpod and apps Explain Everything and Showbie were demonstrated.

At the end of the deliberations, when delegates were

WC3 delegates

asked: 'Will you make any changes to the way you teach contact lenses at your institution following your participation in Third IACLE World Congress?' almost all the delegates responded affirmatively. While many said that the most common changes they would undertake would be to introduce multimedia presentations, interactive lectures and pre-recorded sessions to their teaching, some said they would use technology for knowledge assessment and would attempt to move to paperless education while introducing evidence-based practice early in the syllabi.

Speaking on the occasion, IACLE President Dr Shehzad Naroo said, "The choice of topics at the Congress reflected education tools that will enhance the CL teaching experience for students the world over."

Educator Feedback

Rolando Rojas, Universidad Peruana de Los Andes in Lima, Perú commented: "The Congress marked a turning point in my thinking about education. I have learnt that the main role of an educator is to facilitate learning."

Henri Eek of Deltion College and Hogeschool Utrecht, The Netherlands, said: "The Congress made me think about considering the increased use of tablets or computers in our schools."

Dr Rajeswari Mahadevan, Assistant Professor, Elite School of Optometry in Chennai, said : "All the technology that we can use – I never knew so much existed for teaching purposes."

Assistant Professor of Optometry at a school at Deakin University in Australia, **Craig Woods** said: "The meeting exceeded my expectations."

Sponsoring companies

The sponsors of the Congress included Alcon, CooperVision and Johnson & Johnson Vision Care. Alcon, in the USA, provides innovative products that enhance quality of life by helping people worldwide see better. Cooper Vision is one of the world's leading manufacturers of soft contact lenses and related products and services, while Johnson & Johnson Vision Care is tasked with creating life-long solutions to vision care and has pioneered the world's first disposable soft contact lens.

Professor and Head of Optometry and Vision Science Department at Amity University Gurgaon Monica Chaudhry (left) and Professor Prema Chande, Principal of Lotus College of Optometry Mumbai at the event

Dr Rajeshwari Mahadevan (left) Assistant Professor at Elite School of Optometry with IACLE Asia Pacific Contact Lens Educator of the Year Prof Chaudhry