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## FIACLEs play key role in ‘Advancing Eyecare’ in Africa

From the ocular effects of the Ebola virus to meeting the needs of presbyopes, the Eye Focus Africa conference (6-8 September) covered a wide range of topics. FIACLEs David Berkow from Israel and Nick Rumney from the UK were among 400 delegates taking part and sent this report



‘Advancing Eyecare’ was the theme for this year’s Eye Focus Africa conference organised by the [South African Optometric Association](#). The aim was to address topical, controversial and practical issues encountered in daily practice. The program encompassed both clinical and practice management related sessions.

The conference took place at Gallagher Convention Centre near Johannesburg over three days. IACLE was allocated a slot on the final day in order to give a presentation.

FIACLE **David Berkow** (pictured right) explained to an audience of about 50 delegates what IACLE is all about, its mission and what it offers to its members. He described all the benefits of being a member of IACLE and how to join. This was a successful IACLE meeting which hopefully will bring more new members on board.

David was also a keynote speaker at the conference and delivered four other presentations. ‘Eyes on Ebola’ explained in depth the disease, its effect on the eye and how to try to avoid being affected. A second presentation was entitled ‘Office hygiene – spread the word not the germs’.

### Contact lens topics

The two contact lens related presentations were on dry eye and on specialty contact lens fitting. ‘Dry eye – causes and reasons for dry eye disease (DED)’ examined ways to diagnose the disease using instrumentation, observation and questionnaires. David then discussed how to treat DED depending on the causes.

‘Soft contact lenses for keratoconus and irregular corneas’ was given on behalf of Soflex (a contact lens company in Israel that, among other activities, produces specialty contact lenses both for the local market and also for export). The lens described was a soft contact lens which is thicker in the centre and has a thinner skirt in the periphery. The lens has pressure balancing holes which aid in stabilization, improve oxygen permeability and avoid air bubbles beneath the lens. David explained how to fit the lens using either curvature or sag.

## Demodex to diabetes

FIACLE **Nick Rumney** (pictured below second right) delivered a lecture and workshops on the benefits of optical coherence tomography (OCT). From the contact lens perspective, he talked about the challenges of fulfilling the needs of presbyopic patients by understanding the perspectives brought by different generations, in a presentation entitled 'Presbyopia why me?' His closing presentation was 'The mites in your eyes', discussing the diagnostic and treatment challenges of ophthalmic Demodex.



For Nick, the highlight of the conference was meeting keynote speaker **Professor Tim Noakes** (pictured above left). Tim is an iconoclastic South African doctor who has challenged the orthodoxy of Western medicine surrounding the worldwide epidemic of diabetes. Professor Noakes is an advocate of the high fat, low carbohydrate diet that it is claimed can alter and, in fact, reverse the insulin resistance that lies at the heart of Type 2 diabetes.

In summary, this was an enjoyable conference, the program was well organized and very informative.

- Find more information on Eye Focus Africa [here](#).