

## BCLA looks to the future as it celebrates the past

The latest approaches to managing myopia and dry eye were among the highlights as the British Contact Lens Association held its 40<sup>th</sup> Clinical Conference in Liverpool, UK (9-11 June). IACLE played a central role in the meeting, as Alison Ewbank and Dr Gina Sorbara report



The past, present and future of contact lenses were put into sharp focus as more than 1,000 practitioners and researchers from across the world gathered in Liverpool, UK for the BCLA's 40<sup>th</sup> Clinical Conference & Exhibition. Dry eye, myopia control and new applications for contact lenses were high on the agenda over three days of education and research sessions.



This year marked a very successful participation at BCLA for IACLE, its members and Fellows, including a well attended Education Day, jointly organized with the British Universities Committee of Contact Lens Educators (BUCCLE) held the preceding day (8 June).

### Emerging technologies

A special BCLA session on extending contact lens applications beyond the correction of refractive error was facilitated by IACLE Assistant Secretary **Professor Philip Morgan** (University of Manchester, UK). To open the session, industry representatives and academics lined up to describe new products in prospect:

- **Dr George Yao** (Alcon) reported that Alcon and Google had joined up to create a 'smart lens' that had a biosensor for monitoring sugar levels in the tear film in patients with diabetes. The company was also developing a smart lens for presbyopia that incorporated electrical accommodation features.
- **Xiao-Yu Song** (Johnson & Johnson Vision Care) described various novel approaches: an 'active contact lens' for anti-allergy (lens and eye drops combined), adaptive optics lenses for glare and eyestrain relief, light-enabled 3D printed lenses that changed with UV light, and smart accommodating lenses for presbyopia.

- **David Bailey** (Sensomed) reviewed the Triggerfish device for monitoring glaucoma (IOP) throughout the day and night. The lens incorporated a strain gauge that monitored changes in ocular volume due to tissue elasticity. The system could predict the time course of disease and also distinguish normal pressure from normal tension glaucoma.
- **Dr Stephen Hicks** (OxSight, University of Oxford) was investigating augmented vision for blind individuals. An example was an implanted electronic infra-red camera that worked in the dark. Smart spectacles and contact lenses with embedded electronics to form a digital image were being developed.
- Augmented reality in the workplace and information augmentation while driving were other applications in prospect, described by **Dr Steve Newman** (Menicon) and FIAACLE **Professor James Wolffsohn** (Aston University, UK).

### Managing myopia: three-year findings

The prevalence of myopia is projected to increase from approximately 2bn people worldwide in 2010 to almost 5bn in 2050, bringing with it ocular health challenges. BCLA 2017 marked the release of three-year results with the CooperVision MiSight 1 day dual-focus myopia control contact lens for reducing the rate of juvenile-onset myopia.

**Paul Chamberlain** (CooperVision) described a prospective, multi-center, double-masked, randomized study that enrolled 144 myopic children aged 8-12 years from Singapore, Canada, England and Portugal. At three years, the lens was effective in slowing myopia progression: by 59% as measured by mean cycloplegic spherical equivalent and 52% as measured by mean axial elongation of the eye, when compared to children in a control group wearing a single-vision daily disposable contact lens.



### Managing dry eye: DEWS II results awaited

Dry eye disease and management was the other key theme throughout this year's BCLA Conference, filling the first day of the program and more. Chair of the BCLA's Academic Committee, Professor Wolffsohn and **Dr Jennifer Craig** (University of Auckland, New Zealand) anticipated the findings of the [Tear Film & Ocular Surface Society's DEWS II Report](#) with discussion of the [new definition of dry eye](#) and a diagnosis of dry eye conducted live on stage.

FIAACLE **Professor Lyndon Jones** (University of Waterloo, Canada) reviewed the evidence for

management strategies for dry eye. Early-stage researchers from the European Dry Eye Network (EDEN) project then described their latest findings. In the BCLA Medal Address, **Professor Michel Guillon** (pictured above, Ocular Technology Group) presented his work on tear kinetics in contact lens-induced dry eye. IACLE member **Dr Christine Purslow** (Thea Pharmaceuticals) and FIAACLE **Sebastian Marx** (University of Applied Sciences Jena) were among other speakers on dry eye topics.

Following the conference, the BCLA announced a new CET-accredited program that would focus on clinical skills for Ocular Surface Health (OSH) and Dry Eye, allowing BCLA members to gain CET points while working towards a Dry Eye Certificate or a higher level to lead to a BCLA Fellowship.

## IACLE highlights

Elsewhere on the program, IACLE members and Fellows took to the stage to chair sessions and deliver keynote addresses, lectures and workshops. Highlights of IACLE involvement included:

- IACLE President **Dr Shehzad Naroo**, Editor-in-Chief of the BCLA's journal [Contact Lens & Anterior Eye](#), reviewed the 'Top 10 Posters to see before you drop'. Shehzad also introduced a session on 'Tears to cash flow', discussing the scale of the dry eye problem among the UK population.
- FIACLE **Dr Fabrizio Zeri** (Aston University, UK) received the BCLA Irving Fatt 2017 Award for his study: Does monovision affect eye movement pattern during reading? Fabrizio was presented with the award by incoming BCLA President **Keith Tempany** (pictured, far right).
- FIACLEs **Professor Lyndon Jones** and **Dr Eef van der Worp** were among this year's keynote speakers, alongside Dr Jennifer Craig and BCLA Medallist Professor Michel Guillon.
- The keynote address from **Lyndon** (right) posed the question: Therapeutic contact lenses for drug and cell delivery: dream or reality? One of the biggest opportunities ahead was the development of specialized contact lenses for this purpose, especially for agents used to treat ocular surface-related disease, he said.
- In his keynote, **Eef** (right) spoke about putting the expertise back in to soft lens fitting. He argued that it was time to move away from base curve values and central keratometry readings in soft lens fitting.
- IACLE Treasurer **Dr ETTY BITTON** (University of Montreal, Canada) co-presented a clinical workshop with Dr Craig on anterior blepharitis secondary to demodex. The workshop topic for IACLE member **Dr Giancarlo Montani** (University of Salento, Italy) was computer vision syndrome and digital eye strain with contact lenses.
- FIACLE **Antonio Calossi** (University of Florence, Italy) was the overall winner in the Diane Gould Photographic Awards. **Debby Yeung** and IACLE Vice President **Dr Gina Sorbara** took first prize in the poster competition and FIACLE **Dr Stefan Bandlitz** (Cologne School of Optometry, Germany) was a runner-up.
- And IACLE member **Manbir Nagra** received one of the 18 new BCLA Fellowships awarded during the conference and presented at the Awards Dinner.





### Rewarding achievement

The BCLA Conference also marked the 2017 IACLE Contact Lens Educator of the Year Awards ceremony to recognise and reward achievement in contact lens education worldwide, supported by the BCLA and sponsored by CooperVision.

Acknowledged at the ceremony was IACLE Travel Award recipient **Kristina Mihic** from the University of Applied Sciences Velika Gorica, Croatia (pictured left) who received her certificate from Shehzad.

The BCLA also introduced new categories of award to be presented at its dinner. The President's Award went to Australian FICLÉ **Kate Gifford**, and **Laura Reece** – colleague of FICLÉ Nick Rumney in his Hereford practice in the UK – was awarded Young Contact Lens Practitioner of the Year.

### The next four decades

Commenting after the event, **Cheryl Donnelly** (pictured below right), chief executive of the BCLA, said: 'Our 40th anniversary conference not only allowed us to facilitate a comprehensive exchange of knowledge, but also provided an opportunity to celebrate our proud 40-year history. We have been at the heart of many advances in our industry over the past four decades and will keep pushing over the next four decades as contact lenses continue to advance.'

New BCLA President Keith Tempany added: 'The sterling leadership of [outgoing president] 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.'

- For more information on the BCLA click [here](#) and find paper, poster and workshop abstracts from the 40<sup>th</sup> Clinical Conference [here](#).

