



June 2019

## IACLE makes its mark at BCLA 2019 to celebrate 40th year

IACLE enjoyed a high profile throughout the British Contact Lens Association Clinical Conference and made a major contribution to this successful event, as Alison Ewbank reports



**IACLE member Dr Mohammad Abahussin (left) from Saudi Arabia made his mark on the time wall at the association's exhibition booth. IACLE President Dr Shehzad Naroo and Vice President Professor Philip Morgan (right) cut an anniversary cake at the 40th reception**

IACLE celebrated 40 years of 'Exceptional Education. Exponential Impact' at the British Contact Lens Association Clinical Conference in Manchester, UK (30 May – 2 June). Following on from IACLE/BUCCLE Education Day (29 May), BCLA 2019 saw the Executive Board, staff, Fellows and members involved throughout the program, as they chaired sessions, joined panel discussions, and delivered papers, posters and workshops.

More than 100 delegates took up the invitation to 'Make Your Mark' at the IACLE exhibition booth on a time wall of milestones in the association's history. Visitors also contributed ideas for the future of contact lens education. The highlight of IACLE's presence was a 40th Anniversary celebration for 70 members and guests, hosted at the exhibition booth by President **Dr Shehzad Naroo** and Vice President **Professor Philip Morgan** of the University of Manchester.

### Contact lenses around the world

40th Anniversary celebrations opened with a presentation from Shehzad who chaired the International Perspectives session. He described the changing face of contact lens education and outlined the association's achievements during its first 40 years. Over four decades, IACLE had brought together a total of 2,500 members in 91 countries, who had instilled their knowledge to as many as 170,000 students. IACLE estimates that more than 250 million contact lens wearers have experienced the life-changing benefits of contact lenses as a result.



The session featured reports on contact lens developments around the world. Director of Educational Programs **Nilesh Thite** (India) presented a survey of perceived opportunities and threats to contact lens practice in India. Among 490 eye care practitioners (ECPs), the top two opportunities were seen as prescribing daily disposables for occasional wear, and cosmetic lenses. Perceived threats were the lack of regulation of contact lens practice and the online availability of lenses without a validated prescription.

**Dr Gary Orsborn** (USA) described [a study](#) of ECP attitudes to daily disposable silicone hydrogel (DD SiH) lenses. A total of 300 ECPs across three countries – the US, UK and Japan – shared strong beliefs and perceptions about the benefits of DD SiHs for their patients. Asked to choose only one type of contact lens to fit on their patients, nearly nine in 10 (88%) said DD SiHs would be their choice.

According to FIACLE **Dr Fabrizio Zeri** (Italy), there was a ‘mismatch’ between ECPs’ use of and attitudes to social media and that of their patients. Funded by industry body Assottica, a survey of 461 ECPs and 1,000 ametropes found eight in 10 ECPs believe the main reason patients buy lenses via the internet is cost, but only half of contact lens wearers purchasing online cite cost as the reason. ECPs still had a major role to play the decision of ametropes to use contact lenses, he said.

**Dr Dimitra Makrynioti** (Greece) conducted the first study of compliance in Greek contact lens users. Nine in 10 of the 240 users surveyed bought their lenses from an ECP and 9% bought online. Non-compliant behaviours included cleaning lenses with tap water (13%), and sleeping/napping (23%) or swimming (36%) with lenses on. Users needed more encouragement to adopt healthy habits.

IACLE member **Emmanuel Kobia-Acquah** (Ghana) (pictured top right at a workshop) reported that contact lens practice in his country was relatively new, with few ECPs currently fitting lenses. Of 117 records reviewed from 2013-2016, nearly a third (29%) reported complications associated with contact lens wear, principally papillary conjunctivitis (41%) and corneal infiltrates (29%). Since a third of reported complications (27%) were due to patient negligence, more emphasis on patient education was needed during fitting.



‘Build your brand in social media’ urged **Dr Bridgitte Shen Lee** (USA). Her advice was to use the right hashtags (such as #eyecare and #optometry), create engaging content and ‘tell your story’.

### **This year’s highlights**

Elsewhere on the program, IACLE educators were busy participating in some of the key sessions at the conference. Themes this year were particularly around **myopia control**, as well as **contact lens comfort, dry eye** and **specialty lens practice**. Among new research findings presented during Friday’s myopia sessions were five-year findings with myopia control soft lenses, and soon-to-be-published results with extended depth of focus (EDOF) lenses. **Dr Nicole Carnt** (Australia) delivered the Irving Fatt Memorial Lecture on Acanthamoeba keratitis.

Highlights of IACLE involvement included:

- FIACLE **Professor Lyndon Jones** (Canada) (pictured right) presented the BCLA Medal Address and received his award from outgoing BCLA President **Professor Sunil Shah**. Lyndon also took part in the session on contact lens prescribing, alongside former IACLE President **Professor Deborah Sweeney** (Australia), the tear film session and Dry Eye Tech Live.



- **Our President and Vice President** were busy throughout the three days. Shehzad spoke on 'Transient effects of smoking on ocular health' and judged the research posters. In his role as Editor of the BCLA journal, *Contact Lens and Anterior Eye*, he chaired the editorial panel meeting. Phil led sessions on contact lens comfort, the tear film, and free papers on material topics, as well as taking part in the Disruptive Clinical Practice session and myopia track.

- Treasurer **Dr Etty Bitton** (Canada) (pictured right) contributed to the free papers on dry eye, and joined a panel discussion with IACLE member **Dr Jennifer Craig** (New Zealand). Etty co-hosted a workshop on 'Diagnosing and managing Demodex blepharitis'. Jenni was also involved in workshops, lectures and interactive sessions.



- FIACLE **Dr Eef can der Worp** (Netherlands) (pictured left) chaired a session of free papers on specialty lenses and a Mini Global Specialty Lens Symposium, as well as giving three presentations.

- FIACLE **Professor James Wolffsohn** (UK), chaired a session of free papers on presbyopia, and delivered a paper in the pathology session. James was also involved in Dry Eye Tech Live, Controversies in Optimising the Ocular Surface, and Disruptive Clinical Practice. He examined candidates for the Dry Eye Certificate and was made an inaugural BCLA Dry Eye Fellow.
- 2018 IACLE Travel Award winner **Ahmed Sherry** (Lebanon) and 2017 IACLE Travel Award winner **Kristina Mihalj** (Croatia and UK) both presented their research work as free papers.
- FIACLEs **Neil Retallic** (UK), **Dr Christine Purslow** (UK), **Sebastian Marx** (Germany), **Renee Reeder** (USA) and **Stefan Bandlitz** (Germany) all presented lectures or workshops, or chaired sessions. Educator Members also actively participated throughout the three days of the conference, while Associate Members were involved in industry partner sessions. And IACLE member **Giancarlo Montani** (Italy) delivered a total of four presentations.

### Celebrating success

The 2019 IACLE Contact Lens Educators of the Year stepped up to the stage at the IACLE Awards Presentation in the main auditorium. Winners received their certificates from **Dr Gary Orsborn**, Vice President of Global Professional & Clinical Affairs at CooperVision, sponsor of the Educator Awards.



Also receiving his award from outgoing BCLA President **Professor Sunil Shah** was one of five IACLE Travel Award winners for 2019, **Joseph Afonne** from Mzuzu University in Malawi. The annual Travel Awards are funded by IACLE and all its corporate sponsors. All awards were supported by the BCLA.



**Pictured (left to right) at the IACLE Awards presentation are: President Dr Shehzad Naroo, Dr Fabrizio Zeri, Professor Craig Woods, Joseph Afonne, Dr Rubén Velázquez, outgoing BCLA President Professor Sunil Shah and Dr Gary Orsborn, Vice President of Global Professional & Clinical Affairs at CooperVision**

Among BCLA awards presented at the Gala Dinner, six people received a special recognition of 'BCLA Dry Eye Fellowship' including Professor Lyndon Jones, Dr Jennifer Craig and Professor James Wolffsohn. Dr ETTY Bitton was awarded 'BCLA Certificate in Management of Dry Eye & Contact Lens Retention'.

Sunil Shah officially handed over his chain of office to Alcon's **Jonathon Bench** (pictured below center). Summing up BCLA 2019, Sunil said: 'This conference was a truly global gathering featuring the very best speakers on the subjects that matter most to 21st century eye care professionals. To see so many countries from around the world represented in both delegates and speakers proved the enduring international appeal of the BCLA.'

Alcon and CooperVision were Partner Sponsors and Johnson & Johnson Vision was Platinum Sponsor. Gold Sponsors were Menicon and SEED with Ultravision, and Technology Sponsor Topcon.

IACLE's 40th anniversary events now move on to the Asia Pacific Optometric Congress (APOC) in Manila, Philippines (17-20 June). Celebrations will be held at two further major international meetings during 2019: the Colegio Federación Colombiana de Optómetras (FEDOPTO) Congress in Bogotá, Colombia (8-10 August), and Academy 2019 and the 3rd World Congress of Optometry in Orlando, Florida, USA (23-27 October).

