

Getting up close and personal at BSPD's 2017 conference

ELIZABETH WILLASEY, JUDI HUMPHREYS and LAURA GARTSHORE report on their experience of this year's BSPD conference – by all accounts a dynamic and inspirational event...

CREATIVE Collaboration was the theme of BSPD's 2017 conference and for the first time the dynamic programme was available to delegates via an app. Using mobile phones, delegates could create a personalised conference agenda, take notes, and engage directly with speakers.

The conference kicked off with a study day, hosted by Teachers' Branch and organised by Branch Chair, Laura Gartshore. The topical focus to the morning session was the influence of social media in dentistry. Ben Underwood, a GDP based in Yorkshire, presented his novel Brush DJ app, which has successfully been introduced to initiate positive behaviour change in tooth brushing practice. Professor Kevin O'Brien, gave an enlightening presentation describing the establishment of his influential evidence-based orthodontic blog (kevinobrienorthoblog.com). The blog is viewed 7,000 times a week, and recently ignited a lively discussion about 24 month braces. Other speakers discussed the importance of online professionalism and the role of social media in the NHS.

Innovation in dental education was the focus of the afternoon session. The University of Liverpool's Professor Callum Youngson discussed the future of dental education, complementing Professor Luke Dawson's presentation which described the design of new curricula. The self-efficacy and preparedness of today's dental graduates was discussed. Delegates were asked to consider whether current assessment methods can be a barrier to successful professional development, and to consider limitations of current methods that encourage undergraduates to count the number of treatment procedures completed to demonstrate competency.

Collette Balmer chaired the final, interactive, session "Mind the (Soft) Gaps". Sarah McKernon discussed the importance of non-technical skills in dentistry, and Ayisha Davies-House considered the impact of generational theory on perceptions of professionalism.

The main conference was opened the following day by Siobhan Barry, Conference Chair. An inspiring morning session included presentations from Professor Marie-Therese Hosey, Kings College London, who emphasised the importance of capturing teachable moments' to help to reduce the incidence of early childhood caries. Sondas Albadri and Yang See Chau, University of Liverpool, informed delegates of the progress and work of the Northern Alliance Group - established between members of the Paediatric Dentistry teams of Liverpool, Sheffield, Manchester and latterly Newcastle, to share best clinical practice and collaborate on multi-centre clinical governance projects.

This was followed by four presentations delivered by members of UK cleft networks about the current challenges of multidisciplinary management of children

with cleft disorders. All highlighted the desire and merit of a paediatric dentistry specialist being a key member of these teams.

Wednesday evening saw 2017's Angel of the North Quiz. One of the more challenging activities involved each team being armed with tissue paper, balloons, card and feathers and competing to construct the best bee, the symbol of Manchester's industrial past.

Thursday started with hot filled rolls and networking opportunities for colleagues attending the Academic Breakfast. For early risers there was also opportunity to experience Tai Chi in the beautiful surroundings of Salford Quays.

The first session of the morning saw talks from esteemed medical colleagues in the areas of paediatric bone disorders, inherited metabolic disease and paediatric immunology. Professor Zulf Mughal explored the uses of bisphosphonates in children with osteogenesis imperfecta and how that may alter dental management and suggests we apply the same cautions as used with adult patients when extracting teeth.

Joanne Taylor from charity The Climb gave a passionate talk to open the second session. This explored the work of the charity, which offers support for those living with extremely rare diagnoses of inherited metabolic disorders, and the opportunity to connect with other families in the same situation.

Sarah Vince-Cain from CHAMP followed, outlining her work in producing a Manchester wide digital BMI growth chart for primary aged children. This interactive screening tool can be used by parents, schools and health professionals to monitor children's BMI to tackle childhood obesity. It is hoped that the information will empower families to make changes to their lifestyle.

In the afternoon, the presentations for clinical governance and poster prizes took place, show casing the expertise, innovation and collaborative approaches used by our colleagues when providing treatment for children.

The conference dinner was held at the impressive Imperial War Museum North, opposite the Lowry, and made a striking venue for celebrating the victors from the prize categories – Lucy Risdale from Birmingham Community Healthcare for Clinical Governance; Clement Seeballuck from Dundee Dental School & Hospital for best Poster Presentation; Rebecca Knapp from Sheffield School of Clinical Dentistry for the Research Prize; and Sarah Jane Snape from the Royal Manchester Children's Hospital for the Clinical Prize. The night culminated in a rousing chorus of 'don't look back in anger' on the dance floor, celebrating the city of Manchester and remembering those affected by the tragic events earlier this year.

Ingrid Perry from Teeth Team winner of BSPD's first Outstanding Innovation award kicked off the final day of the 2017 conference, reinforcing how effective



community based prevention strategies can be. Margie Taylor, Chief Dental Officer (CDO) for Scotland, echoed this, highlighting the effectiveness of Scotland's Childsmile Programme, but indicating that health inequality is still prevalent. Colette Bridgeman, CDO for Wales, highlighted the importance of remunerating GDPs for providing advice on prevention and brought welcome news of an expanding speciality presence in Wales, with two new consultant and two new training posts. Professor Sara Hurley, CDO for England, sang the praises of Managed Clinical Networks for encouraging collaboration and innovation within paediatric dentistry and the importance of an integrated health and social care approach.

After the break Richard Valle-Jones and Rachel Isba shared news of their joint venture in North Manchester to join up primary care dentistry and secondary care medicine, by ensuring an acute referral pathway for those children attending A&E with dental pain. The conference closed with Nicola Innes presenting an update on new research projects and the Fiction trial, with published results expected in time for

BSPD 2018 in Dundee. We look forward to another thought-provoking conference, striving to raise the profile of children in dentistry. ■

About the authors

Laura Gartshore (centre) is Specialist & Clinical Lecturer in Paediatric Dentistry, Liverpool. Elizabeth Willasey (left) is a Clinical Lecturer in Paediatric Dentistry, Liverpool and Judi Humphreys, right, is an NIHR Academic Clinical Fellow in Paediatric Dentistry.

