The British Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry (BACD) holds an annual conference towards the end of each year, designed to facilitate the advancement of knowledge for all attendees. With international experts giving talks on a wide range of topics, delegates are able to learn about the latest techniques, materials and procedures from those at the forefront of aesthetic dentistry.

In November this year, the many acclaimed speakers attending the conference will include Dr Julian Caplan BDS, President-Elect of the BACD who will be presenting on the subjects of Photography and Accreditation. In this interview, Dr Caplan outlines what delegates can expect from his speeches at the BACD conference.

“I will be giving two lectures at the conference, one on photography and the other regarding accreditation,” says Dr Caplan. “The photographic talk will combine a presentation on the ‘nuts and bolts’ of dental photography with a demonstration of the recommended cameras, involving plenty of hands-on opportunities. The accreditation seminar will be a workshop to help aspiring examinees with their cases.”

In his first lecture, Dr Caplan will explain the significance of a good knowledge base when using photography to enhance your skills. “Photography is an important part of my work,” says Dr Caplan. “The ability to produce clear photographic records of patients before and after treatment, benefits dentists in multiple ways. For legal reasons, photographic proof accompanied by good X-rays, study models and concise clinical notes, are essential cosmetic dentistry, especially in the litigious society we live in. As some patients have short-term memory of their original smile, initial pre-treatment photographs can be the proof you need to show that you have not moved their centre line, providing assurance of the quality of your work. Though of course this should be mentioned at the original treatment plan presentation.

“Photography also offers invaluable assistance to accurate treatment planning of cases. Photographs greatly aid the dentist when establishing what it actually is making the smile unattractive, and so help when deciding what needs to be changed and what type of treatment would be most suitable. Dentists are often too focused on teeth and not focused enough on gingivae. The photographic shots that I will be talking about will help the dentist...
see how the problem lies with the 'pink' in the smile, rather than just the 'white.'

“Another area essential for dentists to excel in is communication. Affecting everything from informed consent to treatment explanations, these visual aids can significantly enhance patient understanding. You could be the best clinician in the world, but if your patient does not appreciate why they need certain procedures to achieve a beautiful smile, they will not agree to them.”

In order to develop your career and improve the standard of service you offer, it is important to assess and evaluate your own work. Dr Caplan believes that photographs greatly enhance records and can help when you are evaluating your own previous work. “Adding photographs to your patient records is a big positive for self assessment, as you can see the good and the bad of each case, and the immense improvement between cases will be highlighted.”

At the BACD conference, speakers will also address current affairs within the dental industry, and offer their opinion and words of advice to dentists being affected by them. Dr Caplan’s second lecture will address the issues concerning the requirements necessary to practice certain areas of dentistry, as well as offering guidance. “The main issue that I am concerned about is the increasing effect that the CQC policies are having on our profession,” he says. “Although there are obviously definite positives, I regularly speak to diligent, caring clinicians who are scared of what the CQC might do to them, compelling them to invest ridiculous amounts of money on practice improvements. Recent changes have come at a time when practices are facing financial difficulties, and the way the CQC has communicated these should have been handled with the present economic climate in mind.”

When discussing where the inspiration to speak at the BACD conference comes from, he speaks very highly of the people he has met in previous years. “The delegates who attend the annual conference are my type of people – positive thinkers who are there to improve themselves. Every year I meet new people and make new friends, and I am inspired by each of them. I feel honoured to speak at such a conference, but I actually gain far more by listening to others.”

“For this reason, the main thing I would like delegates to gain from my speeches, is the motivation to take action. My goal is for dental professionals to return to their practices and either start taking photographs or improve their technique to enhance their work, and begin the accreditation process.”

BACD membership offers both accreditation and educational opportunities, giving you the means to develop your skills and knowledge with some of the most experienced professionals in their separate fields. According to Dr Caplan, “The BACD provides excellent study groups, courses and, in my view, the best annual conference available.”

The annual conference provides easy access to the advice you need to maintain and expand your practice, as well as information on new clinical techniques. For more information on any of the discussed topic, this year’s event will be held 22nd-24th November at the Manchester Central Convention Complex.

Committed to excellence in cosmetic dentistry, the BACD helps dental professionals keep up-to-date with the latest trends in aesthetics, and ensure they offer their patients the best care possible.

For further enquirers about the British Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry visit www.bacd.com, email Suzy Rowlands at suzy@bacd.com or call 0207 612 4166.