Picture perfect for NOW launch

The British Orthodontic Society launched the first ever National Orthodontic Week last week in London Dental Tribune was there.

It’s not the worst start to the week when you get to spend it in the calm surroundings of the National Portrait Gallery in London’s Trafalgar Square, looking at some of the most famous faces in the 20th Century photographed by Irving Penn. This is where I found myself at the launch of National Orthodontic Week, the brainchild of the British Orthodontic Society.

This event, newly launched for 2010, is aiming to raise the awareness of the benefits of orthodontics to the public and highlight the options available to patients.

NOW was launched in a presentation given by BOS chair Nigel Harradine, where he likened the importance of the face in portraits to the fascination of orthodontists in aspects of the face. One of Penn’s most famous photos was of Picasso, and Dr Harradine used a famous quote of Picasso’s, where he said “Photographers, along with dentists, are the two professions never satisfied with what they do. Every dentist would like to be a doctor and inside every photographer is a painter trying to get out!”

Nigel took the quote very tongue in cheek – as he said he was very proud to be a dentist and an orthodontist and wouldn’t want to be doing anything else – and his lively style kept the audience amused as he detailed what NOW had been established to achieve. He showed some case presentations of how orthodontics had been able to change not just the dentition and the facial shape of his patients, but their self-esteem and quality of life. This, he said, was one of the most fundamental aspects of orthodontic treatment – it was not just about the physical benefits, rather the effect of treatment on the psychology of patients that mattered.

One of the main focus points of the NOW campaign is the website (www.nowsmile.org). Nigel gave a quick tour of the site and recommended the use of it for both patients and practitioners. Its bright colours and easy navigation and apparel available to promote the event.

According to the survey, Nigel said: “We already had anecdotal evidence from orthodontists who are experiencing a significant increase in enquiries from adults who may not have had an opportunity to correct their bite and their smile earlier in life. This reflects both a change in attitude towards orthodontic treatment and recent advances in treatment techniques”.

Nigel mentioned that many orthodontic practices had wholeheartedly taken up the mantle of NOW, with fundraising and awareness campaigns in their practices as well as purchasing some of the merchandising and apparel available to promote the event.

Top: NOW poster; Bottom left: Guest attend the launch; Bottom right: Dr Nigel Harradine

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National Orthodontic Week ran from 22-28 March and to find out more visit www.nowsmile.org or www.bos.org.uk.