Spring forward

BOS members Fiona Ryan and Zahra Sheriteh report on the recent British Orthodontic Society’s spring Meeting in Dublin

The two-day meeting was held in Dublin.

The conference was held in the Royal College of Surgeons of Ireland’s original building, which is over 200 years old, on the corner of St Stephen’s Green in the heart of Dublin. Following lunch, BOS Chairman Peter McCallum, opened the proceedings with the usual initial tailoring to the format of the day, his introduction setting the stage for many joint ventures between the two societies.

Michael Ryan, Chairman of the OSI, chaired the afternoon session, which was a fascinating insight into the relative strengths and weaknesses of the Invisalign and Incognito appliances.

Lingual had arrived! With Dirk Wiechmann, who made an excellent start to the Friday afternoon session, presenting ‘Lingual Orthodontics: the latest history’.

The most recent advancement in laboratory manufacturing of Incognito, developed by the speaker, has resulted in a custom-made appliance which is not only more comfortable for the patient but also boasts accurate torque expansion. The results from individualised archwires as well as cast gold brackets with precise slot dimensions were impressive.

A reference was made to a recent yet unpublished multicentre randomised controlled trial, which concluded that there was a reduced rate of decalcification in patients following treatment with Incognito compared to labial appliances.

Invisalign – a detailed overview

This was followed by a detailed overview of Invisalign by Peter Huntley. He was interesting to note that this appliance, introduced in the United Kingdom in 2001, is predominantly used by General Dental Practitioners. With adult orthodontics on the increase, Invisalign is an extremely popular appliance, with approximately one million cases being treated worldwide. Peter Huntley is well known for his dynamic and engaging lecturing style, including comfort, aesthetics and good anchorage control, as well as its weaknesses, with particular emphasis on the importance of case selection when using Invisalign, as well as cases where Invisalign should be avoided, such as deep bite cases.

Following tea and cookies, Dirk Wiechmann and Peter Huntley returned with a display of clinical cases treated with Incognito and Invisalign respectively. Dr Wiechmann commenced with an impressive presentation of 26 consecutively debonded cases from September to December with comments to illustrate the use of Invisalign. This included non-extraction Herbst-fixed appliance cases as well as four premolar extraction cases in growing individuals.

Peter Huntley presented cases to highlight the indications for the use of Invisalign, including mild to severe crowding with class I buccal segments, expansion and distal movement and post-treatment relapse. He outlined its benefits including aesthetics, gentle forces and facilitating oral hygiene. However, he advised that care must be taken to eliminate undercuts during manufacture as well as understanding its limitations in terms of the tooth movements that can be achieved. We were very lucky indeed to receive very useful clinical tips from a very experienced clinician.

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With no sign of any ill effects from the night before, the next day’s proceedings started promptly to a full house. The first speaker, Dr Nigel Harradine, BOS President, David Bowden, presented the Geoffrey Fletcher Award to Lorna Dubhny from Dundee Dental School. This award is presented annually to an orthodontic trainee to pursue an elective in orthodontics, to further their knowledge and experience.

The first session was then launched by BOS Chairman, Nigel Harradine. The guest speaker, Dr David Sarver, needed little introduction as most of us will already be familiar with his name as one of the co-authors of the most widely read orthodontic textbook in the world Contemporary Orthodontics by Professors Fehrenbacher and Sarver. Dr Sarver lectures widely on the ‘art and diagnosis of the smile’ and is well known for his dynamic multimedia presentations.

Part 1 - The aesthetic evaluation didn’t disappoint as Dr Sarver sought to expand the diagnostic regime of the audience and to untangle the soft tissue paradigm. The importance of appreciating the macro-, mini- and micro-aesthetics of a smile was discussed in growing, non-growing, and ageing faces. Dr Sarver urged us all as orthodontists to look more at the aesthetics of a patient and less at the cephalometric and to appreciate the ‘art in its entirety’. Dr Sarver presented a systematic method of assessing the face, smile, and dentition in three dimensions. The emphasis was placed on proportions and not linear measurements and resisting the temptation to apply a ‘Procrustean’ approach of ‘one size fits all’.

Following the break, the session was chaired by Cath Crocker of the OSI, who introduced the next speaker, selling coach, Ashley Latter. Ashley was quick to dispel the negative stereotype of a ‘salesman’ with his engaging and interactive session on ‘Helping patients to say YES’. He started by reminding the audience that an investment in knowledge always pays the best interest and continued over the next hour to promote positive selling. Ashley views selling in orthodontics as a combination of building relationships with the right types of patients, finding out their problems, and then solving them.

He reminded the listeners that the reasons patients say no to private treatment is usually nothing to do with technical ability, and that price may be AN issue, but is rarely THE issue. The initial sceptical audience was won over by the participative Attitude Test, which required the audience to remember 20 items in perfect order. A task the majority managed with success despite initial cynicism. Ashley finished his animated and entertaining presentation by reminding the audience that successful selling is about positive attitude and being pro-active.

Dr Sarver’s mini-aesthetic evaluation

The final presentation before lunch was again by David Sarver. This time the focus was on ‘mini-aesthetic evaluation’. Dr Sarver introduced great rapport with the audience as he introduced recent concepts in the quantification of the characteristics of smile aesthetics. As well as showing many examples of the comprehensive three-dimensional analysis that Dr Sarver teaches and practises, he reminded us of the importance of considering the fourth dimension – time – and discussed the influence of aging on the smile. Again, the value of tailoring each treatment plan to the individual was stressed as ‘your smile is your signature’. Dr Sarver spoke about both the shape and proportion of the face, gingival characteristics, and urged the audience to consider these aspects when striving to deliver the optimal result for every patient.

Returning refreshed after lunch, delegates were welcomed back by session chair Peter McCallum. BOS Chairman, who reintroduced David Sarver for a discussion on ‘Orthognathic and Adjunctive cosmetic surgery’. The excellent atmosphere in the auditorium continued and Dr Sarver showed no signs of tiring as he presented an impressive case selection of orthognathic patients before and after orthognathic and adjunctive surgery. These additional procedures included rhinoplasty, genioplasty, platysmal plication, liposuction, V-J closure, and other soft tissue procedures.

The presentation started with an honest account of ‘surgical failures’ and early lessons learned, where Dr Sarver admitted that the occlusal goals had been met but the aesthetic goals had not. The importance of adjunctive procedures to counter the sometimes unwanted side effects of hard tissue orthognathic surgery and to enhance the outcome was emphasised. The audience was captivated by the series of cases presented next where Dr Sarver used digital technology to present ‘morph movies’ of patients with severe malocclusions throughout treatment. The results were exceptional and Dr Sarver accentuated the importance of a multi-specialty approach in offering patients the best outcome.

Complex cases

Dirk Wiechmann returned to present a selection of complex cases treated with Incognito. This was truly impressive! Dr Wiechmann described the use of custom-made Extra Torque (ET) wires in complex Class II division two malocclusions as well as the use of cihorhinotrapezial archwires to manage open and deep bite cases. The use of both lingual and buccal auxiliaries allowed excellent control of tooth movement during space closure.

After a welcome tea-break, David Sarver once again took to the stage, introduced by David Bowden, BOS President. The final topic for discussion was new technologies – soft tissue lasers and CAD-CAM braces. Continuing on the mini-aesthetic theme, Dr Sarver introduced the concept of using soft tissue diode lasers as part of adjunctive orthodontic treatment. Uses for this technique include aesthetic enhancement, such as improving gingival topography, idealising crown proportions, crown lengthening, and resolving crown height asymmetries, in addition to treatment management, for example, eliminating pseudopockets. The benefits of using diode laser to ablate soft tissue; including precision, haemostasis, and the need for topical anaesthetic only, were illustrated.

Finally, Dr Sarver concluded his presentation with an introduction to custom-made Computer Aided Design/Computer Aided Manufacture (CAD/CAM) fixed appliances. The Insignia system uses 3D imaging and software which produces customised brackets and wires which theoretically yield optimal finishing. The possibility of using this software together with digital images of the patient’s smile has been explored by Dr Sarver in his quest to produce the perfect smile to suit every patient.

If you would like more information about the BOS, visit www.bos.org.uk.

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**Note:** The reference to the BOS (British Orthodontic Society) and the event highlights the international and comprehensive nature of orthodontic discussions and advancements globally. The report emphasizes the importance of aesthetic considerations in orthodontic treatment and the increasing role of digital technology in improving outcomes. The contributions of various speakers, including the use of customised appliances and digital technologies, underscore the evolving landscape of orthodontic practice.