May 23-29, 2011 saw the eighth annual Clinical Innovations Conference held in association with Smile-on, the AOG, Dental Directory, ESCD and FGDP (UK). The event, held at the prestigious Royal College of Physicians in London, saw more than 350 delegates come through its doors to find out the latest thinking in aesthetic and restorative dentistry.

The conference was opened by some welcoming words from Smile-on CEO Noam Tamir, and AOG president Pomi Datta. Then it was the turn of Dr Nasser Barghi to commence the lecture programme, with his presentation titled All Ceramic Restorations in 2011: different ceramic systems and their clinical indications.

Dr Barghi discussed various restorative solutions for patients and how technology has progressed to such an extent that there aren’t too many bad products to choose from. He was passionate in his love of zirconia, making it his material of choice for his restorations. He was able to show many case studies to show the different solutions clinicians have at their disposal to illustrate many of his points. Themes in his presentation included:

- Adhesion: cement or bonding? Discussing surface treatment when looking at adhesion
- Veneers: his preference for ceramic veneers; indications for no-prep veneers. These include:
  - No discoloration
  - Presence of diastema
  - No rotation
  - Presence of proportion
- Learning from failures: Dr Barghi commented that his definition of an expert was a person with failures. Acknowledging that these were not a preferred thing in practice, he thanked the ‘luxury’ of being in academia which gave him the chance to be experimental with techniques
- Being in control: he was very passionate about dentists remaining in control of their restorations. Commenting that he always looks at the scans which his dental laboratory have taken from his impressions (he’s not convinced with digital impression taking, not just yet!) so he can ensure that what is going to be milled is what he is expecting for his patients

My favourite piece of advice Dr Barghi gave in his presentation was this: ‘Remember the golden rule of dentistry – if it is your patient, repair it; if it is someone else’s patient, replace it!’

After such a start, it was going to take something special to follow. Luckily, next up was Dr Wyman Chan, discussing Latest techniques in teeth whitening processes. Showcasing his new ‘Jumpstart’ technique, Dr Chan gave a demonstration of the system that he has devised over many years of research and development.

The first thing that struck me was the emphasis on patient safety and the precautions taken to ensure that the process was entirely pain-free for the patient. This was paramount, Dr Chan commented, to ensure that the home regime prescribed by the clinician would be adhered to because the patient knew it wouldn’t hurt.

The other thing that struck me, and this is the innovative thing about the Jumpstart system, is that there is no use of whitening trays or bright cumbersome lights; the whitening gel is painted onto the teeth and a small thermal
diffuser is attached to the lip retractors to help the gel to permeate the tooth structure. The use of a light is just a gimmick, Dr Chan commented, it is the heat, not light that allows the gel to work.

After doing the Jumpstart whitening (which was only 20 minutes), Dr Chan then had the ‘patient’ a willing dental therapist volunteer, perform two home whitening sessions using his take home kits. Again not using trays, he asked the patient to put the special retractors which also hold the diffuser on and paint the gel on her own teeth.

I’ve never been a fan of the concept of tooth whitening, figuring that bleach is not something I want anywhere near my teeth! But after Dr Chan’s lecture, and seeing for myself what can be done in a safe manner even by someone like me, I am a total convert.

With there being so many fabulous lecturers to choose from, it was impossible to see and hear them all. Other presenters included:

- Dr Julian Satterthwaite: Management of failing dentitions
- Dr Julian Veblen: Single File Reciprocation, Shaping the Future of Endodontics
- Dr Peet van der Vyver: Making Magic with Matrix Systems
- Dr Wolfgang Richter: Composites Restorations 2011 - Facts and Fiction
- Dr Tif Qureshi and James Russell: Pre-align then Design - the Simplification of Cosmetic Dentistry for all

A first for the Clinical Innovations Conference, the Friday evening was a chance to get together and party the night away with fellow delegates, sponsors and speakers at the annual Charity Ball, organised by Smile-on and the AOG. A night of fine dining and fantastic entertainment at the five-star Millennium Hotel in Mayfair, the event did make for some delicate heads in the morning!

Fortunately, the Saturday line-up was enough to get even the weakest of constitutions out of bed. Saturday’s speakers included:

- Dr Eddie Scher: Failure in implant dentistry
- Dr Peet van der Vyver: The Benefit of Magnification in Dentistry
- Dr Jason Smithson: Simplified posterior restorations... simple, easy and predictable
- Dr Raj Rattan: The Future Direction of the NHS
- Dr Trevor Burke: A Pragmatic Approach to the treatment of tooth wear
- Dr Bob McLelland: Preparing for perfection
- Dr Liviu Steier: Advanced Biofilm Management - Reality Check From single vs. multiple sessions Root Canal Treatment to full mouth disinfection in Periodontal Treatment
- Dr Jason Smithson: Direct Composite Resins: Advanced Concepts for the 21st Century
- Dr Peet van der Vyver: Management of Curved Root Canals using Modern Endodontic Equipment and Techniques

A knowledgeable exhibition was also there to compliment the speaker programme, giving delegates the opportunity to speak with product experts on a one-to-one basis.

An event enjoyed by attendees, speakers and sponsors alike, Clinical Innovations Conference 2011 was considered a fantastic success. Look out for news of next year’s Conference, coming soon!