Dr Oliver Harman discusses the innovative MSc in Restorative and Aesthetic Dentistry

In the dental industry today, there are many interpretations of the term “cosmetic dentistry”. Some practitioners would define it as a branch of dentistry that focuses solely on the appearance of the smile, as opposed to the health of the teeth. However these are not two mutually exclusive entities.

In an attempt to reconcile “aesthetics” with “cosmetic”, many practitioners are now enrolling in educational courses to help develop their knowledge and understanding within the area of “cosmetic” dentistry. In today’s society, there is a high demand for aesthetically pleasing smiles amongst the general public. As this demand increases, it is important that clinicians enhance their skills within this field, and try to achieve the same for everyone – hospital workers, general practitioners and members of the public.

Dr Oliver Harman from The Harman Dental Clinic in Royal Tunbridge Wells, is one of the two dentists in the UK to pass the BACD Fellowship Examination, and began the MSc course at the beginning of the year.

“I have just completed the introduction to the Smile-on MSc course, and have so far found it to be an excellent grounding in 21st century dentistry,” he says. “For someone who has been practising for 26 years it has been extremely useful, and it gives a really good overall picture. Technology has developed dramatically in the past few years, and the course offers a very up-to-date and progressive set of lectures, at the cutting-edge of the dental industry.”

Positive approach

When discussing what features of the course he found most beneficial, Dr Harman is finding the eLearning approach to be very positive. “I definitely prefer the webinars live, as I feel it adds something to the lecture. Generally the format works very well and is a realistic method of learning for busy dental professionals. The online aspect provides the fantastic privilege of allowing me to continue working while studying.

This is particularly relevant to dental professionals fairly advanced in their careers, as it is more challenging to attend traditional courses regularly with great commitments to their families and practices. The online format allows for more mature clinicians to revisit mainstream education and training without making too many sacrifices.

“The speakers are also very good, and include some of the leading names in the field. I like that the lecturers aren’t limited to Manchester University, enabling the presentations to provide brilliant exposure to a wider faculty than you would normally have access to.”

When talking about why he wanted to take the MSc in Restorative and Aesthetic Dentistry, Dr Harman is very passionate about the controversies surrounding the concept of “cosmetic dentistry”.

“Within the dental industry at the moment, there are some very conflicting views about what the term ‘cosmetic dentistry’ covers. Unfortunately, I think many practitioners have formed their opinions based on some of the pretty terrible examples of so-called ‘cosmetic’ work in the past.

“As far as I’m concerned, ‘cosmetic dentistry’ is not a separate entity in practice. In all my work I aim to complete treatments giving my patients a beautifully crafted smile, which functions properly, looks great, is painless and lasts a lifetime. It’s not necessarily ‘cosmetic’, it’s just good dentistry.

“The MSc in Restorative and Aesthetic Dentistry enhances my mainstream knowledge of modern techniques, providing an updated platform for my work. I put a lot of emphasis on keeping up with new advances within the field worldwide, but I think it is very important to have an understanding of the progress within the UK.”

Bridge the gap

“Along with a few colleagues, I wish to help bridge the gap between the widespread views of ‘cosmetic’ dentistry. Though I have just begun the course, I think it will be a tremendous help to knowing and fully understanding the literature and evidence-base behind the work I do – an invaluable benefit both in practice and for the clinical case studies and articles I frequently write.

“With so many contradictory ideas of ‘cosmetic dentistry’ within the dental community, it is no wonder the general public don’t really understand the term. In order for patients to know what we mean, we need to define the term ourselves first. We need to ensure that what we’re teaching, learning and trying to achieve is the same for everyone – hospital workers, general practitioners and members of the public.”

Solid framework

The MSc course from Smile-on and the University of Manchester is split into seven units, incorporating webinars, lectures, residential sessions and a dissertation to end. The online resources can be accessed repeatedly, at a convenient time to the practitioner, and from a familiar environment. Including access to advice and guidance from some of the experts at the forefront of aesthetic dentistry, the course provides a solid framework for dental professionals to develop and improve the standard of service they offer their patients.

The World’s First Online MSc in Restorative & Aesthetic Dentistry

Master of Science in Restorative & Aesthetic Dentistry

Two of the UK’s most respected education and academic organisations have joined forces to provide an innovative, technology-driven MSc in Restorative and Aesthetic Dentistry. Smile-on, the UK’s pre-eminent healthcare education provider and the University of Manchester, one of the top twenty-five universities in the world, have had the presence to collaborate in providing students with the best of everything – lectures, online technology, live sessions and support.

Convenience

The majority of the learning resources on this programme will be online. The masterclass will combine interactive distance learning, webinars, live learning and practical.

Ownership

This programme is designed to encourage the student to take responsibility for their own learning. The emphasis is on a self-directed learning approach.

Community

Students will be able to communicate with a diverse multi-ethnic global community of peers, with whom they will also share residential get-togethers in fantastic settings around the world.

Opportunity

This innovative programme establishes the academic and clinical parameters and standards for restorative and aesthetic dentistry. Students will leave with a world-recognised MSc.

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Contact info

For more information about the online MSc in Restorative and Aesthetic Dentistry go to www.smile-on.com/msc, email info@smile-on.com or call 020 7400 8989 (Smile-on: inspiring better care. For more information about the online MSc in Restorative and Aesthetic Dentistry go to www.smile-on.com/msc, email info@smile-on.com or call 020 7400 8989.)