Specialist orthodontist Dr. Derek Mahony launches his UK 3-year course “The full face philosophy”

He is launching his 3-year programme “The Full Face Philosophy” – a Mini Residency in Orthodontics for the first time in the UK, starting January 2012. The programme has been taught with great success in Australia and the US, and differs from other courses in that it focuses not just on the alignment of teeth, but also on the facial balance, as well as identifying the cause of the malocclusion. His philosophy is that appliances alone will not make you a good orthodontic clinician, and any orthodontic problem is not only a tooth problem, but should be studied through aspects of development and function. Dr. Mahony says “For orthodontic treatment to be successful, at any level, it is essential for the general dentist to have a thorough understanding of normal facial growth and development, and to possess the skills to recognize developing malocclusions. My courses are aimed at providing this information, so the general dentist will be able to increase their skills in orthodontic diagnosis and treatment planning. We supplement the clinical teaching with the use of typodonts and a number of practical exercises, including wire bending and bracket positioning.”

Dr. Mahony is aware that some of his specialist orthodontic colleagues do not agree with GPs being taught orthodontics, he says “In regular surveys we have undertaken, we note that general dentists who have completed my orthodontic training programmes tend to refer more patients to their Orthodontic Specialists than before they had learnt orthodontics because they are more highly trained as to which cases to refer and when is the appropriate time to commence orthodontic treatment”.

The programme starts with modules on orthodontic diagnosis and cephalometrics, with a strong emphasis on preventive or interceptive orthodontics, particularly in the mixed dentition. Then come modules on the treatment of Class II and Class III malocclusions. The mechanics are based on passive self ligation, and later in the programme more difficult malocclusions are taught, such as vertical growers and open bites. There are modules on periodontics, implantology, restorative/orthodontic interface, biomechanics and aesthetic appliances and the management of TMD. The concept of long term stability, via the use of retention strategies, is taught, and the doctors are also exposed to the possibility of working with OMFS surgeons in the correction of severe skeletal malocclusions.

Following the courses doctors can upload case records and questions onto www.fullfaceglobal.com for advice and peer review; observe clinical procedures and treat their own patients at a UK clinic run by one of Dr Mahony’s experienced UK colleagues, whose experienced team can assist and support.