

BSSPD Annual Conference

Challenging the Dogma in Prosthodontics

P&J Live, Aberdeen.

10-11 March 2022

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After the turmoil and uncertainty of the last couple of years, the British Society of Prosthodontics (BSSPD) was delighted to come together for a face-to-face conference earlier this year in Aberdeen. The motto of the city of Aberdeen is Bon Accord meaning 'good agreement'. When Robert the Bruce laid siege to Aberdeen Castle in 1308, Bon Accord was the secret password used during the campaign. Today, the motto forms part of the City's Official Toast, 'Happy to meet, sorry to part, happy to meet again – Bon Accord!'. This toast is very well suited to the BSSPD. Known as a friendly and inclusive Society, members have always been happy to meet with friends and colleagues at the Annual Conference, before parting in the knowledge that we will meet again the following year. We were very happy to meet again!

The theme of the conference was 'Challenging the Dogma in Prosthodontics'. The evidence base in prosthodontics is variable, not least due to the difficulty in establishing studies such as randomised controlled trials across much of the specialty. Therefore, a lot of teaching and practice is based on dogma. Dogma can be defined as a principle or set of principles laid down by an authority as incontrovertibly true. On close scrutiny many dogmas are found to lack evidence but are still cherished. It doesn't mean they are wrong, but have they been challenged?

The Conference was therefore structured with the aim of scrutinising and debating some of the beliefs that prosthodontists have held dear for many years. A line-up of well-known and high-quality speakers were given a challenging brief by the BSSPD President, Dean Barker, but had free rein to explore their topics and balance available evidence, opinion, and contemporary practice.

Sarra Jawad set the tone for the two-day event by opening with a very elegant talk on why the McGill Consensus Statement had still not been widely adopted, weaving her discussion between clinical need and health economics. Shakeel Shahdad continued with the implant theme and gave a balanced view on the need to submerge implants and place provisional crowns for implant placement in the aesthetic zone.

Pauline Maillou and Nick Lewis both handled the thorny topics of what RCP actually means and how we record it, and how essential semi-adjustable articulators are, respectively. These really are topics that are surrounded by dogma, but the speakers did an excellent job of breaking the subject down.

Next up was Sophie Watkins debating whether conventional bridgework is obsolete in a time of adhesive technology followed by a very practical discussion of impression and registration materials and techniques by James Field. Overall, the first day produced a lot of debate which carried on until the social evening in the adjacent hotel.

At the start of the second day, delegates were treated to a discussion on 'The Art of Prosthodontics' by Rachel Jackson. Rachel is a dentist and medical illustrator, and the Society was very fortunate that she contributed her skills to the conference and title slides. She also described beautifully how closely art and clinical dentistry sit alongside each other.

A perennial highlight of the BSSPD Annual Conference is being impressed by members of the Society taking the opportunity to present their clinical skills and research in oral and poster presentations. These are often younger members of the profession who promise a bright future for the specialty. The winner of the 2022 Schottlander Oral Presentation was Dr Noushad Rahim of Kings College, London for his presentation entitled 'Clinical performance of CAD-CAM generated nanofilled hybrid ceramic onlays on endodontically treated posterior teeth'. Dr Stephanie King of Liverpool Dental Hospital was the recipient of the Schottlander Poster Prize for her poster, 'Modified screw-retained obturator impression technique following recurrence after maxillary ZIP flap reconstruction'. Har-Amrit Singh of Birmingham Dental Hospital received the Society's Coltene Award for his case report titled, 'Prosthodontic management and full-mouth rehabilitation of a patient with severe tooth wear'.



The winner of the 2022 Schottlander Oral prize was Noushad Rahim (KCL) for his presentation entitled "Clinical performance of CAD CAM generated nanofilled hybrid ceramic onlays on endodontically treated posterior teeth".

It was fitting that these award presentations were followed by a very well-balanced view of the 'latest generation' by Giles McCracken. Giles had been given the task of challenging the dogma that 'the latest generation can't cut it like we could in our day'. This is surely a charge that has been passed down through generations of dentists. It was agreed that the latest generation can indeed 'cut it', they just have different things to 'cut'!



The winner of the 2022 Schottlander poster prize was Stephanie King (Liverpool University Dental Hospital) for her poster entitled "Modified Screw-Retained Obturator Impression Technique following Recurrence after Maxillary ZIP Flap Reconstruction"



The winner of the 2022 Coltene Early Career award was Har-Amrit Singh (University of Birmingham) for his submission "Prosthodontic Management & Full Mouth Rehabilitation of a Patient with Severe Tooth Wear – A Case Report"



Outgoing president Dean Barker (on the right) welcomes new president Suresh Nayyar.

The final session of the conference was given over to an exciting, interactive plenary session that sought to establish what techniques, treatment plans and materials we really use behind our closed surgery doors and how our age or experience effects this. Raelene Sambrook and Sam Rollings skilfully took the audience through a series of clinical scenarios in all aspects of Prosthodontics – Fixed, Removable, Maxillofacial and Implant – and reviewed the responses with a couple of expert panels.

'Happy to meet, sorry to part, happy to meet again'. Delegates were indeed delighted to get back together, and two excellent days of conference content passed far too quickly. However, we look forward to meeting again in Birmingham on 24-25 March 2023 for the Society's next Annual Conference, 'One World, One Prosthodontics', under the Presidency of Dr Suresh Nayar. An exciting line-up of international speakers has been organised along with an equally exciting social programme! Details can be found on the Society's website.

Dean Barker

Immediate Past President, BSSPD