



## Welcome to all

**Elaine Grisdale**, head of professional services and international development at the Association of Dispensing Opticians, says this year's conference offers a view in 3D – differentiation, development and diversification

**T**he 2012 ABDO conference in Stratford-upon-Avon promises to be bigger and better than ever, as well as dispensing opticians, all other optical professionals are invited to attend. Building on the success of our last conference, delegates will find a different feel this year as we have an exciting mix of interactive workshops and lectures. The underlying theme of the conference revolves around the three Ds – differentiation, development and diversification. Hence the programme offers a clinical, business and political agenda.

When it comes to CET approved lectures, a number of them will also offer the opportunity to gain additional points via post-conference online CET. Some of the lectures have been specially designed to help practitioners develop their practice businesses; therefore they will not have CET points attributed.

### Top class speakers

We are delighted to welcome an array of top class speakers to the conference this year. In the clinical spotlight, **Frank Munro** will be sharing his vision of how opticians can get involved in developing a lifestyle/healthy vision practice. **Angela McNamee** will be asking in true Shakespearean fashion 'To refer or not to refer... that is the question', outlining the importance for DOs to know when and when not to refer a patient. **Anita Morrison-Fokken** will give a highly entertaining and thought-provoking talk on 'Avoiding slips and trips in our elderly patients'. To round off the clinical subjects, **Sally Bates** will be discussing whether spectacles cause facial basal cell carcinoma.

On the business side, we have several experienced and entertaining speakers. **Julian Wiles** will deliver a talk entitled 'Making everything you can out of everything you've got', a subject relevant to the current business climate. Inspired by the theatrical surroundings, master of motivation **Paul Surridge** will present 'From mediocrity to centre stage – a look at people strategies for successful practice growth'.

**Stuart Jones** has spent his professional life in optics developing his business through excellent customer experience and bespoke eyewear. He will share with us his tips and tricks for becoming a styling practice and how to build a bespoke business around eyewear. In tandem with this presentation, ABDO conference favourite **Duncan Counter** will talk about the importance of using our skills and revisiting how to take the all-important facial measurements and correct ordering for bespoke eyewear.

With diversification being one of the axes of the conference, three opticians, **Jo Holmes**, **Ros Kirk** and **Alan Parkhurst** will talk about their real-life inspirational stories. **Andy Hepworth** and **Paul Walden** have their fingers on the pulse on what's new and what's possible in terms of lens technology and will explain how to use the latest innovations when dispensing.

Existing and potential supervisors and students have not been forgotten, as there are a number of events for them including an exam drop-in session with CL and FBDO examiners giving advice. **Alicia Thompson**, ABDO's director of professional examinations, will also be talking about the importance of the pre-qualification portfolio and giving advice on how to revise for the final qualifying examinations.

**Barry Duncan** and **Mike Cody** will be looking at the important subject of where practices stand after PCTs are abolished, the LOC's role and the scope for DOs in the brave new world of commissioning. We are delighted to welcome **Linda Ford** from the GOC to talk about future changes to the CET regulations and to answer any questions delegates may have.

Conference workshops will cover low vision, handmade frame measurement and we have a three-part introduction to refraction workshop (sponsored by Topcon) looking at subjective refraction, retinoscopy and binocular balance. As workshop places are limited, delegates should sign up on arrival or let me know at [egrisdale@abdo.org.uk](mailto:egrisdale@abdo.org.uk) should they wish to participate.

### Children's vision

DOs play a vitally important role in children's eye care and as part of a new ABDO initiative, there will be a children's vision stand where delegates can find out more about being involved. There will be three subjects highlighted where delegates can find out how to expand their horizons:

- Vision screening. **Michael Gilsenan** runs a successful vision screening programme in Northern Ireland. He will discuss how the strategy works and give delegates pointers to what is involved in a successful vision screening programme
- Presentations in primary schools. **Jo Holmes** and **Christopher Heap** will highlight the do's and don'ts of presenting to children, how to hold their attention and how to follow up with the school after the initial presentation
- Careers in optics. **Peter Black** will be sharing his experiences of the award winning Careers in Optics ambassadors programme and will be inviting members to get involved to help to promote the profession to children of secondary school age.

### Thank you to sponsors

An ABDO conference offers the chance to network with colleagues old and new and with the exhibitors/sponsors, without whose generous support our conference and exhibition wouldn't exist. We are immensely grateful to our industry partners all of whom are included in the listing on pages 29-32. Admission is free to people who wish to visit just the exhibition.

The ABDO AGM will feature the members' vote on the new Articles of Association and name change proposals. The ABDO gala dinner, sponsored by Transitions, is the highlight of the weekend; this year we will be heading to the Heritage Motor Centre in Gaydon with a coach transfer from the Holiday Inn. Diners will have the unique experience of a cocktail served while enjoying a private viewing of the impressive car collection. This will be followed by a sumptuous dinner, award ceremony and dancing into the early hours to the sounds of the amazing live band. ●