

The patient has been seen at hospital level, currently awaits both ultrasound examination and the hospital's own retinal imaging, and is frustrated by the slow pace. It may be that our own follow-up may occur before any hospital conclusion, and we are in a good position to provide accurate and reliable assessment of any visual change to this lesion. We hope that this might provide the first stage of ongoing reassurance for this patient.

The interesting things about this case are firstly the difficulty in actually viewing this lesion. The quality of the images taken through a Volk lens if they had been more central would perhaps be judged average or even poor, but to acquire any image at all in the extreme periphery, as here, is actually quite an achievement. From a clinical point of view the interesting things are firstly the difficulties of certainty of diagnosis with an unusual combination of features. It also demonstrates nicely the difficulties faced by every working optometrist every day of life, not to mention the jeopardy involved therein.

So what have we learned so far? Firstly, how easily this might have been missed. Secondly that despite a high level of clinical care, and with the best intentions and the best will in the world, the limitations of an eye examination, the limitations of resources and the limitations of the instrumentation that we have available to us mean that it is inevitable that on occasion some features will remain undetected.

Thirdly, there is probably a strong argument for the dilation of every patient that walks through our doors.

Fourth, use all of your instrumentation to best advantage, but never in isolation or as a replacement for an overlapping method.

Fifth and finally, DRI is probably now pretty commonplace in routine examination, but there is a place and a similar strong justification for routine DAI, as a diagnostic aid, for future comparison, for the ability to actually show the patient what you are talking about, for your own protection and defence in litigation. Daily use of a digital biomicroscope allows not only DAI, but with the use of a Volk lens provides the ability to produce DRI images that are not achievable with a retinal camera. Most importantly this can be part of a drive to continually seek to raise the standard of ongoing clinical care. ●

● **Ronnie MacGregor** practises in Stranraer



The Contact Lens Pavilion presented the latest contact lens products and services in one location

# Contact lenses on the launchpad

New products, new companies and first-time exhibitors suggest Optrafair was a useful forum for the contact lens sector this year, as *Optician* reports

**W**ith minimal representation from the contact lens industry at Optrafair 2009, the organisers were keen to attract exhibitors from this sector. New for 2011 was a dedicated Contact Lens Pavilion designed to showcase the latest contact lens products and services in one location.

Of the larger lens manufacturers, CIBA Vision, Johnson & Johnson and Sauflon stayed away but CooperVision and Bausch+Lomb took stands, while Alcon and Advanced Eyecare Research were there from the lens care sector.

After an absence from Optrafair of 10 years, CooperVision had the largest stand space and used it to colourful effect to launch its new corporate identity. Professional relations manager Karl Aberdeen said the rebranding was going down well with customers and was 'refreshingly different' from other companies' livery and packaging.

For CooperVision, Optrafair was the ideal forum for promoting its brand.

'This is a trade fair in the true sense of the word. People come here to buy,' said Aberdeen. Product performance had been discussed in a series of six roadshows around the UK, which ended the day before Optrafair and drew 600 delegates, he added.

Bausch+Lomb's reasons for attending were different, with the introduction this month of PureVision2 with High Definition Optics and a first major outing for its Biotrue multipurpose solution.

UK and Ireland sales manager Sharon Ormonde told *Optician* that the decision to return to Optrafair after an absence in 2007 was influenced by the inclusion of the Contact Lens Pavilion. 'It was very worthwhile being there. The event was really well put together and we got to speak to a lot of our customers,' she said.

Over on the Optegra stand, managing director Gareth Steer, former head of B+L's UK operation, was busy discussing refractive surgery co-management. The only exhibitor in the sector at Optrafair, Optegra now has more 80 surgeons operating at its five hospitals in the UK.

## New arrivals

One of two new contact lens companies launched at the show was the OCLC Group, based in north London, which is distributing a Korean-made range of soft lenses in the UK. The Oxygen Xtra brand, includes the SiH daily disposable Oxygen Xtra One Day, only the third such lens in the UK.

OCLC managing director Hitash Visavadia said the new company would only supply independent practices, by membership, and would be introducing a coloured SiH lens as well as toric and multifocal options. The company was funding a new manufacturing facility and planned to become a major player in the sector, said Visavadia.

Essex-based distributor Eterno Vision was another company using Optrafair as its launchpad. Its range covers the Airsoft SiH and Hydrossoft hydrogels, as well as the ColourVUE coloured lenses, including a toric option, from Malaysia-based manufacturer Maxvue Vision.

Sales manager Jason Cantoni said the aim was to move the business away from non-prescription and novelty lenses towards supplying prescription product, again through independents only.

Making its debut at the show was logistics company Adaro Optics, which offers a contact lens management service. Practices register patients online for automatic scheduled home delivery of lenses and solutions from the major manufacturers, and can upload their own logo and include customer communications so deliveries are branded as their own.

Managing director Tim Ralph said Adaro's strategy at Optrafair was to raise awareness among the larger retailers and to make contact with independents. As well as

personalisation, the service allowed products from different suppliers to be packaged together, he explained.

## Fresh solutions

Among lens care companies, Alcon had plenty to talk about at Optrafair, not least the long-expected merger with Novartis that was finally approved by shareholders the day before the show opened. Prominent on the stand was the new Opti-Free EverMoist, an MPS with improved wetting properties that will be available alongside RepleniSH.

Territory manager Paul Conn explained that the HydraGlyde Moisture Matrix in EverMoist was designed to 'bring moisture to the lens rather than being dependent on the tear film', and provided up to 16 hours of wetting time.

B+L's Biotrue was the other recently introduced lens care product at the show, and was also discussed in the live lecture sessions. Advanced Eyecare Research, another first-time exhibitor at Optrafair, showed its range of preservative-free solutions, including a handy Regard travel pack.

Also new on the Alcon stand were the latest lubricating eye drops, Systane Ultra containing sorbitol and Systane Balance for meibomian gland dysfunction (MGD) sufferers. With this month's publication of the International Workshop on MGD, products aimed at this condition are likely to have an increasingly high profile.

## Key trend

In fact tear supplements and other dry eye treatments were one of the key trends at this year's Optrafair. Prominent in this sector was French company Spectrum Thea, making

its first appearance at the show since launching in the UK two years ago.

New products included Thealoz, a preservative- and phosphate-free, non-viscous dry eye product with protective, antioxidant and hydration properties, and Blephagel, the company's latest product for treating blepharitis.

Spectrum Thea also ran a series of clinical and business presentations on its spacious stand, reviewing dry eye strategies and explaining how to set up a dry eye clinic in practice.

Also enjoying its first outing at Optrafair, Scope Healthcare has added a new formulation, Hycosan Xtra, to its range of preservative-free products containing hyaluronic acid. The solution has higher viscosity than others in the range but the same pump-action delivery system.

Ease of application was the key feature promoted by two exhibitors showing liposomal sprays, applied to the closed eyelids. Attending its first major event since rebranding, Eye Logic reported high levels of interest in its product, formerly available as Clarymist and exclusive to optical practices. Optrex showed its own version, ActiMist Eye Spray, launched two years ago and supported by consumer advertising.

Mid-Optic continued to focus on the dry eye market, which sales and marketing director Richard Hardy said still remained relatively untapped in the optical sector, despite estimated sales of £70m per year at retail. Optrafair saw the launch of the Hycosan Extra eye drops, a new addition to the Hycosan range. With a higher concentration of hyaluronic acid, these preservative-free drops are suitable for more severe cases of dry eye. Using a patented delivery system, Hycosan products can be used for up to 12 weeks on opening, which Hardy said gave value to the patient. Free samples were available, with a high level of interest through the show.

Also covering dry eye, independent practitioner Andrew Matheson listed a wide range of products from the TheraTears topical applications and dietary supplements, to punctal plugs and lacrimal syringes.

Finally, for another non-pharmaceutical solution, ophthalmologist Teifi James presented various enhancements to his EyeBag device, which is wholly made in the UK. Returning to Optrafair after a successful first visit there in 2009, James was impressed by the response. 'People here are in the mood to buy,' he said, summing up the feelings of many exhibitors at this year's show. ●



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