

ACCS: raising standards

THIS YEAR'S **COSMETEX** SHOWCASED THE AUSTRALASIAN COLLEGE OF COSMETIC SURGERY'S COMMITMENT TO THE CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT OF STANDARDS OF COSMETIC MEDICAL PRACTICE. LIZZY WOOD REPORTS.

The annual Cosmetex conference, which brings together cosmetic and plastic surgeons, dermatologists, cosmetic physicians and nurses has become the largest of its kind in the southern hemisphere in the area of cosmetic surgery and cosmetic medicine.

Earlier this month, more than 1,000 medical practitioners, delegates and exhibitors descended on Melbourne to attend the three-day conference hosted by the Australasian College of Cosmetic Surgery (ACCS).

With a strong faculty of keynote speakers hailing from the US, Canada, the UK, Italy, the Netherlands and the United Arab Emirates, attendees were witness to many informative and often interactive sessions, including keynote presentations from Dr Arthur Swift, Dr Paul Banwell and Professor Leslie Baumann.

Acknowledged as one of the most influential dermatologists in the world, the ACCS was proud to host Professor Leslie Baumann, who spoke highly of the event.

'I am impressed by the level of cosmetic knowledge and the diversity of the types of physicians at Cosmetex,' she told us at the event. 'It is nice when various specialties come together to share their different points of view on the same topic.'

'In the US, it is mainly dermatologists that perform these types of procedures, so we are missing the multifaceted thinking that this meeting offers. I thought that it was one of the most informative cosmetic meetings that I have been to round the world, and I have been to many.'

It was a sentiment shared by many. Delivering his keynote presentation on the missing link between beauty, fashion and cosmetic medicine, British plastic surgeon Dr Paul Banwell has been attending Cosmetex for many years.



'Cosmetex is always an amazing melting pot of practitioners specialising in cosmetic surgery and cosmetic medicine and I always learn something new,' he said at the event. 'The beauty of Cosmetex is that it appeals to everyone in the industry - be you a surgeon, doctor, nurse or part of the paramedical program. There is something for everyone.'

Founded in 1999, the ACCS was established as a multi-disciplinary body encompassing general surgeons, plastic surgeons, dermatologists, ear nose and throat surgeons, ophthalmologists and other doctors specialising in cosmetic surgery. More than ten years on and the College has grown to encompass hundreds of cosmetic specialists, and is more committed than ever to the continuous improvement in standards in cosmetic medical practice. It's thanks to this commitment that Cosmetex continues to thrive, attracting such a strong faculty of internationally acclaimed speakers, and delegates from across Australasia.

The existence of the college benefits both its members and the hundreds of thousands of men and women who undergo a cosmetic procedure each year in Australia. Both in their training of their members, and in their commitment to raising standards across the industry, patient protection is at the forefront of everything the ACCS does.

'The overriding aim of the College is easily summarised,' says Current President, Dr Colin Moore. 'That is, to ensure the safe provision of cosmetic surgery and non-surgical procedures to the Australian general community through the supply of appropriately trained and certified medical practitioners. In the interests of patient protection, the ACCS was established to bring regulation and accountability into the practice of cosmetic surgery and cosmetic medicine,' he says.

At last year's Cosmetex, the ACCS introduced its Seal of Approval, which can be displayed by any member who complies with the College's Code. This year, raising consumer awareness and protecting patients was again a key concern.

With the growth and greater acceptance of cosmetic medical and surgical procedures, it has become increasingly important that health consumers do their homework and educate themselves.

'Anyone considering having a cosmetic procedure should ensure that they fully understand the risks as well as the benefits and that their practitioner is properly trained in the procedure. Being a specialist of one kind or another is no guarantee that such training has been obtained,' Dr Moore says.

The ACCS was therefore delighted to have the Victorian Health Services Commissioner, Dr Grant Davies, address the conference delegates to underline the importance of maintaining standards and patient protection.

Having been at the forefront of cosmetic medicine for the last 10 years, the conference also afforded members of the ACCS the opportunity to share their expertise in and learn

more about emerging technologies and industry trends.

New treatments and procedures including the regenerative use of stem cells, and micro-fat grafting were showcased along with the latest techniques for more familiar treatments such as anti-wrinkle injections, dermal fillers and surgical procedures for the face and body.

'The introduction of new, regenerative techniques such as stem cell therapies and fat grafting, along with increasing use of cosmeceuticals, provides greater treatment versatility and consumer choice,' says Dr Moore.

'In the future, cosmetic physicians and surgeons will be able to work with a far richer palette to address their patient's requirements,' he adds.

Dr Moore also notes the increasing emphasis practitioners are placing on holistic and preventative strategies - another focus of this year's event. 'Getting good nutrition, adequate exercise, using sun protection and not smoking are the best things you can do for your appearance, health and self-esteem,' Dr Moore said.

'It is a very exciting time for cosmetic medical practice and it underscores the multidisciplinary nature of the growing specialty.'

With this year's event the biggest and best to date, the Australian community can rest assured the ACCS is fulfilling its commitment to ensuring the safe provision of cosmetic surgery and non-surgical procedures. **csbm**



Professor Leslie Baumann, Dr Suzanne Kilmer, Dr Arthur Swift and Dr Ian Holten presented at the Interactive Forum on Face



Members of the ACCS at their Cosmetex stand