

DR EDDIE SCHER

Eddie Scher who is a specialist in prosthodontics and oral surgery, was a founding member of the ADI and a leader in implant dentistry



Despite bringing implant dentistry to the nation and beyond, Dr Eddie Scher thinks his biggest contributions to dentistry are yet to come with plans in the pipeline to write further dental programmes and hosting a myriad of events and courses. But after continually holding so many important roles in various bodies, it's difficult for others not to look back on his career filled with accomplishments and accolades.

IN THE BLOOD

When asked why Dr Scher had chosen dentistry as a profession, the answer was as simple as 'It's in the blood'. Coming from three generations of dentists, Dr Scher was happy to follow in his family's footsteps. His grandfather was the first to set the trend becoming a dental professor in their hometown of Cork, Ireland. His father, along with three brothers, soon followed suit as a clinical professor and had his own dental lab, where Dr Scher was inspired by his dad's work. 'I never felt the need to rebel against the family tradition in dentistry and, in fact, at the age of 11 I made my first full denture in my dad's dental laboratory.'

Family is very important to Eddie. Describing his dad as his 'best friend', he said one of the most challenging times in his life was when his father sadly passed away, only to

be followed by his then wife's lost battle with cancer. But a firm believer in learning from difficulties, Dr Scher picked himself up to later qualify as a specialist in both prosthodontics and oral surgery.

The decision to focus on these two fields also rooted from the memories Dr Eddie Scher had from his father's work. He remembered, 'One day an old lady with a full set of lower removable dentures came into the practice, unhappy with the fact that her prosthetics were not fixed, which was not possible in those days. My dad said, "If only I could put something permanent in to help her." So when I read Dr Brånemark's landmark publication on implants, I jumped on board and travelled to conferences around the world to learn more.'

When bringing back these innovations to England, Dr Scher soon found himself in demand for the treatment, going from working in a hospital, to an associate in a Knightsbridge practice, and then setting up his own practice, The Walpole Street Practice in Chelsea, which he continues to work at as the principal today.

STUDENT BECOMES TEACHER

Looking back at the beginnings of the Association of Dental Implantology (ADI), Dr Scher said, 'I used to get together with five or six other dentists every now and again to learn from each other's implant treatments, and that same study group eventually developed into the ADI!'

As a founding member of the association, Dr Scher has now added the role of scientific chairman for the period of 2011-13. He added, though, that this role comes with many added responsibilities. 'As chairman, I have to organise various events and educational programmes, along with the ADI President, Cemal Ucer. We work hours and hours on end to write dental programmes and courses, and currently have put together the Team Congress that is due to take place in May next year in Manchester.

'As well as organising speakers and what topics that should be covered at the event, I'm also hosting my own lecture at the Congress on treatment complications. I think, above all, I like to teach about the problems I have come across in practice, and then tell others on how to overcome them.'

But the ADI isn't the only commitment that is filling Dr Scher's diary. After lecturing

postgraduates in the US at Temple University, Philadelphia, Dr Scher was awarded with the title of visiting clinical professor, which he says is one of the proudest moments in his career. Added to this, Eddie is also a Fellow and diplomat of the International Congress of Oral Implantologists (ICOI), the world's largest organisation of its kind, and a director on its board. Here, too, Dr Scher has served as scientific chairman, as well as on half a dozen other occasions with the ADI, ICOI and Nobel Biocare. Not to mention his role as president of the ADI in 1990-91 and Alpha Omega in 2008-09.

AS BUSY AS EVER

As this article is written, Dr Scher is preparing for his trip to Philadelphia where he will be lecturing once again, and then moves on to Orlando to sit on the Board of Examiners with the ICOI to write the questions for a Diplomate exam – an invitation that he says is a huge honour and a lifetime highlight. He once again racks up the air miles with a flight to Lisbon, Portugal, to host a lecture – all within a week's work for Eddie.

As for the future, Dr Scher is looking forward to the ADI Congress in May, but is also very excited about his own new teaching course in February 2013. 'I'm starting a new programme in my practice that I believe is the best course I've ever written. It's a one-to-one mentorship for just 10 students in my Walpole Street practice, which has its own lecturing theatre and is equipped with the latest dental equipment and operating room.'

With a lifetime of seeing the benefits of implants, Dr Scher hopes that one day they will be available for the masses through the NHS, but in the nearer and more concrete future, hopes to see *Implant Dentistry Today*, a publication that he is editor-in-chief for, develop from a good practical clinical journal to a recognised scientific reference.

He also advises newly qualified dentists to become a member of as many associations and courses as possible, so that you are constantly learning about the field. Dr Scher said, 'This job is not only about operating dentistry, you also need to recognise different treatments and who to refer to when coming across complications. Make sure you have more than one mentor to help you along the way.'

DR EDDIE SCHER

Qualifications: BDS LDS RCS MFGDS RCS; specialist in prosthodontics; specialist in oral surgery

Positions: Editor in chief of *Implant Dentistry Today*; founder member and current scientific chairman of ADI; visiting clinical professor at Temple University, USA; honorary lecturer at Eastman Dental Hospital and University of Salford

Interests in dentistry: prosthodontics, oral surgery and implants

Interests/hobbies outside of dentistry: golf, skiing, tennis and walking his dog Freddie