

Three-dimensional CET

The AOP's head of professional development, Karen Sparrow, reviews an optometrist education day which was held in the woods of Sussex at the Centre for Sight

I WASN'T expecting to drive down a road deep in the Sussex countryside to find a state-of-the-art ophthalmology surgical unit, hosting ground-breaking optometry CET, hiding in woodland next to the Bluebell Railway line. However, this is the surprising location of the Centre for Sight – a purpose-built ophthalmology clinic and theatre delivering private and NHS treatment to patients from around the world.

The Centre for Sight was established by internationally renowned consultant eye surgeon, Sheraz Daya, and is the UK's longest provider of Lasik laser eye surgery. Mr Daya's other, more recently revealed, claim to media fame is that he is the surgeon who restored former model Katie Piper's eyesight with stem cell surgery. Ms Piper was blinded in one eye following an acid attack in 2008.

The Centre has always been committed to strengthening links with the optometry community and runs two dedicated optometrist CET days each year, led by Mr Daya, hosted at its centre in East Grinstead. The CET topics are delivered throughout the day at breathtaking speed and cover a lot of interesting and useful ground, thankfully backed up by extensive handouts on corneal interventions, keratoconus and the latest developments in cataract and laser refractive surgery.

On July 3, Mr Daya and his team presented to a full house of local optometrists and some from further afield who had made a special journey to the South East for the day. Damian Lake, anterior segment and keratorefractive surgery specialist, covered a useful Q&A session on white corneas asking, "What is it?". Another extremely useful presentation was the ultimate one of the day by Tom Williamson, consultant ophthalmologist and vitreoretinal specialist, on detecting retinal tears. He admitted it is hard, even



for a retinal specialist, and particularly so for optometrists, who aren't seeing tears every day.

The highlight of the day though, excellent lectures and discussions apart, was the femtosecond surgery watched in 3D via a live link into the theatre next door. Mr Daya performed the surgery and his colleague, Saj Khan, gave delegates commentary as we watched through our 3D glasses.

Bausch & Lomb partnered with Centre for Sight to sponsor the day and Craig Graham, surgical business unit director, UK & Nordics for Bausch & Lomb, attended and was pleased by the enthusiasm and number of optometrists attending.

Andrew Ho, a hospital and High Street optometrist from London certainly enjoyed the day, saying: "Lots of fun indeed. It was incredibly engaging and certainly very informative with regards to the latest updates in a number of anterior ocular specialities."

"The passion and dedication displayed from the consultant eye surgeon, Sheraz Daya, and his team was genuinely inspiring. The entrepreneurial approach to constantly drive for better ways to improve the medical and surgical techniques is truly pioneering and undoubtedly very relevant to eye care today.

"More importantly, it was refreshing to hear the importance of the ever-

increasing role of the optometrist and the closer working relationship needed with ophthalmologists as the population continues to rapidly grow older, outstripping the number of surgeons able to cope with predicted demands.

"The live surgical experience in 3D was exciting and unexpected – great to see how hot the team is on embracing new technology. I would recommend all my colleagues to attend an education day here."

Optometrist Steve Patterson had particular interests in the programme content. He said: "I wanted to go on this course as I felt I was getting left behind regarding the present abilities of the laser clinics. The last laser clinic course I attended was when PRK first hit the headlines.

"The live video presentation of three operations with the 3D glasses was riveting; it was like you were in the operating theatre with them. All in all, it was a very good day and I really appreciate the effort that the presenters put in to give us one of the best courses I have attended."

The Centre for Sight is running its next optometrist education days in 2014. Visit www.centreforsight.com/about-us/optometric-education-day for more information.