

PRESS RELEASE

**Friday, 8 December, 2023**

**BCLA Presidential Address highlights the opportunities for growth in contact lens sector**

The new President of the BCLA has used his inaugural address to urge the sector to have “meaningful” conversations after eye exams and deliver “better vision outcomes” for patients.

Rakesh Kapoor used his Presidential Address at The Royal College of Physicians in London on Wednesday, 29 November to discuss the results of a survey conducted among ECPs, while exploring how the contact lens business operates in other countries and what practitioners can learn from them.

Entitled 'Insights and Visions: A Practitioner's Perspective on the Future of the Contact Lens Industry in the UK' – the event saw the return of an in-person Presidential Address for the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr Kapoor, a partner at Specsavers branches in Wembley, Wembley Park, Edgware Broadwalk and Stanmore and a visiting professor at Aston University, said: “We need to be ambitious in growing the sector and have meaningful conversations after an eye examination is complete.

“We should provide patients with the full range of refraction correction options, including contact lenses, and not assume that they will ask for them. Instead, we should notify them if they are suitable candidates.

“All stakeholders in the sector should support growth, which can only happen if we have better-trained, experienced ECPs, keep product choices simple, and have the ability to peer-review with relevant guidance and support from organisations such as the BCLA.

“I am confident in the sector, and I am sure that the BCLA will remain the "glue" that brings all ECPs together with the industry. Let's all focus on growing the sector to allow our patients to have a choice and deliver better vision outcomes.”

The one-hour lecture was well-attended by all sectors and industry leaders. Mr Kapoor added: “I have been a member of the BCLA for over 20 years, having joined early in my career. Back then, I was eager to learn more about the frontiers of new development, particularly in contact lenses, as there was a lot of new development going on in the 1990s.

“I attended many big annual BCLA conference events all around the UK, including Torquay, Bournemouth, and Birmingham. What I appreciated most about the BCLA was the sense of community and the opportunity to exchange knowledge and skills.

“Optometry has come a long way since then, and the BCLA now offers a wealth of knowledge and learnings on anterior eye, dry eye, and cutting-edge research on myopia management.

“As the current President of the BCLA, I am honoured to ensure that the organisation continues to thrive for many years to come. During the COVID years, all membership organisations faced challenges, and we made some significant changes to the operations and strategies of the BCLA to keep it relevant and beneficial to all members and the industry.”

For more details on how to become a BCLA member and to discover its programme of events for 2024 visit [www.bcla.org.uk](http://www.bcla.org.uk/)

**Notes to editors**

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