

Comment

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Jonathan Sandler

Alison and I have just spent almost a week in Sydney as guests of the Australian Orthodontic Society. We caught up with many colleagues who trained in the UK in the nineties and noughties, and then went to seek their fortune in the Antipodes. In addition to visiting Bondai Beach and doing the Harbour Bridge walk, we have also given 8 lectures over 5 days showing our Australian colleagues exactly what we get up to in the UK. It was interesting to contrast the vibrant, incredibly prosperous atmosphere pervading the entire Orthodontic community in Australia, with the uncertainty about future contracts and viability of services at home, both in terms of hospital and specialist orthodontic practice.

Australia celebrates almost 25 years of unbroken economic growth, showing little or no signs of slowdown, never mind recession, over the last 10 years. Despite this contrast in fortunes, the Australian orthodontic community is seriously concerned about the burgeoning increase in short term orthodontic options, the proliferation of 'orthodentistry' and the increasing number of disgruntled patients who feel that they have been shortchanged by the profession. Corporate takeover of the specialty is seen as a major threat to the 'status quo' and DIY orthodontics has also reached these distant shores. Maybe things aren't that different after all. Watch this space . . .

In this spring issue of *Orthodontic Update*, once again we hope to provide something of interest to all our readership. Sophie Barber and colleagues share with us their thoughts on the practical aspects of distraction osteogenesis, a technique which provided an alternative to more conventional methods of tooth and jaw movement. The Bristol Group, led by Dr Mittal, continue their excellent series on misplaced teeth in their discussion of aetiology and correction of 'The Aberrant Molar', a situation which most of us face on a weekly basis. The many clinical uses of separating elastics have been presented by Dr Patel and co-workers, and a couple of interesting Cases are reported of less commonly seen, but potentially serious conditions, that require multidisciplinary management. As the 'Beast from the East' threatens to stifle our travel plans, I hope we can provide some interesting material for those who end up house bound over Easter.