

Health centred orthodontics: Contemporary treatment modalities proving globally popular

By Matt Darcy, Dental Researcher

Change is inevitable in all industries and the orthodontic profession is no exception. The Australian Society of Orthodontists (ASO) website now recognises “in some cases, early orthodontic treatment to expand the upper jaw and eliminate habits can help improve breathing patterns and reduce sleep apnoea risk”.¹

Far from the traditional orthodontic mentality where success of treatment was adjudicated by mechanical excellence, increased awareness of the health benefits associated with early treatment and the impact airway obstruction as well as neuromuscular dysfunction can have on craniofacial growth is completely revitalising the industry.

This liberal approach is propelling therapeutic treatment modalities to the fore of the profession, while traditional orthodontic parochialism continues to diminish as a result. It is therefore incumbent upon educational institutions that specialise in health-focused treatments to facilitate professional development opportunities for forward-thinking practitioners and play an important role in the modernisation of orthodontic practices.

Myofunctional Research Co. (MRC), the world's leading health-centred myofunctional orthodontic education provider, has experienced a recent surge in international interest and officials believe the practical delivery of information has driven the dental community to



Figure 1. MRC provides hands-on education of myofunctional treatment techniques for course attendees.

investigate opportunities to diversify their treatment options.

MRC CEO, Dr Chris Farrell, said the company's hands-on seminars are unique due to the first-hand knowledge practitioners receive from the highly respected myofunctional orthodontic professionals on the early treatment of malocclusion, TMJ disorder and airway dysfunction. He added that course attendees are also given the necessary tools to effectively communicate with the parent and patient in order to facilitate treatment motivation.

“The feedback from practitioners around the world indicates a widespread appreciation for applied learning and a preventative approach to treatment,” Dr Farrell said.

“We hosted a course on the Gold Coast in December and were amazed to see that more than a hundred Chinese delegates had flown to Australia to attend the three-day training course,” Dr Farrell said. “China is currently experiencing an epidemic of health issues and as a result, we have seen a new-found interest in our therapeutic approach to orthodontic treatment.”

Although MRC is making headway in China, Dr Farrell has maintained a long-term relationship with another Asian powerhouse for more than a decade.

“The Japanese adopted our health-centred philosophies 15 years ago and the uptake has been tremendous over the last decade,” Dr Farrell said.

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Meanwhile, on the other side of the Pacific, interest in myofunctional orthodontics is growing at a fast rate in North America. MRC America’s Training and Support Manager Tiffnie Martin said the increase in interest over the last 12 months had been significant in her region and believes the highly successful schedule of myofunctional orthodontic seminars relates to the groundswell of practitioners prioritising a more therapeutic approach to orthodontics.

“2017 proved to be a remarkable year for myofunctional orthodontic educational courses. Ninety per cent of our US, Canadian and Latin American courses were sold out months in advance and we are on track to continue this trend in 2018,” Ms Martin said. “Our 2018 global summit is already 75% booked and is sure to sell out as well.

“We have found that dentists of all specialties have a common goal of providing health centred treatment to their patients.”

The growing demand is reinvigorating practitioners’ desire to learn preventative treatment techniques and MRC plans to provide further educational opportunities to the profession through innovative measures that cater for those who are not able to attend a course in person.

MRC Operations Manager, Daniel Smith, unveiled company plans to provide structured online training programs



Figure 2. Myofunctional Research Co. hosted a training seminar in December 2017 that was attended by over 100 Chinese delegates.



Figure 3. Record numbers were in attendance for MRC’s USA Summit in August 2017.

and live streaming seminars which aim to facilitate more educational opportunities for practitioners. “In the age of digital media, online video is one of the most effective communication tools and MRC has listened to the requests of practitioners wanting to learn online. We are aiming to provide more doctors with informative step-by-step training programs which they can undertake in the comfort of their own surroundings and in their own time,” Mr Smith said.

By offering an array of learning opportunities and avenues, MRC is successfully catering to the growing cohort of practitioners who are enthusiastic about the future of health centred orthodontics.

Myofunctional Research Co. (MRC) regularly hosts training seminars throughout Asia, Australasia, Europe and North America. Course attendees learn myofunctional treatment modalities for dysfunctional breathing, TMJ disorders and malocclusion.

If you are interested in attending a myofunctional orthodontic course near you or for more information, visit www.myoresearch.com

References

1. <https://www.aso.org.au/sleep-apnoea-and-orthodontics> [accessed 20 December 2017].