“In the not-so-distant-future, half of all treatments will be done with aligners”

An interview with Dr Sam Daher, Canada

Vancouver orthodontist Dr Sam Daher is one of the world’s leading experts in clear aligner treatment. Having performed more than 4,000 treatments with invisalign, he currently runs two practices entirely specialised in this treatment modality in addition to his other four clinics. At the recent British Orthodontic Conference (BOC) in Brighton in the UK, where he presented a paper on open-bite treatment with clear aligners, Dental Tribune had the opportunity to speak with him about the benefits of digital technology, the future of clear aligners in general and his business model.

Dental Tribune: Dr Daher, this is the first time you have spoken at the BOC. How was your presentation received?

Dr Sam Daher: I have never been to the BOC; but I have spoken in London many times before. I can recall my first talk to a UK audience a couple of years ago. Back then, the interest in invisalign was not what it is today, perhaps owing to a lack of faith in the system. Today, far more experience has been gleaned and we have seen much better results with it, so there is generally more interest from specialists. The attendance of my lecture here in Brighton was amazing. There is clearly much interest and far greater acceptance than before. Also, the questions posed were far more genuine.

Your presentation here in Brighton focused on open-bite treatment with clear aligners. Could you summarise some of your key points for our readers?

One of the main advantages of clear aligners is that with them we can control the vertical dimension. One of the worst things we can do in open-bite treatment is to allow the posterior teeth to push through. With clear aligners, we do not only prevent the posterior teeth from extruding, but actually intrude them a little, when needed, allowing us to control the vertical dimension and close the anterior open bite at a much faster rate than with any other fixed appliance as a matter of fact. Thus, what I aim for is to intrude the posterior teeth when there is already an anterior open bite. With both an anterior and posterior open bite, we create a mandible that simply autotrates and that will help close the anterior open bite.

The first thing one notices when one starts using scanners is that aligners adapt so much better to the teeth because the scan is far more accurate. Second, it allows for an improved patient experience. Using polyvinyl siloxane material is always a hassle and a discomfort for the patient if the material gets into the mouth. Using scanners saves a great deal of time and is more comfortable for the patient. Furthermore, with ClinCheck and digital scanning have advanced clear aligner treatment. What impact have they had on digital technology in the field?”

I have been using scanners for six years and have not taken one conventional impression since.

“Treatment with aligners is not necessarily difficult, but it is a bit different...”

There are certain shortfalls. For example, patient compliance and sometimes teeth do not move as one intended, but that happens with fixed braces too.

Dr Sam Daher

ClinCheck and digital scanning have advanced clear aligner treatment. What impact have they had on digital technology in the field?”

What was obvious here in Brighton is that orthodontics is at a crossroads. What role will clear aligners play in the future, in your opinion?

I believe—and I said that already five years ago—that in ten to 20 years, a much larger portion of the aligner market has actually advanced quite a bit and this development is based on science, technology and experience.”

Thank you very much for the interview.”

Dr Sam Daher

“Aligner treatment is not without its critics. Is there any justification for this, in your opinion?

The aligner market has actually advanced quite a bit and this development is based on science, technology and experience.”

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Thank you very much for the interview.”

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