# Keeping current:

## Key take-aways from the 2nd Oculoplastic Insight Course at Sankt Erik

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I had the privilege to attend the Oculoplastic Insight Course at Sankt Erik, September 25–26. The exemplary course was organized by Associate Professor Eva Dafgård Kopp and Dr. Elin Bohman, both working at Sankt Erik Eye Hosptal. The invited lecturers were world-famous oculoplastic surgeons and well-known lecturers: Naresh Joshi and Richard Caesar, both from the U.K., Richard Allen from the U.S., and Ulrich Schaudig from Germany. Just to gather this elite group for two days of lectures and discussions must be considered an impressive achievement by the organizers.

Each lecturer held a presentation for about 45 minutes, followed by a discussion between the lectures about the presentation, while the other lectures were on the scene . The audience was encouraged to ask questions, which gave rise to lively and interesting discussions. In my opinion, it was organizationally clever to keep all the lecturers at the podium during all the sessions to foster discussions between them. Naturally, one would believe they would share the same opinion in all matters, but as medicine is not an exact science their answers could differ, which brought light to the discussions. For instance, Ric Caesar advised to avoid cosmetic operations of the lower eyelids, while Naresh Joshi was keen to operate on them and even showed elegant movies from his cosmetic operations of the lower eyelids. At the same point, they both agreed that the lower eyelids are trickier than the upper eyelids to operate when the indication is cosmetic.

Various topics regarding the eyelids were presented, and the first lecture by Ric Caesar was about ectropion and entropion with a personal twist. Naresh Joshi followed with lower lid retractions and festoons. In the discussion that followed, the importance of stretching the lower eyelid postoperatively with frost sutures up to at least one week was stressed. A take home message for me was the option of making temporary tarsorrhaphy after inserting a graft in the lower eyelid to keep it stretched and impose a “gymnastic session,” as it forces the graft to move in accordance with the upper eyelid because of the tarsorrhaphy.

Richard Allen’s lectures were, among other things, about corneal neurotization. Patients with lack of corneal sensation have a major risk of corneal problems (neurotrophic keratitis) and, especially when combined with a facial paralysis, there is a great risk of corneal perforation. The surgery transfers a healthy sensory nerve to the eye to guide new nerve growth into the cornea. This reinnervation can restore protective reflexes, promote healing, and prevent severe complications like ulcers and vision loss. A few patients have already been operated in Sweden and the advantages and risks of the operation were discussed. This is for sure something that we will hear more about in the coming years.

The following day started with Uli Schaudig giving a lecture on medical therapy of tumours. Several pathways for the destruction of tumors were shown, including by defining an antigen on them that could be “attacked” by an antibody, so-called immunotherapy. In our arsenal, we already have medications like Vismodegib for basal cells carcinomas and Cemiplimab for squamous cell carcinoma; however, the future will probably give us more medical therapies for various sort of tumors affecting the eyelids and orbit.

Several other aspects of oculoplastic surgery were covered during these two informative days, such as ptosis, trauma, eye lid surgery in obesity patients, eyelid reconstruction post tumor excision, eyelid reconstruction in thyroid patients, and periocular infections including necrotizing fasciitis.

The social event was equally memorable and very well attended. The dinner at the Swedish Society of Medicine showcased delicious food, nice talks, and an almost spontaneous violin concert played by one of the attendees.

In this setting, I would also like to highlight the venue of the course. Many congresses have their venues in large, elegant buildings, but with useless acoustics. The venue of this course was excellent, with all the AV equipment working seamless and with excellent acoustics.

Now we eagerly await the next in this series of courses.

*Karl Engelsberg*