

The fledgling expert

Young implant dentist **Adam Patel** believes learning from the experts and having a philosophical approach to life is the key to success

Can you tell us a bit about your background?

I was born and raised in Leicester, the eldest of four children. Whilst studying for my A-levels at The City of Leicester College I made a concerted effort to seek a career path that would reciprocate and harmonise with my interests and core values. I aspired towards a career path which was diverse and all encompassing – one that immersed my passion for science with art, combining nature with mechanics - a profession where I could express myself, whilst genuinely making a difference to people's lives. Pursuing a career in dentistry seemed the rational choice.

You've undertaken a lot of cosmetic and implant dentistry training – can you tell us about that?

Dental school nurtured me with the fundamentals of the profession and provided a solid foundation from which I could progress and fine-tune my skills within any discipline.

I decided to focus on implantology, combining my interest in full-mouth oral rehabilitation and cosmetics. Together they embodied everything that stimulates me professionally and that I am deeply passionate about – integrating nature with mechanics.

I have invested the five years following dental school in continuous professional progression undertaking a training pathway which has encompassed diplomas from various royal college of surgeons, certification in both restorative and oral surgery and a Master's degree in implantology.

You recently carried out some research on peri-implantitis which is about to be published – can you provide some insight into this?

Peri-implantitis is the progressive destruction of the supporting soft and hard tissues surrounding an implant – a disease that can ultimately lead to the failure of an implant. In the present era, there is no topic which carries more relevance than this in the field of implantology. In collaboration with Professor of oral and maxillofacial surgery Julian Yates we have completed the most current systematic review on the management of peri-implantitis worldwide. Collating

Fact file

Qualifications: BDS MFDS RCS Ed MFDS RCPSPG PG Cert Rest, MSc in Implantology

Position: Associate practitioner, visiting clinician, Implantology mentor and lecturer

Dental interests: Oral reconstructive, Implantology, cosmetics and short-term orthodontics

Interests out of dentistry: Globetrotting, philosophy, adrenaline-fuelled activities, sport

information from international studies on the subject area, the review aims to provide a consensus on the management of the disease that is continually increasing in prevalence globally. The paper will be published in an international implant journal shortly.

You have achieved a lot at a young age – what do you think is the secret to your success and what keeps you motivated?

Humility is the key. Honestly, in my own mind, I haven't achieved at all yet. I am often told that I am very ambitious, determined and focused - but I am still some distance from reaching my objectives in life. Every milestone thus far is nothing more than a stepping-stone to where I want to be. I take each step as it comes and approach each hurdle very systematically and take heed from the experience of those that have walked the path before me.

You carry out some 'instant ortho' work, having gained accreditation from three different short-term ortho systems. How has this been for you and what do you say to the orthodontists who claim that this is a 'quick fix' method?

Short-term orthodontics is a great instrument to have within any practitioner's armamentarium. It provides an invaluable treatment modality both alone and as part of a more expansive multi-disciplinary treatment approach. It meets the demands of a certain population, it is practical and certainly more affordable. However, I feel a





Adam with the late Professor Per-Ingvar Brånemark

sound basis of orthodontic knowledge is extremely important before embarking on any orthodontic treatment and having the nous for case selection is critical. Short-term ortho can be an adjunct or an alternative to conventional orthodontics for specific cases, but is unequivocally not a replacement by any means.

Your expert field is implantology. What do you enjoy most about your chosen discipline and what is the most satisfying aspect of your work?

The world of implants is fascinating. It is a realm where you incorporate knowledge procured through years of studying the plethora of disciplines within dentistry with the aspiration of achieving a beautifully harmonious symbiotic result resembling nature. It truly encompasses all of the sciences, continuously challenges, requires immense thought, patience and planning. Some present due to neglect, others due to trauma, and others due to disease. I am truly grateful to be in a position where I can help others.

How do you relax in your spare time? How do you balance work and family life?

Spare time? I think that term is eliminated from your dictionary the day you start an MSc! Over the last few years, there has been zero balance. However, if you have the foresight to see beyond, in the grand scheme of things and over a more proportional time-frame the balance will be redressed – so I hope! I am still living a bachelor life, so I hop onto a plane any chance I get and I go and explore a different part of the world. Some of my close friends are scattered across different countries, so any opportunity is an excuse to go and visit. I love sport and adrenaline-fuelled activities. The gym is also



Certification from Paul Tipton

useful for releasing stress. In addition, family is extremely important to me and I always try to spend quality time with my siblings.

Are there any dental professionals that you admire?

An abundance. Some I admire for their dedication and accomplishments within the profession and others for their inspiration, contribution and progressive influence in my own career.

Firstly, Professor Callum Youngson, head of Liverpool Dental School, for keeping me from veering off the path during my rebellious years as an undergraduate. He keeps a watchful eye over me and I have the utmost respect for him. Professor Paul Tipton for his incredible motivation and appetite for teaching. Honestly, his passion for dentistry is infectious and he has played a pivotal role in my progress.

P-I Brånemark, firstly for his monumental discovery and the subsequent changes that have followed in people's lives worldwide. He invited me to his home earlier last year in Mölndal, Sweden, where I spent some time one-to-one discussing the whole spectra of life, dentistry and implants. He was a truly remarkable human being. I feel extremely honoured to have forged a relationship with Professor Brånemark and the knowledge and wisdom he has passed on to me is invaluable. He will be sadly missed.

Colin Campbell, a specialist oral surgeon with whom I connected from our very first dialogue. Colin is an incredibly wise man, with deep entrenched morals, remarkable ethos and a splendid foresight.

I must also add Professors Julian Yates and Craig Barclay, Nigel Saynor, Hassan Maghaireh, Amin Aminian, Jon Rees and Mark Edmunson to my list, all of whom are outstanding clinicians of international calibre and I have had the pleasure of working alongside.

What are your plans for the future?

I would like to create a multi-disciplinary centre-of-excellence and reconstructive work at some stage with implants being the main focus. I have been offered an opportunity to lecture on implantology and would like to develop this side of my profile over the coming years.

I undoubtedly enjoy journalism, so will continue to write for the newspapers and dental publications. I am currently in discussion with one publication to start a blog-esque style column to guide younger colleagues. I am also working on an antibiotic study at the moment and plan to carry out further studies within the field of implantology in the future. Oh, and I would love to collaborate with some of my more esteemed colleagues to write a book on implantology.

In the future, I would like to go back to my primitive Africa and help set up a sustainable oral health programme and help empower local clinicians with skills and means to serve the neediest within the community. And of course, at some point I would love a family and some children!

Do you have any advice for young dentists?

It is imperative to one's own development to reflect upon your character frequently and observe every aspect of your life in perspective. If you have made it through five years at dental school then you certainly possess an array of qualities to succeed.

Feel honoured to be part of such an amazing profession. Find what you love about it and endeavour to be the best you can be at it. Seek out people that you admire and aspire to emulate – learn from them. Remember, you may get knocked down once or twice, but it will only make you grow stronger. Finally, if someone offers you a ride in the elevator to success – don't take it! It is an illusion, trust me, there is no elevator – the only way up is via the stairway. [PD](#)



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