

SMILE WITH CONFIDENCE

No one understands the importance of a lovely smile better than Dr Andrew McCance. **Lucy Ryan** meets the groundbreaking orthodontist who has developed a new technique to help you enjoy beautiful straight teeth

Dr Andrew McCance likes to break boundaries. With over 27 years' clinical experience, which includes working with children with serious facial deformities at Great Ormond Street Hospital and with the Sri Lankan Cleft Palate Project in Sri Lanka, he has developed new techniques to make sure that the trauma traditionally associated with orthodontic work is a thing of the past. His latest treatment – a revolutionary clear brace – is a development that is encouraging people who would not normally consider treatment to bite the orthodontic bullet.

'In the States, almost half of adults wear braces and it's totally acceptable,' says Dr McCance. 'However, here about one in a thousand do. Older people now want straight teeth, but they don't want the stigma of wearing unsightly braces with metal and wires in their mouth, discolouration of teeth or impaired speech.'

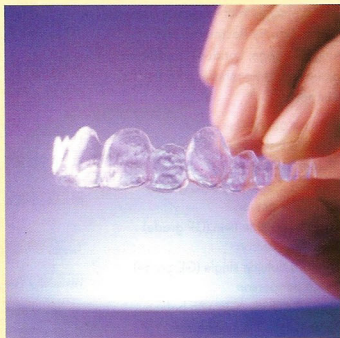
To reduce such stigma, Dr McCance and his team began to develop a clear brace in the mid 1990s, building on work already undertaken in the States. Now his pioneering product, the invisible ClearStep brace is proving particularly popular with adults.

'Our clear brace system really works,' says Dr McCance. It's discreet, easy to wear, pain-free and hygienic. You clean your teeth as normal, your speech is unaffected and you can even take it out for business meetings and for social occasions. The adults who have benefited from the treatment would never have darkened the door of an orthodontist were it not for this kind of system. It's great to see.'

Dr McCance loves to see the way in which his work changes people's lives. 'Through my

work, I've seen people's personalities seriously transform. Children and adults who never smile come in and when they leave they are beaming. Having a lovely smile literally transforms their outlook and confidence.'

Joan Keeley is a case in point. For 50 years, she lived with an ugly gap in her front teeth. 'I hated my smile,' she says. 'I felt incredibly self-conscious and in photos, my mouth was always shut or my hand covered my mouth.'



“People didn't even know I was wearing a brace,”

Last year, she consulted Dr McCance and after seven months of ClearStep treatment, the gap in her teeth was closed. 'It's made such a difference,' she says. 'I have so much more confidence and can't stop showing off my smile.' She was delighted and surprised by the simple, discreet process. 'People didn't even know I was wearing a brace,' she says. 'I had to tell people I was wearing one.'

Enjoying a lovely smile is not simply a

question of vanity, confirms Dr McCance. 'Your smile makes an instant impression and research shows that, after the eyes, your mouth is the second thing that people assess upon meeting someone,' he says. 'People with bad teeth often worry about meeting people, about smiling and laughing. It can hinder their social interaction and they may develop habits to hide their teeth. It's also been well documented in studies that if you have a nice smile, you'll do better in interview situations and in terms of career success.'

Over the last 13 years, Dr McCance and his team of 50 have provided the highest possible standards of treatment to about 50,000 children. In addition, his pioneering research work into 3-Dimensional Measurement of Surgical Change is now reaching the clinical trial stage: an exciting development that Dr McCance hopes will revolutionise the accuracy with which facial surgery is conducted.

It is this sense of striving to make orthodontic treatment better and more accessible to people that motivates Dr McCance. 'The smile fascinates me,' he says. 'There's nothing more rewarding than seeing someone come in with a messy smile and see them leave with beautiful straight teeth. I also include free teeth whitening at the end of treatment and love to see the reaction of the patients when they see their smile is brighter too.'

For more information about ClearStep treatment in London contact Dr Andrew McCance BDS (Glas) FDS RCPS (Glas) DOrth Morth RCS (Eng) MSc PhD (Lond) on 020 7486 6917 or visit www.clearstep.co.uk