

# Meet

## Adj Associate Professor Mehdi Rahimi

Ahead of the Rotary Endodontics workshop in November, Brooke Evans-Butler caught up with endodontist Adj Associate Professor Mehdi Rahimi

Despite a background in gene therapy and biomedical sciences, Mehdi moved into dentistry because of a long-held admiration for a distant uncle, Professor Mahmoud Torabinejad.

After three years of working in dentistry, Mehdi stood at the crossroad between orthodontics and endodontics. Mehdi decided to pursue orthodontics, but quickly found it wasn't a good fit – and that the parts of his work he was most enjoying were pointing him towards endodontics.



“At the time, I was working as a dentist in areas where patients couldn't afford expensive dentistry and were not fans of referring out to specialists, so I ended up treating a lot of emergency cases,” he recalls. “After seeing a lot of trauma cases, I realised I would really enjoy endodontics, so started specialist training in this field.”

Although he loves it now, Mehdi reveals he didn't enjoy endo initially.

“My first few months out were terrible,” he admits. “I had one misadventure with a perforation through a tooth and I thought: ‘I hate endodontics.’ But with patience, persistence and hard work I found procedures I really disliked became easier and easier with time.”

Mehdi now teaches endodontics nationally and internationally, which means travelling often (he was waiting to board a plane when we spoke). However, despite all the time spent away from home, Mehdi says he is in his element when he teaches.

“When you get so much thanks and appreciation from people attending courses it drives you. It makes you want to do more and is very rewarding.”

Mehdi finds a real satisfaction in teaching dentists: “Dentists do 75% of all endodontic therapies,” he says. “We often get the difficult ones.”

Aside from teaching and his work as Principal Endodontist at Gentle Endodontics, Mehdi wears many other hats. He is the current president of the Australian Society of Endodontology (NSW branch), the immediate past president of the Australian Asian Association of Dentists, a fellow of the International College of Dentists (FICD), a fellow of the Pierre Fauchard Academy, a member of the Australian Dental Association (NSW) Education and Research Committee, a member of the Royal Australian College of Dental Surgeons in Endodontics, and a member of the Australian and New Zealand Academy of Endodontists. He is the father of a toddler, so finding balance at both work and home is crucial. He also sponsors the Sydney University Dental Rugby team, which involves spending time

with the students/players, attending practice games as well as the final matches (the team recently won the cup by beating their arch rivals Medical School 26-12).

“Having many roles is difficult and is a daily challenge,” Mehdi says. “The way I calm myself down is with my hobbies. I do yoga, although the first time I did it I fell on someone and I didn’t think I would do it again,” he laughs. “Now, when I am at my Parramatta practice, I do a half-an-hour yoga session with one of my senior nurses at the park, which is walking distance from the practice and that calms me. I also play badminton once or twice a week and a heavy session of cardio.”

Mehdi is surrounded by a great team and says his amazing practice manager and staff (who are like family to him) ensure his three Gentle Endodontics practices run smoothly. “I do a lot of allocation of tasks because I know one person cannot do everything,” he says.

One part of Mehdi’s schedule not slowing down is his teaching schedule – with Mehdi heading to Perth in November for the upcoming Rotary Endodontics workshop on November 23.

The full-day course will introduce participants to the most clinically relevant rotary NiTi systems and will teach state-of-the-art evidence-based techniques for root-canal preparation and obturation.

The course will cover:

- How to best select and use contemporary rotary NiTi file systems.
- How and when to use an electronic apex locator to greatly improve the accuracy and efficiency of working length determination.
- An effective irrigation regimen based on current best evidence.
- How to integrate instrumentation and obturation to improve efficiency and achieve predictable results.
- Troubleshooting common endodontic procedural problems.

“I think most dentists in Western Australia might have not adopted rotary endodontics as quickly as the other States, so we want to teach revolutionised rotary endodontics,” Mehdi says.

“We’ll also teach how to locate calcified canals, such as the MB2 canal,” he adds. “This canal is there in 90% of cases but is difficult to find, so we teach an up-to-date technique to find its location – and this is something that drives many dentists to attend our course.

“I am hoping they get a very good overview of endodontics, and take away further technical skills that they can then practice on plastics before they go to the patient.”



## Five minutes with Mehdi Rahimi

### Which three words best describe you?

Hard-working individual. I put a lot of effort into everything I do.

### If you weren’t in the dentistry field, what would you be doing for a living?

I would be in research in gene therapy. I finished my honours and was going to do a PhD in gene therapy.

### What do you do in your spare time?

I enjoy playing the piano, which gives me a bit of calm. I have a grand piano and that is something I love. I love classical and jazz music. One of my favourite radio stations, which my nurses get sick of, is a French station called Cherie Zen. You go into your zen place when you listen to it.

### Who is your favourite band/musician?

I come from the era of Bon Jovi and Guns and Roses, but I really like Eros Ramazzotti and am hoping he will tour Australia – or I will need to take my wife to Italy to see him in concert.

**NOV23**  **WA DENTAL CPD**

**Rotary Endontics** presented by Dr Mehdi Rahimi and Dr Mark Johnstone, will be held at UWA Dental School on Saturday, November 23.