

SPECIALTY LENSES

Behind the Headlines: Menicon Acquires #1 Keratoconus Lens

Last fall, Menicon acquired the Rose K brand from New Zealand-based Rose K International, further enhancing Menicon's position as a global leader in contact lenses. What does this mean to practitioners? Here's what will change and what will stay the same.

Business as usual

The good news for contact lens practitioners is that the Rose K contact lens they have come to rely on for their keratoconus patients continues to be manufactured to the same high standards by the same labs, using the same pricing structure. Practitioners continue to work with their Rose K suppliers as they did before the acquisition.

"The purchase by Menicon of Rose K does not change the existing distribution arrangements except, potentially, in countries where Menicon has a subsidiary," says Jonathan Jacobson, general manager, global strategy and operations, Menicon Company Ltd. "In those markets, it is possible the Menicon subsidiary will also offer Rose K lenses.

"In addition, there is an ongoing strategic cooperation with Bausch & Lomb, and

where Boston was the material of choice for Rose K lenses, this has not changed," Mr. Jacobson says.

Practitioners who would like to order a Rose K lens in Menicon Z material may contact their Rose K distributor for availability.

Growing the brand and the market

Even better news for practitioners is Menicon's plan to launch two new Rose K products next year. "These products will enhance the breadth of products from Rose K to fit keratoconus and irregular corneas," Mr. Jacobson says.

Another strategy that has not changed is the drive to expand the availability of Rose K lenses throughout the world. To that end, Menicon continues to work closely with the former owners, Dr. Paul Rose and Mr. Ian Jennings.

"Dr. Rose continues to work for the Rose K brand as a consultant for Menicon," Mr. Jacobson says. "In this role, he works on new product development, technical support to the Rose K manufacturers and distributors around the world, and as a

spokesperson for Rose K at seminars and conferences. In fact, Dr. Rose has just begun a 2-month tour during which he will speak at meetings in Germany, Austria, France, Croatia, Italy, Spain, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Egypt, United Arab Emirates, China and Hong Kong."

Positive changes

As a result of the acquisition, the Rose K brand is now managed from within Menicon's global operations group, which is based in Nagoya, Japan. This is a change that is likely to have little to no impact on practitioners. What will have an impact is the allocation of new resources to the Rose K brand.

According to Mr. Jacobson, Menicon's support of Dr. Rose's speaking tours is just one example of the company's commitment to the brand. Menicon will also support: attendance at leading industry meetings with Rose K exhibits; development of Web-based training on contact lens fitting for keratoconus and irregular corneas; development of a topography-based system for fitting Rose K lenses; and annual meetings of Rose K manufacturers to share ideas and expand the use of best practices. ■



Menicon management and Rose K manufacturers from around the world learn details of the Rose K acquisition and the new business structure at the Rose K "Kick-off" meeting in Nagoya, Japan, in December.



Left to right: Dr. Hidenari Tanaka, CEO and president of Menicon Co. Ltd., Chairman Kyoichi Tanaka, founder of the Menicon Company, Dr. Paul Rose and Mr. Ian Jennings, cofounders of Rose K International, celebrate the acquisition of the Rose K lens business by Menicon Co. Ltd.