Creating new possibilities with All-on-4
How one lecture on the All-on-4 treatment concept changed the course of a young clinician’s career

by Dr. Po-Chih Hsu, China

I work in a hospital where many patients suffering from edentulism are business travelers or cancer patients and simply do not have time to wait for bone grafting procedures to be completed. Attending a lecture by Dr. Paulo Maló in Taipei, Taiwan, in 2012 was a seminal moment in my career as a clinician.

As Maló explained the principles of the All-on-4 treatment concept, I realized what an incredible opportunity it presented. For me, this graftless technique was revolutionary. I saw immediately that it offered me a way to restore quality of life for my edentulous patients.

Development and support

Of course, before I could start treating patients, I first needed to develop the skills required to implement the concept safely and effectively. As the lecture had been organized by Nobel Biocare, I turned to them for advice, and I could not have been happier with the response.

Nobel Biocare provided the opportunity for me and my prosthodontist to train at the Malo Clinic. This gave me a fantastic grounding in the concept and teamwork, but the support from Nobel Biocare did not end there. We stayed in close contact, and they helped secure mentors that I could turn to as I conducted my All-on-4 treatments.

From T & E to TV

Our partnership continued, and last year, we worked together on a public outreach campaign for the hospital where I work. In collaboration, we developed marketing materials and visual aids to support the program. This entailed a substantial public awareness drive as well, and as part of this, I appeared on national television to provide expert insight into how the All-on-4 treatment concept benefits the patient, particularly when it comes to cost, time and the lower number of surgeries required, since grafting can be avoided.

Featured alongside me were former denture wearers whose lives had been transformed by the treatment. As they described the improvements they had experienced, not just in esthetics, but in being able to eat more nourishing food, it was another important moment for me. It highlighted again the revolutionary nature of All-on-4.

Since introducing the All-on-4 treatment concept, I have also seen an increase in patient flow, which, of course, is a boost for business.

I have now treated over 100 patients according to the concept, and the demand has been so great that I have had to start a waiting list for new cases.

Start your journey

I understand that some clinicians might be wary of taking time out to train in a new treatment concept. All I can say is that for me it has been a fantastic success, and it was made possible by a great partnership with Nobel Biocare. If you are considering it, I would really recommend giving your local Nobel Biocare team a call. Why not see where your All-on-4 journey could take you?

More to explore!

To see Hsu speaking on Taiwanese television (with English subtitles), please visit http://bit.ly/drhsu.
"It is not about counting the seconds... it is about making every second count"

An interview with Dr. Pascal Kunz, Vice President of Product Management for Digital Dentistry at Nobel Biocare

By Dental Tribune International

Dr. Pascal Kunz: Digital technologies are changing the way we do things in many fields and in our daily lives. A great example of how such technologies has successfully introduced new behaviors is GPS-based navigation. In the past, getting from A to an unknown B was time-consuming and involved a great deal of preparation. One had to buy a map and constantly refer to it to find one’s way to a new destination, ask for directions, etc.

Today, with seamless built in GPS technology in cars or smartphones, one can focus on driving and combine patient information with the click of a button. What’s more, the digital technician can be involved from the very start of the procedure—and this is, of course, essential when beautiful and long-lasting prostheses are the goal. Planning with the outcome in mind and all of the relevant information available in one place is definitively helping us to identify pitfalls upfront and treat patients better.

To return to the initial travel analogy, when it comes to predictability, it is crucial that both parties—the clinician as the driver and the patient as the passenger—have the same expectations of the destination they will reach once the journey is over. Digital technologies help visualize the procedure, the positive impact the treatment will have on the patient’s quality of life and the final outcome, and—even more important for the patient—hep minimize treatment time. In this respect, we at Nobel Biocare believe that it is our job to provide proven technologies and make it part of protocols that can be safely replicated and taught to others.

In your opinion, what characterizes the state-of-the-art digital workflow in dental practice today?

A true digital workflow is straightforward and as close as possible to the natural way of treating a patient. Ideally, it is closely connected to the clinician’s diagnostic tools. With SmartFusion technology, for example, he or she is able to take any CBCT or intra-oral scan and combine these in a fast and easy way to obtain a fully automatic diagnostic setup of the missing teeth, which he or she can send to the laboratory and use to order the surgical template from Nobel Biocare.

In short, the digital workflow allows the clinician to use the same technology for diagnostics and communication with the dental technician, reducing the number of visits and therefore the time to teeth. The goal with this technology is to achieve quality treatment according to a three-visit approach—diagnosis, surgery (including provisioning) and restoration—and this ensures that the time spent with the patient is used as efficiently as possible. It is not about counting the seconds when the patient is in the chair, it is about making every second count.

How does Nobel Biocare encourage dental professionals to adopt digital technologies?

The Nobel Biocare Global Symposium is one of our most important endeavors in this respect. Every three years, all of our greatest lecturers and thought leaders gather at the event to jointly review and discuss current products and to help us introduce new solutions to our customers and provide training. After such a landmark event, through our expert salesforce at Nobel Biocare, who have been a key part of the digital evolution in implantology, we then continue to train and educate dental professionals all over the globe on the advantages of digital technologies at a more local level.

Our focus is to bring our innovations to those who want to make a difference and share our philosophy that the best treatment can only be delivered through a combination users digitally. How has the system been received?

Since the introduction of SmartFusion three years ago at the last Nobel Biocare Global Symposium, we have seen a tremendous uptake in North America, as dentists increasingly started to team up with their dental technicians once they understood the impact and benefits for all parties involved, including the prevention of costly mistakes in the implant planning, placement and restoration process. On a global basis, we have seen a very promising and continually increasing uptake. Of course, the adoption of new technologies takes time, but today we already have over 11,500 registered NobelClinician installations. We can see that the profession really understands the advantages of integrated solutions, namely predictability, productivity and profitability—not only in a commercial sense, but also in terms of reducing the time and cost of treatment and restorations, and most importantly, increasing patient satisfaction.

What position will Nobel Biocare hold in the global digital dentistry market, and what are the main challenges in the near future?

We are confident that Nobel Biocare will have a very strong position. Within the Danaher group, dentistry is an important focus area, and within that dental platform, the Nobel Biocare team has a major role to play in advancing the global digital dentistry offering and becoming a leader in the field. Our focus is firmly on continuing to provide value to our customers, who stand to benefit from our synergies with the other brands in Danaher’s dental platform. The future looks extremely bright for Nobel Biocare and our new colleagues at Danaher, for our customers and for their patients. We have some great ideas in the works.

About

Dr. Pascal Kunz received his medical and dental degrees from the University of Basel in Switzerland. He has worked clinically in surgical departments and as a dentist in both private practice and the department of reconstructive dentistry at the University of Basel. In 2007, Kunz joined Nobel Biocare, where he is now responsible for the Digital Dentistry Product Management team for Danaher’s dental platform.
“Visual stimulation is an extremely powerful tool”

by Dental Tribune International

Dental Tribune International: Dr. MacLean, could you please introduce yourself to the readers by sharing some details about your professional background?

Dr. Scott MacLean: I have been a dentist for close to 25 years, with a main focus on dental-implant-related practice, both placement and restoration. My passion is to provide and teach dental implantology and improve quality of life. I have lectured internationally on these topics and have taught in the implant elective at the Faculty of Dentistry at Dalhousie University in Canada for more than ten years and it is now part of the overall curriculum. For about the same time, I have been involved with Nobel Biocare and the launch of new products, such as the NobelActive implant, NobelProcera system and different bone grafting materials.

The topic of today’s discussion forum at the Nobel Biocare Global Symposium is partnering for life. Could you briefly describe what attendees can expect?

At the forum today, I will be talking about how dentists can improve communication with their patients in order to encourage them to value dental implants and understand why they should have them. One of the main issues in this respect is that dentists should explain and illustrate the benefits of dental implants for quality of life. We have to get patients excited and interested by educating them. As the patient population ages increasingly, longevity is becoming a major topic in all areas of health care. There will be more older people who want quality of life, which is why they will have their hips replaced even at an advanced age, and if they are convinced about the benefits, they will want the same for their mouth in order to eat, smile, kiss and speak better.

According to your experience, what approaches and tools can help dental professionals grow their practice and increase patient flow?

There are many things we cannot describe. Thus, the most effective approach is to stimulate patients visually, so this enhances their limbic system and helps them make decisions. NobelClinician Software can be a great asset in this regard, so it can be used not only as a planning tool but also as an educational tool. Dentists can show their patients different aspects of the treatment outcome, which is what they are most interested in. This is comparable to the booking process in a travel agency. If you want to go to Hawaii, the agent will not show you pictures of hour-long flights but images of the beach to help you visualize your final destination. We sometimes focus too much on the details of the procedure itself, which might scare the patient and make him or her apprehensive about treatment. Visual stimulation is an extremely powerful tool and helps the patient get more involved in the treatment.

In your opinion, what are the indications that are most challenging for dental implantologists, and how can the software help facilitate treatment of these cases?

The most important advantage of using NobelClinician is that one can draw on a great deal of information, especially about anatomical structures, and this capability was not available in the past in the early stages of implant planning, before even starting treatment. This helps increase precision and accuracy tremendously. Placing implants should always be both precise and accurate. However, this is not always the case. At a recent scientific meeting, I learned that only about 30 percent of implants are placed in the right position.