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Dr Sharma during Bio-Oss practical

Review of A Very Practical Implant Course 2004 **By Dr Suresh Sharma**

I think like many of my colleagues I genuinely came to a stage in my career where I wanted to take my Practice into another direction. I also found a number of my loyal, longstanding patients expressing an interest in dental implants. Hence I began to search for an implant course which would fulfil my needs.



Dr Allen teaching us anatomy

There are so many implant courses available I have to admit I found it quite confusing as to which one I should sign up for. I asked a number of my colleagues who had already completed courses about their experiences. It came as a surprise that a vast majority of them still did not have the confidence to place implants. It was at this point that I noticed an advert for 'The Most Comprehensive Implant Course in the UK,' and it claimed that each student will place 10 implants into 'real patients' under supervision. I really didn't fancy experimenting on my patients so this course appeared to be exactly what I was looking for.



Dr Asghari, Dr Sharma, Dr Najefi, Dr Zafar (behind) during another 'Hands On' session

London Modules

Each module was run on Friday, Saturday and half day on Sunday. The quality of the speakers were first class, and many of them had well over 15 years in the field. We were always encouraged to at each module to bring in our potential cases and use our tutors for mentoring.

The modules in London consisted of the following topics:

1. A general introduction into Implantology and an overview of the course
2. Periodontology and its relationship to aesthetics and implantology
3. Anatomy, medico-legal issues and suturing practical
4. Occlusion and prosthetics
5. Guided Tissue regeneration
6. Advanced implant surgery
7. Complications and treatment planning



A typical Saturday evening eating dinner together

All the modules were excellent, but I think my personal favourite was Dr Andre Saadoun who not only simplified perio for me, but showed us all the simple periodontal procedures we can all carry out in our day to day practices (crown lengthening, gingivectomies, connective tissue grafts etc).



Dr Habib and Dr Curran taking impressions

Dr Appolonius Allen A.K.A 'Dr Numb' taught us anatomy and really simplified it in a way that it really stuck in my head (who ever thought that was possible!).

We also had a number of superb practicals, one on suturing (how, which type, where and why) where we practised on animal heads. Another on synthetic jaws where we practised handling and using Bio-Oss and Bio Guide (materials I never knew existed before this course) on both teeth and implants. Of course there were other important practicals such as placing implants into synthetic jaws, impression taking etc.



Group photo outside the University of Paris

University of Paris

I really didn't know what to expect at Paris apart from the fact we had to sit an examination.

On Friday morning we were split up into pairs and had a 'fresh cadaver' between us.

The first session was basic anatomy.

We were shown how and where to find the relevant structures on a large screen and then had to carry out the procedure on the cadaver. It was absolutely fascinating!

In the 2nd session we began to place implants into the cadavers and we had a great feel for how it felt to drill into human bone and how to reflect the tissues.

The evening was topped off with some good food and some great French wine.



Dr Allen teaching anatomy on 'fresh' cadavers

On Saturday, we spent some more time placing implants and then were

taught how to carry out a sinus lift using both internal and external techniques. Geistlich had kindly provided us with some samples of Bio-Oss and Bio-Guide so we were able to practice some of our skills we had learnt from the London modules.

I never thought I would ever carry out a sinus lift so it was a great feeling to have now had the experience.



Sitting the exam

Late in the afternoon we had our examination and I was pleased to find out that same evening, at a Jazz club (where we also had our presentations) that I had passed. What a relief!



Treatment planning

University of San Pedro

This was the bit everyone was looking forward to the most. I arrived a couple of days earlier so that I could have a relaxing weekend and get ready for the week ahead.

We were split up into 4 groups.

One group did the treatment planning while the other 3 groups carried out the treatment plan in the surgical area. Each group had a tutor to supervise.



Ready for surgery

On day 1, I was involved in treatment planning. We were working besides the undergraduates, and one had to admire their skills and dedication as they worked with limited resources.



Placing an implant in a patient under supervision

Initially I found the language a little difficult but we had translators (undergraduates who were bi-lingual) and they worked tirelessly with us from morning til night.

We would clerk in the patients, take impressions, radiographs, and then carry out tracings of the OPG in order to assist in constructing a treatment plan. If the case was straight forward and the patient wanted to have the treatment carried out, their details were given to one of the surgical groups were they would carry out the necessary treatment. If a patient needed a graft they would be placed on the grafting list, and will be treated by students on the Advanced training program.



Implants in position

From Day 2 onwards I was in the surgical area.

I was partnered by Dr Promodh Datta and Dr Mohammed Asghari. Each of us had a specific role, for example: If I was doing the surgery, Dr Datta would be the main nurse and Dr Asghari would be the runner. Dr Datta would have to prepare and disinfect the area, while Dr Asghari would get all the instruments etc together. While they would do this, I would assess the treatment plan and verify it with my tutor.

The whole thing worked very well, as you gain a better understanding of the different roles when carrying out implant surgery. Cross infection was taken very seriously, as it should be.



Time to relax on the beach after a hard week of surgery

My first implant was to replace missing teeth in the Lower left 5/6 region (2 implants). I was quite anxious and hesitant but it seemed as if my Tutors confidence in me and his reassurance really helped. I can vividly recall preparing the implant site for the first time, I was sweating and nervous but when I had placed the 2 implants into position I had a real adrenaline rush, a real sense of achievement.

My first 2 implants took 90 minutes, and my 10th implant took only 20 minutes.

After having done my first 6 implants I could feel my confidence increasing and my suturing improving (thank God for the suturing module in London).

I must say a big thank you to all of my course tutors, especially to Dr Nadeem Zafar whose guidance and hard work is much appreciated. Even since I have completed the course he has always been there to help me with my cases. It is nice to know that we are not abandoned now that we have completed the course, and this is just as important as the course itself.

I came onto the course with minimal surgical experience, and now I feel confident enough to carry out dental implant surgery for my patients.

I definitely recommend this course to everyone and anyone interested in placing Dental Implants. They say that you have to pay for quality and I have to say it has been a phenomenal journey and a wonderful, very positive life changing experience.