

Fig. 1

Fig. 2

**Fig. 1:** Georg Isbaner, Editorial Manager of *implants* (left), and Hans Geiselhöringer, President of Nobel Biocare Systems, at IDS 2019. **Fig. 2:** Visitors to IDS could gather information on the new Mucointegration™ concept at the booth of the dental implant company.

## A pipeline filled with groundbreaking innovations

At the 2019 International Dental Show (IDS), Georg Isbaner, Editorial Manager of *implants*, spoke with Nobel Biocare Systems President Hans Geiselhöringer about the novel Mucointegration™ concept, the role that the ceramic implant system NobelPearl plays in the portfolio of the company and what participants can expect from the Global Symposium in Madrid this summer. In addition, he shared a few details about the new implant system Nobel Biocare N1, which is coming to markets soon.

**Mr Geiselhöringer, judging by your presence here at IDS, there seems to be a lot of movement at Nobel Biocare right now.**

You're right about that. Innovation is the bedrock of our strategy. For several years now, we've been working intensively to bring a number of groundbreaking products to the market that will change implant dentistry as we know it. We have introduced some quite significant innovations in the past and we are constantly aiming to advance the development of our products even further. That's why we have put our heads together and invested a great deal in the development of a new and advanced surface technology comprising the implant, the abutment and the soft-tissue interface in particular. Here at

IDS 2019, we are proud to present this brand-new concept under the name Mucointegration™.

**What exactly does this term mean?**

Up to this point, implantology has been primarily focused on the integration of the implant with the bone. In recent years, however, the focus has shifted more and more to the soft tissue, as it is a very important factor for long-term aesthetics. In my opinion, there have not been enough solutions available so far to pursue this approach reliably and sustainably. With our new surfaces, we are now able to meet patients' demand for solutions that provide not only immediate function and shorter treatment times but better long-term results and aesthetics too. Necessary studies to back this claim also exist now. There has always been a strong focus on roughness when it comes to developing implant surface technologies. Yet, this is not the only factor responsible for successful osseointegration. Another important factor is surface chemistry. An effective implant surface has to be made by means of a special form of anodisation. With this in mind, we have developed our Xeal surface for the abutment and the soft-tissue interface on the upper implant head.





Mucointegration™ is a concept that requires entirely new investments in research, development and production. It was clear to us, however, that there are so many unresolved issues which today's implant dentistry has yet to address. This goes contrary to the belief of some that there are no real innovations left to be made in this field. We have devoted ourselves to these issues and have made enormous improvements in almost every vital step in implant therapy. We have combined these advances into one implant system, Nobel Biocare N1, which will be introduced at our Global Symposium in Madrid in Spain at the end of June 2019. It features easy handling, good predictability of treatment outcomes and an extremely short osseointegration period. I am convinced that it will set new industry standards and I look forward to presenting it to our customers in Madrid this summer.

**With NobelPearl, the Nobel Biocare portfolio features a ceramic implant that plays in the top league. How does this fit into your overall strategy?**

NobelPearl is an important part of our portfolio, although I think that ceramic implantology will most likely continue to be a niche area in the future. However, I can't really predict how this area will develop over the next ten to 15 years. NobelPearl is important to us because there are patients who quite simply demand an all-ceramic solution. I'm not going to go into the advantages or disadvantages ceramics might have compared with other materials. As far as I'm concerned, the only things that count are that an implant is clinically well applicable and scientifically proven. This is definitely the case with NobelPearl.

Moreover, I think it's crucial that a ceramic implant is actually metal-free. With the exception of NobelPearl, there is no such implant at the moment. Most ceramic

systems usually have a metal screw built in. As a patient, I would be upset if I requested a metal-free construction and ended up having a metal screw implanted. I also think that two-piece ceramic implant systems have significant advantages, especially when it comes to the healing phase. Ceramic implants in general are not well suited to immediate loading during this time. However, there are always loading forces, be it through chewing or pressure from the tongue. One-piece ceramic implants do not cope very well with these loading forces and sometimes tend to break during the healing phase. Hence, I would always prefer a two-piece system. I also find two-piece ceramic implants simply more aesthetic. This is just my personal opinion, but I believe many of my colleagues and dentists would agree with me.

**Only recently, you announced a new Nobel Biocare Global Symposia series. What can dentists look forward to at the first of these training events in Madrid this summer?**

For many years, we have organised a global symposium every three years and held national symposia in the years between. However, based on the excellent feedback from our clinical partners on our new products prior to launch, we have decided to organise three global symposia over the next three years instead of only one. One will take place in Europe, one in North America and one in Asia. We really need three global symposia for our numerous advances and innovations to be addressed adequately on a global scale. In Madrid, our new surfaces and the new Nobel Biocare N1 implant system will be presented. At the symposium in the US, the surface will be presented again and Nobel Biocare N1 will be launched. In Asia, we will launch the surface and Nobel Biocare N1 simultaneously.

**“Our new Nobel Biocare solutions can be described as the next generation in implant dentistry...”**

We want to reach as many customers with our symposia as possible because we consider our innovations to be real breakthroughs in implant dentistry. They are yet another step forward in making implant placement procedures even faster, safer and more predictable. Nobel Biocare N1, especially, is so different to what we have been used to and what we considered to be good in the past. It could be described as almost revolutionary, as it brings improvements to every step of the implant treatment. I am already looking forward to the reaction from the audience when we first present Nobel Biocare N1 and reveal the designs and the biology behind it. From

the unique preparation possibilities of the implant bed to the new implant body, Nobel Biocare N1 is amazing in every way. Our R&D teams and the more than 20 universities we have worked with to develop and test the system have done an incredibly good job.

Another factor that is very important when we launch new products is training. At our symposia, we will offer various hands-on courses led by experienced experts who, at that point, will have already been working with our new product for over a year. Based on their feedback and through a peer-to-peer exchange, we will be able to provide dentists with the best possible training and information on our products. Yet, we act as mere organisers of these training courses and the real training can only flourish when experts are training experts. Mentoring and coaching are both topics that are important to us and on which we want to focus even more in the future. In addition, we have established a support network for clinicians who are only starting to use our new products. There, they will be able to contact experts who will be able to provide feedback in the unlikely case that something doesn't work as planned.

**What challenges are connected to establishing the Nobel Biocare Systems umbrella brand? How do you communicate this to dental professionals?**

The innovations that we bring to the market with Xeal, TiUltra and Nobel Biocare N1 are clearly separated from those of our value brands, such as Alpha-Bio Tec, Implant Direct or Logon. Our new Nobel Biocare products can be described as the next generation in implant dentistry and, of course, we are creating the necessary incentives for dentists to invest in them. The surface technology and the protocols used when inserting Nobel Biocare N1 will help many patients to be less afraid before the procedure, and less traumatised and stressed afterwards. In addition to treatment costs, the patient's biggest concern is the pain that is associated with surgery. In order to address this fear, we have to do more research and continue to advance technologies even further.

I am convinced, however, that Nobel Biocare N1 and our new surface technology are giant steps in the right direction. There is still a lot that needs to be improved in implantology: when it comes to digital integration options and

3D pre-planning possibilities, for instance. However, if we look at our All-on-4 treatment concept, it didn't take long for it to become the standard protocol for treating edentulous jaws. I am confident that there are concepts in other areas, as well that we can embrace and improve on in order to do justice to our leadership role in innovation.

Moreover, I am confident that we will bring even more groundbreaking innovations to the market in the next five to seven years. Our surface technology and Nobel Biocare N1 are only the beginning. We will also focus even more on the long-term preservation of soft tissue. This is a crucial area which has not been addressed in implant dentistry at all so far—or only to a limited extent. In order to guarantee healthy soft tissue around the implant, the prostheses and the interface, we need scientifically proven protocols, which unfortunately do not exist yet. However, we are already tackling this issue by developing a new product which will be launched within the next two years.

I am pleased about the fact that we have a pipeline that is filled with groundbreaking innovations, all aimed at optimising the clinical workflow and ultimately making therapy less invasive and time-consuming for patients. At Nobel Biocare, our focus is always on the patient. Our products will also significantly increase the reliability of restorations, so that patients can hopefully live with our implants and prostheses throughout their lives.

**There is still a great need for information regarding the approval of medical products. How do you feel about this?**

It's becoming increasingly difficult to obtain approval for a product. However, I am glad about that. If I were a patient in need of treatment, I would want the product that is used to be safe, medically tested and scientifically proven. This lies within the responsibility of every manufacturer of medical devices. I welcome clear rules on when is a product approved and when is it not.

**Mr Geiselhöringer, thank you for your time.**

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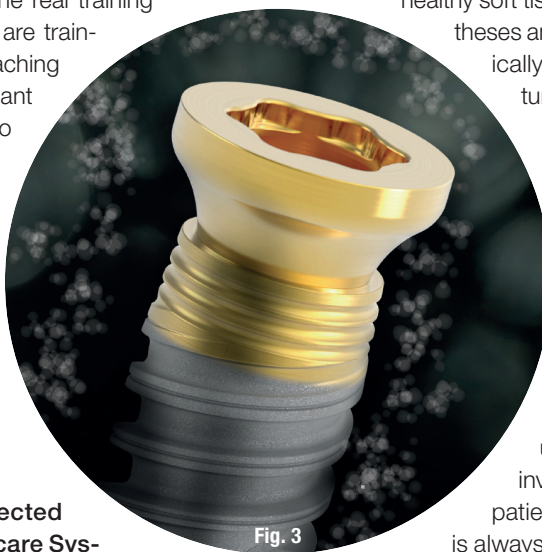


Fig. 3

**Fig. 3:** The new surfaces Xeal and TiUltra are aimed at optimising tissue integration of implants.

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