

Celebrating 40 Years of DGZI in Berlin



Dr med dent Roland Hille

“Nobody could have imagined in 1970 what a success story oral implantology would turn out to be, when seven dentists, headed by Prof Dr Hans L Grafelmann, a dentist from Bremen, founded DGZI. In spite of various negative opinions, mainly from universities, this then-adventurous therapy was established in Germany against the mainstream, thanks to a great deal of perseverance and conviction, an incredible drive and much operative skill. There were a growing number of colleagues who were fascinated by the possibility of fixing dental prostheses on implanted new dental roots, a process which could give patients the feeling of no longer being handicapped.

40 years ago the obligatory tooth conserving methods were incomparable to current means and methods. Thus many patients, especially those with edentulous jaws, could achieve a completely new quality of life courtesy of intraosseous or subperiosteal implants. Let us remember: At that time, we did not have any bone substitutes, membranes etc. at our disposal, all of which are considered absolutely standard today. For the past four decades oral implantology has greatly influenced dental rehabilitation measures, and has without question become the most innovative discipline in dento-maxillo-facial medicine in the last 25 years.

On September 24, 1982, the DGZMK (German Association for Dento-Maxillo-Facial Medicine) approved implantology as a new method for use. Oral implantology also became scientifically in vogue, when universities intensified their research activities, and industrial companies sensed a new market with adequate financial resources.

In the beginning scientific journals referred to implantology as “the red light district in dental medicine”, but nowadays there is no doubt about the important role which this subdiscipline plays in dentistry. Patients actively request this therapy, and any colleagues who underestimate the importance of implantology for the success and future for their own dental practices will be left behind.

DGZI has achieved significant accomplishments in education and advanced training, as up until now university education has not attached that much value to implantology. A postgraduate structured educational program has existed since 1998, which almost 1,500 colleagues have participated in and have learned from implantology specialists and university professors about the state of the art in implantology. Patients increasingly ask for treatment by a “DGZI Specialist in Implantology”, because such specialists often have much more operative skills than those colleagues who obtained a masters degree.

40 years of DGZI is truly a great milestone in Europe's oldest scientific implantological association, an association which also enjoys an extraordinarily good reputation nationally and internationally. The Consensus Conference for Implantology congratulates DGZI heartily and wishes all its members much success and an exciting future in oral implantology.

I hope to see you on the occasion of our anniversary congress on October 1 and 2 in Berlin.

Dr med dent Roland Hille
President of the Consensus Conference for Implantology