

Onward to new horizons

In late 2019, long-standing board member of the German Association of Dental Implantology (DGZI) Dr Georg Bach was elected as new President of the professional society. In this interview, Bach talks about the importance of DGZI, the oldest professional society for implantology in Europe, and what can be expected from the 3rd Future Congress for Dental Implantology, which is set to take place this autumn in Bremen in Germany. The society's 50th anniversary will be celebrated at the congress too.

Dr Bach, there are many other professional implantology associations in Germany. As Europe's oldest professional implantology society, where does DGZI stand in comparison with the others?

One thing upfront: DGZI is well positioned! As a professional society, we are very stable and our members are steadily, albeit moderately, growing in numbers. DGZI is an internationally networked society and over the last decades, strong bonds and friendships have been established on a global scale. Here, I would like to mention our close ties to Japan and the Arab region in particular. Of course, we are not alone in the world. There are

many professional implantology associations. The fact that DGZI is the oldest of all European professional societies is fascinating, but at the same time, it comes with a great deal of responsibility. Mere tradition is not enough to move things forward. A professional society must constantly question and redefine itself. I think that DGZI, by accepting young colleagues on to the board and by being in solidarity with the dental technicians who are also members of the board, has tackled important questions about its future and answered them to a large extent. As far as the other professional associations are concerned, we at DGZI are committed to following the paths that we've previously taken and which have proved to be successful, as we constantly seek to engage in fruitful and harmonious cooperation.

Despite frequent medical and academic collaboration, professional societies are often in competition with one another. Against this background, what distinguishes DGZI?

As is the case with any competition or any market, you can only survive by being appealing and performing well. Every day, you start anew. Yet, what we offer and our

In conversation with Jürgen Isbaner (board member of OEMUS MEDIA AG), Dr Georg Bach (left) reveals DGZI's recipe for success.



range of services seem to have established quite a good reputation for us. Our members are growing in number, and there is a high level of satisfaction among the participants in our training courses and curricula, which speaks for itself. I believe that our highly professional management is the bedrock of DGZI. Here, our board, our office in Düsseldorf and, above all, our business management led by Dr Torsten Hartmann must be mentioned. Moreover, we are making an enormous impact with our German language *Implantologie Journal*. And then there's

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our international magazine *implants*, which is published in 98 countries across the globe and is vital for consolidating our connection with our partners abroad. Internationally speaking, I believe *implants* has a standing that is second to none. I would also like to mention the coaching books by DGZI Vice President and Treasurer Dr Rolf Vollmer, into which he has put an incredible amount of hard work and which have been particularly well received abroad. Lastly, I believe that our Future Congress is something that also sets us apart from the rest.

What in particular makes the Future Congress so special?

It's not easy for professional societies to hold a successful congress every year and we assessed this problem together with our media partner OEMUS MEDIA. The concept of the classic parliamentary seating with a wide variety of parallel podiums has been successful for decades. However, we could see no way of developing this format further. We thus developed the Future Congress—an innovative concept involving first-rate lectures, the transmission of live operations into the conference hall, an extensive range of table clinics and the integrative industry exhibition. At our Future Congress, we raise new questions, try to give satisfactory answers and present new ways of interaction between participants, speakers and the industry. This approach is also reflected in an updated organisational concept in that the original fragmentation of the congress into various different podiums, workshops and side programmes has been eliminated,

and the overall appeal of the conference as an event for practitioners has been more focused. There is now an industry day on Friday and a science day on Saturday. In this way, the event has become particularly attractive to implantologists working in private practice and to the younger generation too.

What can members, scientists and researchers, as well as industry partners, look forward to at your anniversary congress this autumn?

This year, we're celebrating not only 50 years of DGZI but also the birthday of established implantology, thanks to the courage and the visions of the DGZI founders back in the seventies. Back then, our profession was still in its infancy and often even frowned upon, and the formation of a dedicated professional society contributed to establishing implantology in Germany and enabling it to reach the level at which it is today. What we can accomplish today and the techniques we've been able to master are things that even many of us, even though optimistic, would not have dared to hope for back in 1970. I regard our anniversary this autumn as also a birthday for European implantology, and I am pleased that the presidents and board members of other professional societies have accepted the invitation to attend our 3rd Future Congress—the 50th DGZI International Annual Congress—which will be held on 6 and 7 November 2020 in Bremen, the city where DGZI was founded. We are going to reflect on the past and, at the same time, put a strong focus on looking ahead. Indeed, we are facing great challenges: implantology is constantly changing and will be revolutionised in the coming years, owing to rapid advancements made in the field of digitalisation. As a professional society, we'll have to find new ways to guide the next generation on their way forward in the profession. In this respect, we noticed, at our 2019 congress in Munich, that DGZI is becoming increasingly successful in attracting young people. This rejuvenation process has reached the DGZI board too. In addition, last year, we appointed a woman to the board for the first time. As you can see, there's a lot happening at DGZI.

Thank you for these great insights, Dr Bach.

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