



Fig. 3_ Anatomy course: Dr Vollmer supports students at the University Dresden in 2013.



Fig. 4_ Visit and further education at Prof. Leonard Linkow's, New York.

My board colleagues and I maintain foreign relations by regularly attending international conferences in the US and Japan (which has 600 DGZI members currently), among others. During these congresses, we have meetings with the other boards, during which we discuss future joint events or projects, such as meetings and continuing education through curricula that can be developed jointly. We also invite our overseas colleagues to congresses in Germany in order to strengthen our contacts. For example, this year we have established contacts with a university in Mexico City.

How important is the DGZI training programme for international contacts?

The training programme is highly regarded in the Arab world, which has unfortunately suffered political unrest in recent times. Background knowledge is necessary to understand the situation concerning the placement of dental implants. For example, in countries like Saudi Arabia or the United Arab Emirates, we face the following problem: placing a dental implant

without a licence is illegal and punishable by law. Once colleagues in this region have completed a course in implantology similar to the German one, which we offer as a kind of licence issue through our representatives, they undergo an interview, which includes a written and oral examination, by the Ministry of Higher Education to be awarded the licence to legally place implants.

In this regard, some countries have already made substantial progress compared with Germany, where dentists can place implants without any specific qualification. The regulatory bodies in these countries ensure that, most importantly, patients are treated satisfactorily and professionally and that their doctors have the requisite qualifications, as should be the case for any treatment. The government of Qatar, for instance, has taken the next step forward by issuing a law that implants placed by licensed implant dentists will be wholly subsidised by government health care insurance. This must be a paradise for implant dentists with postgraduate education.

Fig. 5_ Dr Rolf Vollmer (left) welcomes a congress participant at the DGZI congress in Dubai 2005.



In addition to running your own practice, you are internationally active and a professor in the Faculty of Oral and Dental Medicine at Cairo University. Could you tell us more about your activities abroad?

My duties at the DGZI, as well as my practice, include promoting the DGZI's reputation. This is usually achieved through lectures on postgraduate education in different countries, which I regularly attend. The intention is to promote the DGZI through sharing expertise. Anything made in Germany is automatically regarded as well-made and reliable. Concerning my professor role at Cairo University, I am there on a regular basis along with other colleagues from the DGZI board. In addition, invited speakers, not necessarily members of the DGZI, give presentations or hold lectures. We have also worked together



with the dental faculty in developing a master's programme, which is being launched this year, specific to the situation in Egypt, which will require a substantial amount of paper work.

So much work and travel certainly needs some balance. What do you do in your leisure time?

In addition to having to balance my activities between the DGZI and my practice, I have a family with three children aged between 13 and 18. Every summer, I go to Spain with my family, where we relax doing all kinds of activities, such as water sports. Furthermore, I try to avoid the health problems that a dentist develops during the course of his or her professional life through poor posture by swimming regularly. I try to keep active during my free time with various activities in the garden and restoration of half-timbered houses.

Where do you see the future of DGZI in relation to other implantology associations?

I foresee the DGZI in the future being among the top of the largest professional associations. To achieve this place, the DGZI board would have to continue pursuing personal contact with our members, which is not something other scientific associations (which might be more university oriented) have succeeded in doing well.

In the future, we will focus on the concerns and interests of colleagues of the younger generation, for example in the young study groups. Positive developments in the Hamburg and Cologne groups have already been seen. A leader of one of the study groups has already been accepted to the extended DGZI board. We have also been addressing our young colleagues' needs by means of a more modern approach, for instance our new e-learning curriculum. During the past thirty years, the DGZI has evolved immensely

from the simple practitioner association it was in the beginning. We have a great mixture of science-based connections to universities and contacts with practitioners. For example, our president, Prof. Dr Herbert Deppe (Clinic and Policlinic for Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery at the Technische Universität München hospital), is a university professor himself and the first assessor of the DGZI board. Prof. K.-O. Henkel is a senior physician and medical director of oral and maxillofacial surgery and plastic surgery in the government military hospital in Hamburg. Several scientific projects have been initiated in recent years, including studies on socket and alveolar ridge preservation, heat generation while drilling, a finite element study on current topics, such as the "All-on-4®" concept, by Dr Paulo Maló, and a three-year study by Prof. Werner Goetz from the Department of Orthodontics at the University of Bonn about the integration of bone replacement materials.

Dr Vollmer, thank you for taking your time for these interesting information.

Fig. 6 Dr Vollmer and his wife Dr Martina Vollmer at the 44th DGZI annual congress.

Fig. 7 Japanese participants at the GBOI exam in 2007.

Fig. 8 Congress in Orlando: (from left) John Minichetti (President AAID), Dr. Mazen Tamimi (DGZI representative Jordan and Middle East) and Dr Rolf Vollmer with his children Nikolaus, Bernadette and Leonard.

