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**Recommended CE Training Protocols**  
**...working toward an industry standard**

The IDIA Advisory Board

As a result of interviews and research prompted by complaints from patients and health care providers, the IDIA has come to the conclusion that the major factor in the significant increases in implant failures and complications across the country is dentists not having comprehensive training before embarking on implant surgery. Unfortunately, numerous training centers and implant companies are making questionable representations in promotional materials, stating that abbreviated courses are fully adequate to begin placing implants and that implant surgery is simple and profitable.

Therefore, as indicated in previous publications, we held meetings with industry leaders and malpractice defense attorney, Arthur W. Curley, JD to discuss the need for training guidelines, as well as concerns that the industry could be facing a crisis of confidence in the future as a result of the increased failures and complications.

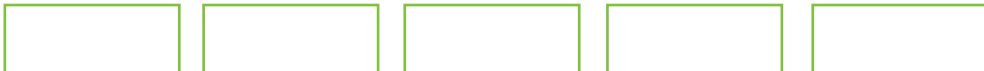
To address these concerns, the IDIA formed a committee that included Mr. Curley, to develop recommendations for training guidelines to meet the legal standard of care. We have based these guidelines on those already established in the U.K., the collective experience of several surgical specialists and restorative dentists, and the knowledge and understanding of the legal ramifications in the United States. These guidelines were subsequently reviewed by numerous general dentists, prosthodontists and surgical specialists who were independent of the committee.

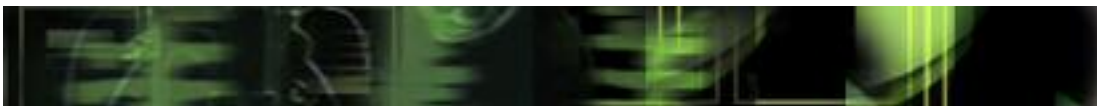
It is not our intention to dictate the structure of CE courses or to establish a specific curriculum for surgical implant training programs. Rather, we seek to provide guidelines for evaluating CE courses to determine whether they cover the recommended areas of study to meet the legal standard of care.

We believe that the only way that we can effectively preserve the highest standards in implant dentistry and protect the patients, as well as the profession is to work toward the following objectives:

- For implant companies to distribute these guidelines to new surgical customers and participants in surgical training courses.
- For implant companies and training centers to discontinue making questionable or unfounded representations in promotional materials for training courses, contradicting the guidelines regarding the legal standard of care.
- For these guidelines to eventually lead to an industry standard for company sponsored surgical training programs.

Scott Root, President and CEO of Astra Tech, Inc. and Steve Schiess, President of Biomet 3i took the lead role in the industry to support our efforts to develop training guidelines and work toward an industry standard for the benefit of patients, the profession and the entire implant industry. Lifecore and Neoss are also supportive of our efforts and are participating in the distribution of these guidelines.





## Surviving the Onslaught of Marketing Strategies That Are Undermining Your Business

Cynthia M. Bollinger, Director IDIA

A recent mailing from *Implant Profits Marketing System* made the following statements:

*“ATTENTION SPECIALISTS: The Implant game is changing rapidly. The major vendors (Nobel, Zimmer, et al) are cutting into your referral base by marketing surgical courses straight to the GP and more GPs are placing their own implants – a trend that will only get worse...specialists that don’t see this train coming will be flattened by it in the next few years.”*

Although blunt, there is truth to those statements. According to investment analysts, there are approximately 30,000 general dentists placing implants compared to 10,000 surgical specialists. So, basically, your competition for implant patients has tripled - and they are being motivated by various marketing firms making the following claims:

*“...be part of the most profitable service you can perform in dentistry...”*

*“...exclusive program for GP’s who place implants...implant patient attraction system for GP’s who want to make HUGE MONEY...if you place implants and you aren’t making HUGE SUMS of money then you have a BIG PROBLEM.”*

It seems that marketing firms have concluded that the trend started by some of the major implant companies is the future of implant dentistry. Unfortunately, this conclusion appears to be validated when you scan the websites of implant companies and training centers to review their education programs. Reviewing these course offerings confirms my belief that Dentsply, Nobel Biocare and Zimmer declined our invitation to participate in distributing the training guidelines because they are offering abbreviated courses and promoting them as adequate to begin placing implants.

And in addition to sponsoring and providing abbreviated training courses on implants, Nobel Biocare is now sponsoring abbreviated courses to train general dentists how to do routine oral surgery procedures - taught by a general dentist.

Fortunately there are options for surgical specialists who have come to realize that by purchasing implants from certain companies, they are basically financing the very strategies that are undermining their practices. If you are concerned about the marketing strategies of your implant company, you might want to evaluate the services provided by companies that support surgical specialists.

In addition to working with a company that supports the team concept, it is important to evaluate your current marketing plan because you simply cannot afford to keep doing the same things you have done in the past if you want to remain competitive.

### Revise Education Programs Provided for Referrals.

This is one area of your marketing plan that should be revised in response to the market. Topics for courses and study clubs should include complications, the complexity and nuances of surgery and risk management. I strongly recommend the Standard of Care Referral Program developed by the IDIA for the risk management education of referrals.

### Expand the Role of Your Implant Coordinator.

An expanded role for the Implant Coordinator, including public relations with the referrals, should be a major component of the marketing plan. If you work with a company that targets general dentists, do not have the rep spend time with your referrals. Your Implant Coordinator can be trained to do lunch and learn meetings and assist with impressions, ordering components, etc.

Surgical specialists should also consider membership in the IDIA. As a non-profit organization, committed to preserving the integrity of implant dentistry and protecting patients, we have become somewhat of an advocacy group for the surgical profession. Membership includes various publications, such as our strategic planning guide for surgical practices, with strategies for remaining competitive in this market.



## ***Forget About Your Cheese...Who Moved Your Business?***

*...a random sampling of courses sponsored by implant companies...*

### **Zimmer**

Expand Your Dental Practice with: Implant Surgical Placement and Basic Bone Grafting (2.5 days)

*“Routine implant surgical placement and basic bone grafting are becoming a common part of general practice....surgical placement of root-form dental implants and basic bone grafts require the same surgical skills as those used in performing a complicated extraction.”*

Incorporating Dental Implants Into the Endodontic Practice, Easily and Predictably (8 hours)

*“Financial production is leaving the endodontic office in the form of implant dentistry because the endodontist is not familiar with placing dental implants quickly and predictably for their referral base.”*

Neuromuscular Implants - Implant I - Las Vegas Institute (3 days)

*“This three-day program delivers state-of-the-art education which will enable the clinician to gain knowledge and confidence in dental implant treatment planning, patient work-ups and basic to advanced surgical and restorative techniques.”*

### **Dentsply**

Implant EZ for the G.P. Getting Started (14 hours)

*“Learn the easy surgical techniques for single-tooth implants...for every general practitioner to take advantage of this enormous opportunity...this means an increase in production and profitability for you ...”*

Solutions for Success: Intro to Implant Surgery (12 hours)

*“Live surgeries, hands-on placement and prosthetics...reduce complications associated with malpositioned implants...possess communication skills for gaining patient case acceptance...understand appropriate, case-specific fee structures and applicable cost specifics”*

### **Nobel Biocare**

Two-Day Minor Oral Surgeries for the General Dentist/Preprosthetic Surgery

*Course topics include: alveoloplasty, vestibuloplasty, surgical treatment of tori and exostosis, frenectomies, oral electro surgery and various other oral surgery procedures.*

California Implant Institute (*run by the same general dentist as above*)

*“California Implant Institute’s commitment is to make all aspects of implant dentistry easier & more profitable for general dentists.”*

*When we called the Institute, the receptionist told us that they train general dentists; that the instructor is a general dentist who works out of his house; that there is no “institute” per se – the courses are taught at a hotel (including cadaver courses)...and that he makes the ridge expansion and block grafting courses look so easy that even she (the receptionist) felt that she could do it and she doesn’t have any dental background!*

### **Bio Horizons**

Implant Dentistry – The New Standard of Care (20 hours)

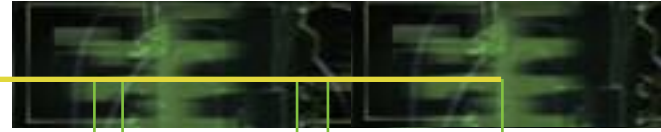
*“General Dentists Teaching General Dentists the Art and Science of Implant Dentistry”*

*“If you are ready to being providing complete implant care to your patients...you will learn current treatment options that you can provide to your patients on Monday!”*

### **DICOA Dental Implant System**

*“Finally – An Implant System for the G.P...don’t miss out on the biggest trend in the history of dental delivery...every GP can be doing routine implant cases to increase the bottom line and professional enjoyment.”*





## Prudent “Business Partners” for Surgical Specialists

The IDIA routinely receives calls from surgeons asking which companies are "safe bets" for them. Two major implant companies are prudent choices for surgical specialists due to the positioning strategies they have implemented over the past few years and the integrity of the company presidents; Astra Tech and Biomet 3i. Both companies support the team concept and they are not pursuing general dentists as surgical customers.

### **Astra Tech, Inc.**

The company does not provide surgical programs for dentists who have not had a surgical residency. The company only sponsors surgical programs where the curriculum is developed and managed by an educational institution/University.

The company supported the creation of recommended training guidelines for implant placement and plans to distribute them whenever applicable.

The sales force is clearly instructed that general dentists are not to be targeted for the promotion of implant surgery or surgical training courses.

Support of the team concept is further demonstrated by the following:

- Surgeon to referral communication forms
- Software used for enhanced communication of treatment plans
- Courses, seminars & World Congress topics focused on team approach
- The System Integration™ program is designed to help facilitate the conversion of a surgical specialist's referrals to a new implant system

### **Biomet 3i**

The company does not offer surgical training courses targeted at general dentists. They only offer restorative programs for general dentists.

The company supported the creation of recommended training guidelines for implant placement and plans to distribute them whenever applicable.

They provide the following services & programs to support the team concept:

- Professional Development Services Department, to develop marketing plans for customers.
- General Practitioner Advisors who focus on developing referring offices for surgical specialists
- Surgical Implant Treatment Coordinator programs and marketing courses for surgical specialists and their teams
- Distributor of the IDIA Standard of Care Referral Program since 2003
- *Creating and Driving Your Own Study Club*, a unique, how-to guide on developing interdisciplinary educational relationships with referrals
- A full complement of innovative conversion programs to support surgical specialists in converting their referrals

There is also a new company that supports the team concept, Neoss. Unlike the marketing strategies of most small companies, Neoss is not targeting general dentists and they do not sponsor training courses for general dentists. They have begun distributing the IDIA Standard of Care Referral Program and will be distributing the new training guidelines whenever appropriate.

