Q-Implant Marathon offers live surgery hands-on implant placement and sinus lift courses

By Trinion Collegium Practicum Staff

Continuing education in dental implantology has traditionally focused on theoretical aspects. However, since 2003, the Trinion Collegium Practicum (TCP) has organized practice-oriented dental implantology courses based on the model of surgeon training in European hospitals, enabling dentists to gain a firmer grasp of implant procedures.

Drawbacks of traditional implantology education
Conventionally, entering the field of implantology has proven difficult for many dentists. Typically, it is not a subject of university education, with many universities and courses focusing largely on theoretical orientation. Because of this, establishing oneself within this particular area of dental medicine can prove to be a time-consuming endeavor.

Furthermore, complicating the matter is the issue that educational and training programs rarely present an opportunity for participants to work directly on patients. According to Alfredo Valencia, MD, DDS, scientific director for Trinion Collegium Practicum, this has led to implant education placing an increased emphasis on theoretical training.

This theoretical emphasis ultimately results in a neglect of practical experience and, more importantly, a general lack of confidence in ability. Because of this, many inexperienced dentists develop a fear of complicated cases and, thus, a limited learning curve, Valencia asserts.

Learning by doing
As a result of the growing concern stemming from the lack of practical hands-on implantology courses, TCP teamed up with Valencia to develop the Q-Implant® Marathon. Started in 2003 in Santa Clara, Cuba, the course is designed to be purely hands-on with a real patient experience under strict supervision from internationally renowned surgeons. Participants with a strong theoretical foundation in implantology spend five days assisting in and performing surgeries.

Throughout the course, participants are assigned to small groups (three individuals or less) under direct supervision from the same instructor for the entire duration of the course. This intimate setting allows for the opportunity for each beginner participant to place 30 implants in the span of five days. Advanced levels guarantee 10-15 sinus lifts per participant and depending on the level of surgical experience, participants may participate in more complex surgeries such as mono blocks, ridge splits, titanium mesh reconstruction and more.

Patients are prepared and followed-up by resident members of the private clinic in which the surgeries are conducted. In most cases, patients are immediately provided with temporary restorations, so participants can see the result of the treatment and complete photographic documentation. The phased approach of the Q-Implant Marathon, which accounts for 60 dental C.E. hours through the Academy of General Dentistry, divides participants into three levels: Beginner, Advanced I and Advanced II.

The Q-Implant Marathon gives dental practitioners an opportunity to learn relevant knowledge they require in their home clinics. Beginners’ courses focus around basic implant cases, whereas surgeons with considerable experience can opt to participate in an advanced course focusing on complicated cases. Regardless of skill level or experience, all students experience the reassurance that they have a highly qualified supervisor at their disposal to discuss cases and assist during surgery. “Learning by doing is the most successful way to gain experience in implantology, and that is why we do it that way,” Valencia said.

Focus on the United States
Today, the hand-on concept has been rolled-out in three permanent locations worldwide with one in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, and two courses in Asia. In the last 11 years, TCP has hosted more than 2,500 dentists in the Q-Implant Marathon leading to the treatment of more than 20,000 patients and the placement of more than 55,000 implants.

The decision to conduct these hands-on courses in Santo Domingo is a direct result of the rising number of dental implantologists in the United States and its surrounding regions. Additionally, there is a growing number of patients in this region that demand a high level of care but lack access to adequate dental care. More than 100 courses have been conducted in the three locations.

The head instructor for the Q-Implant Marathon in Santo Domingo is Valencia, who received his medical degree from the University of Oviedo in Spain. Valencia has more than 30 years experience in the fields of oral and maxillofacial surgery and stomatology.

He is supported by a team of assisting tutors that he personally recruited. Most of these tutors have been trained in implantology by Valencia directly.

“I know them well, and it is easy for me to work with them,” he said in regard to his colleagues.

For more information
The Q-Implant Marathon is conducted several times a year in Dominican Republic, Cambodia and Laos. Upcoming sessions in Dominican Republic will be Feb. 19-20 and June 8-12. To find out more information about the Q-Implant Marathon, contact Dominika Zmely at (877) 705-1002, email info@implantologycourses.com or visit the website at www.implantologycourses.com.

The Q-Implant Marathon offers dental practitioners an opportunity to learn relevant knowledge they can use in their own clinics. (Photo/Provided by Trinion Collegium Practicum)