

Implant Prosthodontics:

Undergraduate or Postgraduate Discipline?

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Osseointegrated implants have changed the way we think about oral rehabilitation over the last thirty years. Their evolution from a questionable remedy to a trustworthy clinical application passed through a series of stages, some of them confusing but most of them rewarding.

There were technical problems to be solved like choosing among external and internal connection, the size and material of the holding screw or the amount of preload necessary. There were biological processes to be understood like which types of surfaces the osteoplasts really like, how long does an implant need before it can bear load or which types of grafting materials work. There were also surgical techniques and prosthetic approaches to be improved in order to be able to get a safer more esthetic and long lasting outcome.

All these described above, have led to a good level of understanding of the clinical entity that can be summarized in the words “implant rehabilitation”. Having passed the first stages of evolution and with millions of implants placed worldwide there is a growing conversation over the past few years on who should be taught to be placing and restoring osseointegrated implants. The purpose of this lecture is to present the latest knowledge and ideas on whether implant prosthodontics should be taught on the graduate, undergraduate or both levels. The presentation will focus on various subjects like the similarities and differences in practicing clinical dentistry in different areas of Europe, comparisons of the teaching curricula of graduate and undergraduate programs, an insight on what the future dentist should have in terms of competences in what regards prosthodontics and finally some innovative ways of teaching implant prosthodontics.