Teamwork—For predictable outcomes

“Working as a team allows us to make the most of our individual strengths and knowledge”

_Drs Uday Reebye and Tarun Agarwal agree that well-organised teamwork is beneficial for the patient and clinician alike._

_Two doctors in the United States—one a general dentist, the other an oral surgeon—advocate a team approach to implant dentistry that creates a virtual clinic, consisting of a surgical specialist, an anesthesiologist, a restorative dentist and a dental technician or laboratory._

The Nobel Biocare team asked Drs Tarun Agarwal and Uday Reebye for some insights about teamwork in general and the All-on-4 treatment concept in particular.

_How did you begin working together?_

**Dr Tarun Agarwal:** I first met Uday while he was a medical student at the University of North Carolina. Later, after he completed his oral surgery residency and opened his practice here in North Carolina, I began sending him the surgical cases that I wasn’t comfortable tackling. Our professional relationship flourished when Uday encouraged me to participate and collaborate on our surgical cases. He was very open to sharing tips and tricks and even allowing me to participate in the surgery.

**Dr Uday Reebye:** At the same time, Tarun taught me about prosthetic and implant advancements that had a great impact on my work.

**Dr Tarun Agarwal:** It became pretty clear that the cases we did together were the cases that turned out best and went the smoothest. I think it was the strategic collaboration and taking the ‘holistic’ (surgical and restorative) approach to the case that made the difference.

_For you, your dental practices and the patient: What are the main benefits of the team approach?_

**Dr Uday Reebye:** Implant dentistry is rapidly evolving and its complexities require solid prosthetic and surgical knowledge. Working as a team allows us to make the most of our individual strengths and expertise.

Sharing knowledge is essential for making advances in our field. Many times the biggest
changes I make on my surgeries are due to what
Tarun has taught me on the restorative side; and
conversely, Tarun has changed his treatment plan-
ing and prosthetic planning since he began getting
involved in surgeries.

Dr Tarun Agarwal: What’s more, I now have the
confidence to tackle complex cases that I would
never have even started in the past.

The patient is the real win-
er in our teamwork approach.
They are provided with a seam-
less treatment experience. Each
member of the team is focused
on his or her core competency,
which leads to better results.

I should also mention that
practice productivity has stea-
dily increased. As our mutual
caseload has grown, so have re-
ferrals and our reputation within
the community. It’s like a snow-
ball gaining size and momentum
going downhill.

Would you say that you each
bring different qualities to the
partnership?

Dr Tarun Agarwal: Without
question. Dr Reebye is a dual
degree (MD and DMD) board cer-
tified Oral Maxillofacial Surgeon.
His expertise and knowledge of surgery is light years
ahead of mine. I am an esthetically-focused general
dentist that has tremendous experience with digital
dentistry.

By each having an open mind we are able to blend
the digital technologies of restorative dentistry into
the surgical world of complex implant dentistry.
Over time, we have learned a great deal from each
other, and now have a greater appreciation for the
complexities and issues that each other deal with in
the treatment process.

Do you ever have a difference of opinion when it
comes to planning the treatment?

Dr Tarun Agarwal: Of course we do! Sometimes
we have to bend on the surgical side and sometimes
we have to bend on the restorative side...

Dr Uday Reebye: ...and it usually works out that
whomever wins the argument has thought through
the issue at hand a little longer and harder.

Dr Uday Reebye: It was an easy trade-off
to make. At the end of the day, we resolve any
differences of opinion guided by a single principle—
to do what’s in the best interest of the patient.

Is the All-on-4 treatment concept especially
appropriate for your team approach?

Dr Uday Reebye: Yes, in my eyes, the All-on-4
treatment concept can only be successful as a
team effort. It is a beautiful treatment concept that
marries surgical and prosthetic philosophies.

I have to tell you that teamwork brings a great
deal of enjoyment to the clinic. If you are happy
when working, patients are happier, assistants are
happier, and somehow that brew results in great
outcomes.

Dr Tarun Agarwal: It really does! In our team
approach, the restorative dentist creates the case
blueprint, the surgical specialist serves as an
engineer—by verifying the blueprint is surgically
Dr Tarun Agarwal: And because this treatment concept is more affordable for patients, a greater number of patients become implant candidates. For us, the All-on-4 treatment concept has virtually created a new market.

Dr Tarun Agarwal: Go learn about it with an open mind! There are literally millions of patients who can benefit from this treatment. Nobel Biocare has a predictable workflow with a tremendous support system to make you successful.

Dr Uday Reebye: Before I took my first All-on-4 class, all I heard from many clinicians (none of which had taken a class or done All-on-4 surgery), that the concept was flawed and a recipe for disaster. Seven years later, all I can say is that I am so happy we did not listen to them. My advice? 'Keep an open mind, take a course, and see for yourselves what a great service you can provide for your patients!'

For any clinicians out there looking to adopt a team approach like yours, is there a secret to successful partnership?

Dr Tarun Agarwal: You have got to let go of your ego. We are all equals to the patient, after all, each bringing a different area of expertise to the team...

Dr Uday Reebye: ...and let me add this: Listen to your patients. Be willing to talk to other clinicians to share ideas, and never be afraid to reach out when you need help. Most of us love to share what we know with each other—to be of help and to learn more at the same time.

And finally—enjoy! It is a wonderful journey...

Dr Uday Reebye: We see so many edentulous or about-to-be edentulous patients who need new teeth. Previous treatment modalities were so expensive and difficult that these patients left our clinics depressed, with no hope in sight. The All-on-4 treatment concept allows us as clinicians to give hope to many patients who once had few or no encouraging options. Now we can dramatically change the lives of these patients for the better.

Dr Tarun Agarwal (left): ‘Over time we have pushed each other to take a closer look at each other’s perspective.’

feasible—and the anesthesiologist is totally focused on patient comfort.

Starting with the endpoint in mind and collaborating to make it possible has routinely led to great outcomes.

What do you see as the main benefits of the All-on-4 treatment concept, both for clinicians and patients?

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What would you say to clinicians thinking about starting with the All-on-4 treatment concept?

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