By Fred Michmershuizen
Dental Tribune
Zimmer Dental and the New York University College of Dentistry held the third annual Global Implantology Week March 19-23 in New York City. The event drew more than 300 participants from around the world to take part in educational lectures and hands-on courses covering the latest research findings, techniques and products in implant dentistry.

On the roster of speakers were 12 practicing clinicians, who shared their clinical expertise on the most advanced, up-to-date patient treatment options to attendees from as many as 35 countries.

The American Academy of Implant Dentistry (AAID) has filed a lawsuit in U.S. District Court in Austin seeking to invalidate a Texas regulation that severely restricts dentists from advertising their bona fide AAID credentials in implant dentistry. In 2009 and 2010, AAID won judicial verdicts overturning similar rules enforced by state dental boards in Florida and California.

AAID’s chief legal counsel, Frank Recker, JD, DDS, informed the Texas Board of Dental Examiners in writing about the unequivocal judicial precedents and hoped to convince the board to rescind its restrictions and avoid litigation. “The board did not respond to our communications for two years,” Recker said. “Because AAID’s credentialed members continue to be in jeopardy if they advertise their credentials, the academy decided to pursue legal action.”

Two Texas dentists holding AAID’s dental implant credentials, Dr. Jay Elliott of Houston and Dr. Monty Buck of Galveston, joined the lawsuit as individual co-plaintiffs.

AAID is seeking a permanent injunction and declaratory judgment to strike down the Texas regulation, which allows unrestricted advertising only for dental credentials and accreditations issued by organizations recognized as dental specialties by the American Dental Association (ADA).

Dentists with bona fide credentials not issued by ADA-recognized specialty organizations are required to include lengthy disclaimers in their advertising in Texas. This limitation, contends AAID, is burdensome and prohibits dentists from advertising true statements about credentials in implant dentistry earned from the AAID and the American Board of Oral Implantology (ABOI).

In Florida and California, the presiding judges ruled that such advertising restrictions violate the First and Fourteenth Amendments to the U.S. Constitution, which protect freedom of speech and equal protection of the laws. Recker said the legal precedents solidly favor AAID and Drs. Elliott and Buck.

“Consumers in Texas have no ready means of learning which dentists practicing in their state have significant substantive training in implant dentistry,” Recker said. “Awareness of AAID’s dental credentials is burdensome and prohibits dentists from advertising true statements about credentials in implant dentistry earned from the AAID and the American Board of Oral Implantology (ABOI).”

AAID is seeking a permanent injunction and declaratory judgment to strike down the Texas regulation, which allows unrestricted advertising only for dental credentials and accreditations issued by organizations recognized as dental specialties by the American Dental Association (ADA).

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implant credential provides consumers with objectively verifiable information regarding a dentist’s knowledge, proficiency and experience. The Texas advertising restriction prevents highly qualified implant dentists from differentiating their training and education.”

Recker added that in Texas dentists with no training in placing implants are permitted to engage in implant dentistry and advertise that they perform this service. It makes it almost impossible for consumers to objectively evaluate a dentist’s qualifications to perform implant procedures.

In the 2009 Florida decision, Circuit Court Judge Frank E. Sheffield ruled that a state law restricting how dentists can advertise their training and education “is almost impossible to view the latest products and to network with their colleagues from other countries.”

At the conclusion of the week, a closing ceremony was held in which participants received certificates of achievement.

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Dr. Maurice Salama, currently on the faculties of the University of Pennsylvania and the Medical College of Georgia as clinical assistant professor of periodontics and a visiting professor of periodontics at Nova University in Florida, kicked off the clinical presentations on Monday morning with a lecture on site preparation and bone augmentation techniques. Later, he offered a lecture on the choices, options and solutions for complex esthetic challenges.

Other educational highlights included presentations by Dr. Jerome Surmenian of Nice, France, on the new trabecular metal implant and Dr. Edwin McGlumphy, an associate professor at the Ohio State University College of Dentistry, introducing Zimmer’s Angled Ti-pered Abutment. Also speaking were Dr. Edgard S. El Chaar, Dr. Moustafa El-Sherif, Dr. Paul Fugazzotto, Dr. Markus Hürzeler, Dr. Joseph Leonetti, Dr. Giovanni Pisoni, Dr. Georgios Romanos and Dr. Christian F.J. Stappert.

The weekend long event is one of many continuing education opportunities provided by Zimmer Dental, a company that prides itself on providing both state-of-the-art products and valuable learning initiatives.

Offering an extensive range of company-sponsored courses, partnerships with clinicians, international symposia and university development programs and our flagship Zimmer University, Zimmer Dental maintains its commitment to providing dental professionals with the educational programs needed to complement skill sets and to help clinicians achieve unprecedented levels of professional satisfaction and success,” said Karen Turn, associate director of continuing education for Zimmer Dental, in a welcome message to attendees.

In addition to the many educational lectures and hands-on workshops offered during Global Implantology Week, Practicing clinicians shared their clinical expertise on implant treatment options during Global Implantology Week.

Corrections

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