

Wake up with a smile



Managing Director of Omni Dental Ceramics Mr. Lachlan Thompson with Specialist Prosthodontist of Bayside Dental Specialists Dr. Philip Tan

Using a cutting-edge technology, AuDentes is a unique treatment that reduces the number of pre- and post-operative visits, enhance positive experience at the dentist with less pain and swelling, and provide faster recovery and personalised treatment for the patient.

The word 'audentes' is the Latin word for confidence. But for Dr. Philip Tan, specialist prosthodontist of Bayside Dental Specialists clinics; and Mr. Lachlan Thompson, digital technical expert and managing director of Omni Dental Ceramics, 'Au' means Australia and 'Dentes' is teeth —Australian teeth.

In fact, AuDentes is the result from the great teamwork and strong dynamics between Dr. Tan and Mr Thompson.

Smile with confidence

Set to shake up the dentistry industry,

AuDentes is the innovative solution for full bridge or fixed denture needs. It offers an easier treatment with less pain, recovery time and appointments, while still providing the specialised care in a hospital setting.

The innovative implant bridge utilises precision digital technology to offer exquisite accuracy, highly aesthetic and superbly functional result.

"At 90 minutes, the surgery is significantly shorter than other techniques. The soft tissues and bone are exposed for a shorter time, and the patient wakes up with less swelling," Dr Tan explained.

"The healing is better too."

They can simply just go home to rest and recover.

"For a lot of our patients who have neglected their teeth because they're afraid of dentists, not having to come back for injections is a huge thing," explained Dr. Tan.

With the traditional way, there is a risk of contamination as the bridges are glued together during surgery. In addition, the patient is required to come back again to have the final bridge made.



The AuDentes implant bridge was invented by Dr. Philip Tan after he saw some needs of his patients not being met by traditional techniques

On the laboratory side, there is also the race against time to have the final bridge made.

“The staff sometimes stay till 9pm,” said Mr. Thompson.

As the bridges are now pre-made, Mr Thompson and his team will just need to plan ahead and have them made in two weeks.

“And it can all be done between 9am to 5pm,” he said.

“The staff are a lot happier.”

The genesis of the collaboration

In the past, there had been many attempts to achieve immediate bridge implant,

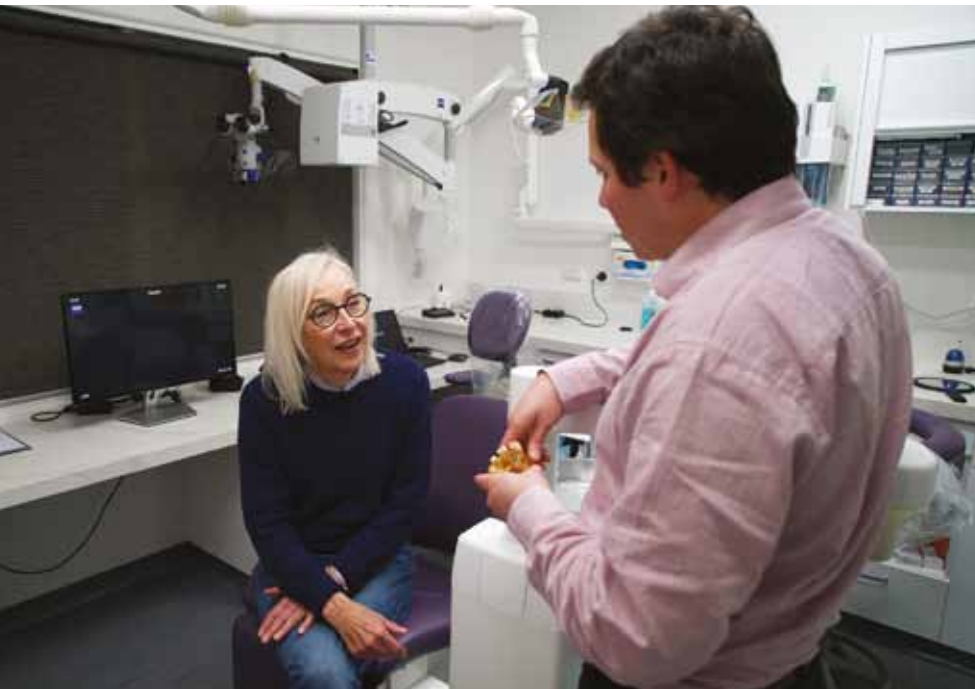


The AuDentes procedure has been proven a highly successful treatment option for those patients with multiple teeth missing, or no teeth

Under the Spotlight



For the AuDentes treatment protocol to work, planning is key



The AuDentes treatment protocol offers a reduced number of pre and post-operative visits, less pain and swelling, and faster recovery

but were all unsuccessful. Hence, the perception that a treatment like AuDentes will not be possible.

“But Philip said, “I have some ideas which may give us a better outcome. Lets press

through and see how we go” Mr. Thompson recounted. “Miraculously, what we tried, worked.”

They pushed on because they saw the need for an immediate bridge implant. For

instance, patients from the countryside faced difficulties flying into the city to get the surgery done, and were not able to leave until three or four days later. With AuDentes, the surgeon can head out to the rural area to do the surgeries, and not have to worry about where the lab is.

But the complexity and the high precision needed for AuDentes that a good lab is needed to make the bridge.

“Lachlan has the most advanced lab in Australia,” said Dr. Tan. “He has a lot of experience fiddling and changing things to optimise them.”

The team had their first patient about 18 months ago and launched their website in August this year.

“It may ruffle some feathers that we are doing something people say can’t be done. Others may also be prompted to say, “We can do the same thing,” said Dr. Tan. “But when you look at it in-depth, it’s not the case.”

AuDentes gives patients the opportunity to get an immediate bridge. But in advertisements which say they can achieve an ‘immediate bridge’, ‘immediate’ means a couple of days later.

“With AuDentes, you’re really getting them now,” explained Dr. Tan.

The feedback Dr. Tan received has been positive. There were cases where patients had tears of joy or continuously used the word ‘confidence’ to describe the happiness of having nice looking teeth.

“Those are memorable because you know you’ve changed someone’s life, and that’s why you go into healthcare — to change people’s lives for the better,” said Dr. Tan. For the technicians, the defining factor is



Dr. Tan is a passionate exponent of digital dentistry and lectures throughout Australia and internationally on the topic.

seeing that they're able to give the best possible treatment.

"When the patient is 'losing their mind' about how good the outcome is, aesthetically; that's amazing!" said Mr. Thompson.

A touch of difference with digital

Throughout the process of developing AuDentes, Mr. Thompson and his team at Omni Dental Ceramics have been incorporating digital workflow. It was this year that Mr. Thompson realised they have reached a point where patients can identify that there's a positive difference.

"When you're using a digital workflow in

a clinic, the communication improves," Mr. Thompson explained.

Although his team had a steep learning curve with 3D printing, they are starting to see that the end results are worth it.

"Some of the patients said, 'My dentist doesn't have this,' or 'I prefer this so much more; I don't understand why my dentist doesn't get this.' It's such an advantage when the patient can actually see what's happening in their mouth. For me, it's an investment that's financially advantageous," he said.

The team also implemented a handheld scanner from Imetric, known as iCam4D, which has improved the accuracy in taking impressions. After doing about 150 to 200 arches this year with the scanner, his verdict is it's 'flawless' and "it

saves the technician an hour each time."

While the laboratory is still in early days in terms of full end-to-end solution, Mr. Thompson believes that the integration will get better as 3D printing grows; with labs focusing on challenging greater complexity.

"When a client has a scanner and if something goes wrong, there is a better chance for us at the lab to sort it out and do what we can to quickly fix it," said Mr. Thompson.

For Dr. Tan, when considering an equipment for his practice, he looks at improving a patient's outcome, the efficiency with

which he can deliver the healthcare service, quality, as well as support.

"For high-tech products, invariably, something doesn't work at some point," he said.

"And with Australia being somewhat removed from the manufacturers, there is the challenge of getting support, or back-up, when something isn't working," Mr. Thompson added, "We need to find the best solution for the patient and work out the most efficient way to manufacture. There's always room for improvement and it's a constant revolution with digital.

You have to be aware of the white noise and the misinformation out there. With what's happening on the digital side of things, a lot of the products on the market probably wouldn't be around anymore in a couple of years."

Encouraging dental innovation

To encourage dental innovations, Dr. Tan runs three study groups for local dentists — meeting about three or four times annually to talk about new technology, what's happening in the clinics, and the challenges with patients.

"There's camaraderie, solidarity, and communication about how we're helping people. On the state-based and international level, we give presentations. We've also ran some educational courses in Melbourne, Sydney, and Perth, as well as in South East Asia, where we try to engage with more dentists and laboratories," said Dr. Tan.

Omni Dental Ceramics does small and intimate evenings with existing clients to give them an update on where the lab is currently at.

"Dentists already have a lot of education to get through each year," explained Mr. Thompson. "So, they rely on the lab to

get information on how they should best manufacture things and which way to best treat their patients.”

At these informational evenings, he goes through different cases and explains his recommendations.

Virtual vs Reality

“As technicians, we spend so much time in the lab with our heads down developing things that when I pick up the phone to speak to clients, I’d find that they have no idea what we’re doing,” said Mr. Thompson. “So, six months ago, I decided to get the word out on social media, especially with regards to the implant solutions and digital workflow that we’ve implemented. The feedback’s been positive.”

But Dr. Tan also stressed that social media disproportionately amplified on “Look how great I am...!”, and so he emphasized that, “I don’t want you to get sucked into the view that everyone doing dentistry is perfect all the time. That’s not reality. Keep things in perspective.

Yes, there are some patients where we do these fancy, big things, but there’re a lot of stuff we do that’s just day-to-day restorative and surgical work. Big, glamour cases are great, but they’re not the most common.”

The other thing is, on social media, there could be a lot that’s not said, he explained. “If you see a case that’s saying, “I did this, this, and this...,” it’s not always the complete truth,” said Dr. Tan.

“When I say ‘tooth impression’, and someone says, ‘I took an impression’, we could have done two very different things. Your learning doesn’t stop, and it shouldn’t be just on social media. There’s a lot to be said for proper mentorship; someone holding your hand and showing you through what they actually do. Because

there’s so much more than ‘I took this impression’ and all these nuances.”

Mr. Thompson, on the other hand, said he’d go on the flipside, “I’ll say, don’t believe in a lot of the negativity. For technicians, there’s this preconceived notion in the industry that we’re not needed in the workflow. That’s not true.”

While he was going through his training, he was told, a lot of times, that there’ll not be a job for him.

“I had four or five friends that I went training with who stopped because they believed it. If you’re good at something, it doesn’t matter what you do, there’s going to be an opportunity,” he said.

And that is true. With AuDentes, he is still looking at ways to improve and optimise it further.

“Not a massive goal, perhaps, but each day, I have that at the back of my mind — to have a better end result for the patient,” he said. **DA**



Dr. Tan believes that even those patients with significant dental issues should be able to enjoy a confident and healthy smile every day