



CUSTOMERS ARE OUR INSPIRATION

SUCCESS STORIES FROM ACROSS NORTH AMERICA

DR. GREGORY PHILLIPS

COLUMBUS, IN

PERIODONTIST

Background

Dr. Greg Phillips opened his Columbus, Indiana periodontal practice in 1992. After five years of practicing general dentistry he decided to return to school to specialize in periodontics. His periodontal residency at Indiana University School of Dentistry involved an introduction to implant dentistry and provided new focus and direction. Dr. Phillips played an active role advocating for the use of dental implants to his colleagues and built a practice that has grown consistently over the last 17 years. While dental implants are more widely embraced today than they were in the early 1990s, Dr. Phillips's success is applicable to anyone building and growing a dental implant practice today.

The Challenge

Building the confidence of referring GP's to grow an implant practice.

Columbus, Indiana, a town of 39,000, is 45 miles south of Indianapolis—the closest major metropolitan area. When Dr. Phillips began his practice, few practitioners in the region offered dental implant services. Most dentists in the state are trained at the Indiana University School of Dentistry and in the early 1990s only the prosthodontic residents were taught to restore dental implants. As a result, the few general dentists who attempted dental implant restorations were unhappy with the cost and complexity. In fact, Dr. Phillips remembers a referring general dentist at the time complaining that he had to buy a new instrument every time he restored an implant. With its single set of instruments to restore all of its implants, the simplicity of the Straumann® Dental Implant System helped alleviate this problem.

Dr. Phillips viewed dental implants as a tremendous improvement over crown and bridge restorations—in fact he believes even today too many healthy teeth are ground down to support bridgework, and many patients with dentures could greatly improve their quality of life with just two dental implants. In partially edentulous cases, Dr. Phillips believes that implant care is valuable because healthy tooth structure is preserved and the teeth are not asked to do additional work, which can improve their prognosis. In addition, maintaining excellent oral hygiene is easier with single implants than with fixed bridges, and, by replacing the “root” of the tooth, dental implants can help preserve the patient's bone. In completely edentulous cases, two or more implants may greatly improve the patient's quality of life by helping preserve self esteem and may even improve diet by allowing them to eat a greater variety of healthy foods including fresh fruits and vegetables.

When Dr. Phillips first began using the Straumann Dental Implant System he emphasized to general dentists that restoring an implant was identical to crown and bridge restorations. Initially, Dr. Phillips placed the abutments himself so the restorative dentist only needed to take a standard crown and bridge impression. The only expense to the general dentist was the lab bill. In addition, because Dr. Phillips had been a general dentist for five years he was familiar with the restorative task and was empathetic to the general practitioners' concerns.

COMMITTED TO
SIMPLY DOING MORE
FOR DENTAL PROFESSIONALSSM

“I stay with Straumann because of the simplicity and the compelling body of science behind their products. They’re a very conscientious company and they don’t bring their products to market without thoroughly testing them.”

To build a thriving practice, he realized he had to leverage his knowledge of dental implant technology and the issues relevant to general practitioners to educate the community about the benefits of dental implants. He had to help referring general dentists realize that with the right dental implant technology, restorations could be done easily while bringing great benefit to the patient.

Dr. Phillips values continuing education and uses it to spread the word about dental implants and to grow his young practice. He offered a number of CE programs to both the local general dentists and dental hygienists. To make the classes more attractive he petitioned the Indiana Board of Dentistry to grant continuing education credits to practitioners who completed course work. He also collaborated closely with his Straumann sales representative to develop an educational program specifically focused on the benefits of the Straumann Dental Implant System.

Dr. Phillips chose to partner with Straumann for his continuing education campaign because he felt that Straumann offered a clear and effective portfolio of prosthetic options, which were supported by clinical evidence. And, because the Straumann system requires a small number of instruments for a wide number of restorative purposes he felt that the general dentist would not have to continually incur new costs. Most importantly for Dr. Phillips, he knew that Straumann implants were scientifically developed to provide excellent esthetic results and long term success.

When Dr. Phillips moved into his new office in 2001 he built a classroom and started the Columbus Dental Forum (CDF), a chapter of the Seattle Study Club. The CDF meets monthly during the school year; most meetings are in Dr. Phillips’ office in the evenings, but there are some all-day programs and at least once a year he offers a staff program. Dr. Phillips also moderates group discussions on treatment planning sessions and arranges for guest speakers.

The Results

17 years of Straumann success.

Dr. Phillips was first exposed to Straumann products while in his residency and he has continued to use the system exclusively. Dental implants and related services are now approximately 75% of Dr. Phillips’ practice. Dr. Phillips is placing 350-400 implants a year in his small community and receives referrals consistently from 10-15 general dentists and at least one referral a year from approximately 90 general dentists. In addition, Dr. Phillips receives numerous referrals each year from former implant patients.

He has looked at other implant systems, but stays with Straumann because he believes they are the simplest to use and are backed by thorough scientific research. He also believes that Straumann implants integrate well with surrounding tissue and bone, which can result in fewer complications. Using the Straumann system, he has built a successful practice and improved patient care in a small community and furthered his professional goals.

“I stay with Straumann because of the outstanding support of the Straumann company, the simplicity of the system and, most importantly to me, because of the compelling body of science behind their products. They’re a very conscientious company and, unlike other implant systems, will not bring their products to market without first thoroughly testing them.” – Dr. Greg Phillips



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