

Through the keyhole



Oral Maxillofacial Surgeon Dr. Michael T. Dachowski talks about how time, care and technology shape his practice

What can you tell us about your background?

I was exposed to dentistry from the beginning, as the oldest son of respected dentist Dr. Edward Dachowski of Willow Grove, Pennsylvania. From those early days, I was able to directly experience the relationship of our profession to our patients' quality of life, comfort, and health. It was that impact and its importance that became my incentive to pursue dentistry.

What was also apparent from the early days observing my dad was the level of ongoing educational commitment that is required to maintain an "excellence-based" practice.

After graduating from LaSalle University, Philadelphia, PA, I attended the University of Pennsylvania, School

of Dental Medicine and obtained my dental degree.

When did you become a specialist and why?

In 1989, I completed my residency in oral and maxillofacial surgery at Duke University Medical Center, Durham, NC, and then entered private, hospital-based practice at Holy Redeemer Hospital, Meadowbrook, Pennsylvania. I am board certified with the American Board of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery.

Oral and maxillofacial surgery is a unique specialty and discipline that spans the dental and medical fields providing a unique scope of service at a very high standard. The challenge of this specialty is what drew me in. What maintains this zest is the rapid advancement in techniques, then

implementing them.

Throughout my years in college and into dental school, I worked at Holy Redeemer Hospital, Meadowbrook, Pennsylvania on the nursing staff, a hospital reputed for its high level of care. My goal was to return as an oral and maxillofacial surgeon.

I added a second office in Doylestown, Pennsylvania. At the new location, I added the technology and enhanced equipment to deliver a team-based surgical office. That included Cone Beam CT and a second-to-none computer system of network and software. When it comes to implant dentistry, the goal in delivery is precision.

Is your practice limited?

My practice is limited solely to oral



and maxillofacial surgery with a concentration in dental implants, pre-prosthetic and extractions, and orthognathic surgery.

Why did you decide to focus on OMS?

These areas of my practice dovetail nicely and reflect a true congruence in dentistry. Form does follow function. Now, more than ever, recognition of the relationship of overall health, occlusion, skeletal facial dynamics and esthetics cannot be minimized. This harmony of treatment contributes to quality of life.

The focus of my practice is to establish my place in the team, as the surgeon, thus the concentration in orthognathic and pre-prosthetic surgery as well as dental implant surgery.

Do your patients come through referrals?

All of my patients are referred through a variety of areas: dentists, physicians, patients, community, and the all-important word of mouth.

How long have you been practicing OMS, and what systems do you use?

I have been practicing since 1989. I have used many systems through the evolution of implant dentistry. Presently, my preferences include Straumann®, Zimmer®, and Astra Tech. We also utilize a variety of bone-grafting materials and techniques including Platelet Rich Plasma (Harvest

Technologies) and Bone Morphogenetic Protein (Infuse®, Medtronic), and Synthes® Maxillofacial Hardware.

Implementing precision through treatment planning has come to the forefront. Guided surgery with the aid of the variety of software has not only improved outcome, it has become invaluable in team intercommunication and in patient understanding. I implement Anatomage Invivo, Straumann® Cares®, i-CAT® Vision, and Gendex VixWin.

What training you have undertaken?

I am a board-certified oral and maxillofacial surgeon. Additional education includes yearly meetings with AAOMS, AO, and the ITI as well as local and state professional continuing education meetings.

Who has inspired you?

Obviously, my initial inspiration was my dad, Dr. Edward Dachowski. Additionally, I count several leaders in

my specialty as mentors including Dr. Peter Quinn, Dr. Barry Hendler, Dr. Eric Carlson, and Dr. David Garber. I count Steve Jobs as a leader in re-establishing the delivery of excellence.

Professionally, what are you most proud of?

I am proud of maintaining excellence. My dad did it, and I do as well. Easy to say, but our field requires a constant true dedication to providing the current latest standards and care, all evidence based. This can only be delivered through regular and studious continuing education and reinvesting in the right technology to provide this level of care. My patients deserve the very best. I am proud and privileged to deliver that caliber of care.

What do you think is unique about your practice?

Delivering the highest level of care and treatment is most important and remains as the keystone to my brand.



What is the most satisfying aspect of your practice?

With a surgical basis to my practice, I am able to apply a high level of care and management to each case. This complements the talents from the team of practitioners that I work with. Ultimately, the patient receives the best result from this combination of talent.



Practice profile



Obtaining care with my practice must be a positive experience. Building a foundation of trust by treating our patients with the *time and care* they expect is how we make a difference. It starts with their first communication with us. We provide a relaxing and professional atmosphere. Our entire team is dedicated to providing patients with excellent, personalized care and service to make their visits as comfortable and pleasant as possible.

Unsurpassed applied technology is next. I have cone beam scanners in both offices with the ability to seamlessly and securely exchange that data within my network and with the treatment team. I also have an Orthoralix® 8500 panoramic unit and GXS-700™ intraoral sensors. My practice was recently selected by Gendex to pilot the GXDP-700™ Cone Beam Scanner, and we have found this addition of technology to be welcome and efficient. I utilize multiple software applications in processing, sharing, and presenting data.

The decision to implement computer technology across one's office network is not a small task from any vantage. This addition has enhanced my surgical outcomes, and has functioned as a conduit of information and understanding among the team and the patient.

What has been your biggest challenge?

Re-establishing paradigms of the evolving "team approach." This goes back to committing to high-level education, understanding,

and familiarity for all of the involved members. This also has included coordinating involvement from medical colleagues as well as the dental lab team.

What would you have been if you didn't become a dentist?

A physician. The privilege and reward from improving health and quality of life has always been my professional drive.

What is the future of OMS and dentistry?

It is very bright. Our profession cares for an increasing population of generations with a growing variety of dental-related health issues. The need is apparent.

The advances continue in soft and hard tissue grafting and implant systems and applications. The value of the computer in 3-D surgical case planning across the specialty and throughout dentistry and medicine has been established and is now an invaluable instrument.

The Internet brings a convenient dimension to promptly communicate and share the information and continuing education.

What are your top tips for maintaining a successful specialty practice?

Understand your patients. This starts by listening to them, and involving the appropriate team of professionals.




Be very clear as to the nature and expectations of the care you provide. Involve your in-office treatment team appropriately. Finally, provide that care at present evidence-based standards.

What advice would you give to budding OMS?

Specialty status requires a specialty approach, and that starts with the proper education. Work hard and obtain the best education available. When joining or starting in practice, choose what makes the most professional sense, then commit to


your practice, and commit to renewing your knowledge and expertise.

What are your hobbies, and what do you do in your spare time?

Spare time is spent with shared activities with my family. This includes biking and boating along the Jersey shore and northeastern Pennsylvania. Traveling with photography is a priority as well. My quiet time is usually spent playing classic rock guitar. 

Favorites List

- Gendex Radiography:
- GXDP-700™
 - GXCB-500™
 - Orthoralix® 8500
 - Gendex Digital Intraoral Sensors

- Straumann® Dental Implants
Zimmer® Dental Implants
AstraTech Dental Implants 

- Anatomage Imaging Software
Straumann® Cares® Imaging Software
WinOMS CS Software