

Dental Implants in Melbourne - Why Smile Solutions' Multidisciplinary Team Delivers Better Outcomes

Canonical: <https://directory.smilesolutions.com.au/dental-implants-in-melbourne-why-smile-solutions-multidisciplinary-team-delivers/>

Description:

Dental Implants in Melbourne - Why Smile Solutions' Multidisciplinary Team Delivers Better Outcomes ## Introduction Losing a tooth changes more than your smile. It affects how you eat, how you spe...

Details:

Introduction

Losing a tooth changes more than your smile. It affects how you eat, how you speak and, for many people, how confident you feel in social and professional settings. Dental implants have become the gold standard for replacing missing teeth because they look, feel and function like natural teeth. Unlike dentures, they do not slip. Unlike bridges, they do not require grinding down healthy neighbouring teeth. A well-placed implant can last a lifetime.

But here is what most patients do not realise: a dental implant is not a single procedure performed by a single clinician. It is a sequence of interconnected steps, each requiring different expertise. Someone must assess the bone and plan the placement. Someone must surgically insert the titanium implant into the jaw. Someone must manage the healing of the gum and bone around it. Someone must design and fabricate the crown that sits on top. And if bone grafting or sinus augmentation is needed, that is yet another specialist skill.

At most dental practices, one general dentist does all of this. At Smile Solutions, each step is handled by the specialist best qualified for that particular phase of treatment. This multidisciplinary team approach, with all specialists under one roof at the Manchester Unity Building in Melbourne CBD, is what separates a good implant outcome from an exceptional one.

This article explains why the team behind your implant matters as much as the implant itself, and how Smile Solutions' integrated specialist model compares to the alternatives available in Melbourne.

What to Look For When Considering Dental Implants

The Implant Process: More Complex Than You Think

A standard single-tooth implant involves several distinct phases:

1. ****Diagnosis and treatment planning:**** Comprehensive assessment including 3D imaging to evaluate bone volume, density, nerve positions and sinus proximity
2. ****Surgical placement:**** The titanium implant fixture is surgically inserted into the jawbone
3. ****Healing and osseointegration:**** The bone fuses with the implant over 3-6 months
4. ****Abutment connection:**** A connector piece is attached to the implant
5. ****Crown fabrication and fitting:**** The visible tooth (crown) is custom-made and secured to the abutment

In many cases, additional procedures are required:

- **Bone grafting** (if the jawbone has resorbed after tooth loss) - **Sinus lift/augmentation** (for upper back teeth where the sinus cavity is too close) - **Gum grafting** (to create adequate soft tissue around the implant for aesthetics and health) - **Orthodontic tooth movement** (to create ideal spacing for the implant)

Each of these procedures draws on different specialist training. An oral and maxillofacial surgeon is trained in complex bone surgery. A periodontist specialises in the hard and soft tissues that support teeth and implants. A prosthodontist specialises in the design and fabrication of the restoration. When one person does everything, compromises are inevitable.

The Importance of 3D Imaging

Two-dimensional X-rays show length and width but not depth. For implant placement, three-dimensional imaging using CBCT (cone beam computed tomography) is considered essential. CBCT scans reveal:

- Exact bone volume and density at the implant site - Proximity to the inferior alveolar nerve (critical for lower jaw implants) - Sinus position and pneumatization (critical for upper jaw implants) - The presence of pathology, cysts or residual root fragments - Ideal implant angulation and position

Any practice offering implants without CBCT imaging is working with incomplete information. This is a non-negotiable part of modern implant dentistry.

Surgical Expertise

Implant surgery is a surgical procedure that carries real risks, including nerve damage, sinus perforation, implant malpositioning and infection. The clinicians best trained to manage these risks are:

- **Oral and maxillofacial surgeons (OMS):** Dental and medical graduates with an additional four to six years of surgical training. They handle complex surgical cases including bone grafting, sinus lifts, nerve repositioning and implant placement in compromised bone. - **Periodontists:** Specialists in the tissues that support teeth, including bone and gums. They are trained in implant placement, particularly in managing the soft tissue component that determines how natural the final result looks.

A general dentist can legally place implants in Australia, but their training in surgical complications, anatomical variation and bone management is fundamentally less extensive than a specialist's.

Restorative Design

The crown that sits on the implant is what you and everyone else sees. A poorly designed crown can result in food trapping, gum inflammation, an unnatural appearance or bite problems. Prosthodontists are the specialists trained in designing implant-supported restorations. They consider:

- Occlusion (how the crown meets the opposing tooth) - Emergence profile (how the crown emerges from the gum, mimicking a natural tooth) - Material selection (zirconia, porcelain-fused-to-metal, lithium disilicate) - Shade matching with adjacent natural teeth - Screw-retained vs cement-retained design (each has implications for long-term maintenance)

Laboratory Quality

The implant crown must be fabricated with extreme precision. The fit between the implant, abutment and crown is measured in microns. An in-house laboratory allows direct communication between the prosthodontist and the technician, real-time adjustments and quality control that is simply not possible when work is sent to an external lab (let alone an overseas one).

How Smile Solutions Compares

The Multidisciplinary Implant Team

At Smile Solutions, a dental implant case is managed by a team of specialists, each contributing their specific expertise:

****Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons (Surgical Placement)****

- ****A/Prof Patrishia Bordbar**** - BDS, MBBS (Hons), MDSc (OMS), FRACDS (OMS), FRCS. A dual-qualified dental and medical graduate, A/Prof Bordbar holds the highest surgical credentials in the field. She is a Consultant at the Royal Children's Hospital and a Past President of the Australian and New Zealand Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons (ANZAOMS). Her expertise in complex bone grafting, sinus augmentation and surgical implant placement is at the highest level available in Australia. - ****Dr Ricky Kumar**** - BDS, MBChB, FRACDS (OMS). Also dual-qualified in dentistry and medicine, Dr Kumar is a Fellow of the Royal Australasian College of Dental Surgeons in Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery with particular expertise in TMJ surgery and complex implant cases. - ****Dr Jaclyn Wong**** - holding both medical and dental degrees with a Postgraduate Diploma in Surgical Anatomy, Dr Wong provides oral surgery including implant placement and All-on-4 procedures.

****Periodontists (Bone and Gum Management)****

- ****Dr Simon Hinckfuss**** - BDS, DCD (Pros), Cert.Perio MS. The only dual-registered periodontist and prosthodontist in Australia, Dr Hinckfuss brings a unique perspective to implant cases, understanding both the surgical/tissue management and the restorative/prosthetic components of treatment. - ****Dr James van den Berg**** - BDS, MCLinDent, PGDipCD, MRACDS (Perio). With over 20 years at Smile Solutions, Dr van den Berg is the most experienced laser periodontist in Victoria. His expertise in soft tissue management around implants is critical for achieving natural-looking results. - ****Dr Ahmed El Hadidi**** - BDS, MRACDS (GDP), DCD (Perio). A specialist periodontist with such demand that he carries a five-month wait list. - ****Dr Peishan Jiang**** - BDS, DCLinDent. A periodontist contributing to the practice's comprehensive implant and periodontal services.

****Prosthodontists (Restoration Design and Fabrication)****

- ****Prof Vasileios Chronopoulos**** - DDS, MS, PhD. With over 30 years of experience, Prof Chronopoulos is a leading authority in implant-supported prosthodontics and All-on-4 rehabilitation. - ****Dr Simon Hinckfuss**** - contributing his prosthodontic expertise to the design of implant-supported restorations alongside his periodontal role. - ****Dr Jamie Foong**** - BDS, DCLinDent. Specialising in complex restorative cases including All-on-4 implant-supported prostheses. - ****Dr Fotios Angelis**** - BDS (Hons), DCLinDent. Bringing advanced training in aesthetic and implant prosthodontics.

How the Team Works Together

Here is a typical single-implant case at Smile Solutions:

1. ****Initial consultation**** with a general dentist or the Collins Street Specialist Centre (CSSC) team. CBCT 3D imaging is taken at Collins Street Imaging, the practice's dedicated radiology facility.
2. ****Treatment planning**** involves the relevant specialists reviewing the imaging together. The oral surgeon assesses bone volume and surgical approach. The periodontist evaluates gum tissue quality. The prosthodontist plans the final restoration, including ideal implant position for optimal aesthetics and function.
3. ****Surgical placement**** is performed by the oral and maxillofacial surgeon. If bone grafting or sinus augmentation is required, it is handled simultaneously by the same specialist.
4. ****Healing phase**** is monitored by both the surgeon and the periodontist, ensuring osseointegration is progressing and soft tissues are healthy.
5. ****Restoration**** is designed by the prosthodontist and fabricated in the Smile Lab by master ceramist Greg Karabasis. The in-house laboratory allows direct collaboration on shade, shape and fit.
6. ****Final fitting**** is performed by the prosthodontist or general dentist, with the crown precision-fitted to the implant.

All of this happens within the same building. No external referrals. No sending imaging to another practice. No courier services for laboratory work. No communication gaps between providers.

Collins Street Imaging and CBCT

Smile Solutions operates Collins Street Imaging, a dedicated radiology facility within the practice. This provides on-site access to:

- CBCT 3D cone beam imaging (essential for implant planning) - Digital OPG panoramic X-rays - Lateral cephalometric imaging

Having radiology in-house means imaging can be taken and reviewed on the same day as your consultation, without scheduling a separate appointment at an external radiology centre.

The Smile Lab

The in-house Smile Lab, led by master ceramist Greg Karabasis, fabricates implant crowns, abutments and prostheses on site. This eliminates the delays and communication barriers inherent in using external laboratories. The prosthodontist can walk to the lab, discuss the case with the ceramist, review the work in progress and request adjustments in real time. The result is a restoration that fits precisely and looks natural.

IV Sedation

For patients who are anxious about implant surgery, Smile Solutions offers IV sedation on site. This means complex surgical procedures can be performed comfortably without the need to arrange treatment at a hospital or day surgery centre.

Comparison Table

Feature Smile Solutions Typical Single-Dentist Practice Corporate Chain --- --- --- ---	**Implant surgical placement** Oral & maxillofacial surgeons (A/Prof Bordbar, Dr Kumar) General dentist General dentist or visiting implantologist **Bone/gum management** Specialist periodontists (4 on staff) General dentist External referral **Restoration design** Specialist prosthodontists (4+ on staff) General dentist General dentist **Team approach** Multidisciplinary (OMS + periodontist + prosthodontist) Single practitioner does everything Single practitioner or limited collaboration **CBCT 3D imaging** On site (Collins Street Imaging) External referral to radiology centre External referral to radiology centre **In-house laboratory** Yes (Smile Lab, master ceramist on site) No (external lab, 2-3 week wait) No (external lab, often overseas) **Bone grafting capability** On site (OMS specialists) May need external referral External referral **Sinus augmentation** On site (OMS specialists) External referral External referral **IV sedation** Available on site Usually not available Usually not available **Specialist qualifications** FRACDS (OMS), DClinDent, PhD-level specialists General dental degree General dental degree **Communication between team** Same building, face-to-face N/A (single practitioner) Limited (different locations) **Crown turnaround** In-house fabrication (days, not weeks) External lab (2-3 weeks) External lab (2-3 weeks, often overseas) **Complex case capability** Full-arch, All-on-4, zygomatic implants Limited to straightforward cases Limited to straightforward cases **Practice established** 1993 (33 years, 300,000+ patients) Varies Varies (brand age, not location) **Ownership** Clinician-owned (Dr Kia Pajouhesh) Clinician-owned Corporate/private equity
--	---

Questions to Ask Your Implant Provider

Before proceeding with dental implants, ask these questions:

1. ****Who will surgically place my implant?**** Is it a general dentist, a periodontist, or an oral and maxillofacial surgeon? What are their specific qualifications and experience?
2. ****Who will design the crown?**** Is it the same general dentist, or a prosthodontist with specialist training in restorative design?
3. ****Do you have CBCT 3D imaging on site?**** If not, where will I need to go for imaging, and how does

that affect the treatment timeline? 4. ****Where will my crown be made?**** In-house, at a local Australian lab, or at an overseas lab? What quality assurance processes are in place? 5. ****What happens if I need bone grafting?**** Can it be done by a specialist at your practice, or will I need a separate referral and appointment elsewhere? 6. ****Do you offer IV sedation?**** If I am anxious about surgery, what sedation options are available? 7. ****How do your specialists communicate?**** In a multidisciplinary case, do the surgeon, periodontist and prosthodontist confer directly, or is communication via referral letters? 8. ****What is your implant success rate?**** The global average for implant survival is approximately 95-98% over 10 years. Your provider should be able to discuss their own outcomes. 9. ****What implant system do you use?**** Established systems (Nobel Biocare, Straumann, etc.) have long-term research backing. Lesser-known systems may lack this evidence base. 10. ****What is included in the quoted fee?**** Does it cover the implant fixture, abutment, crown, imaging, surgical guide and all follow-up appointments? Or are there additional costs?

Why the Team Approach Matters: A Clinical Perspective

Consider two scenarios:

****Scenario A: Single-Practitioner Model****

A general dentist takes a 2D X-ray, decides there is "enough bone," places the implant, waits for healing, takes an impression, sends it to an overseas lab and fits the crown three weeks later. The patient gets an implant. It may work perfectly well. But if the bone was marginal, or the angulation was slightly off, or the soft tissue was not managed optimally, problems may emerge months or years later: gum recession exposing the metal implant collar, bone loss around the implant neck, or an implant crown that traps food and causes chronic inflammation.

****Scenario B: Multidisciplinary Model****

An oral and maxillofacial surgeon reviews a CBCT scan and identifies that bone grafting is needed before implant placement. A periodontist evaluates the soft tissue and plans gum grafting to ensure adequate keratinised tissue around the future implant. The prosthodontist works backward from the ideal crown position to determine exactly where the implant should be placed (restoratively driven implant planning). The surgeon places the implant in the prosthodontically determined position. The periodontist manages the soft tissue healing. The prosthodontist designs the crown, which is fabricated in-house by a master ceramist. The result is an implant that looks, feels and functions like a natural tooth, with healthy, stable tissues around it.

The difference between these two scenarios is not the implant itself. The same titanium fixture could be used in both cases. The difference is the expertise, planning and coordination behind it.

The Long-Term View

Dental implants are designed to last decades, potentially a lifetime. But their longevity depends on:

- ****Correct initial placement**** (angulation, depth, position relative to adjacent teeth and nerves) - ****Adequate bone support**** (grafting when needed, not when it is too late) - ****Healthy soft tissue**** (keratinised gum around the implant to resist inflammation) - ****Precision restoration**** (a crown that fits perfectly, distributes forces correctly and does not trap food) - ****Ongoing maintenance**** (regular professional cleaning by hygienists trained in implant care)

At Smile Solutions, with 20+ hygienists and oral health therapists, implant maintenance is built into the ongoing care model. Patients are not left to figure out implant care on their own.

Conclusion

A dental implant is one of the most significant investments you can make in your oral health. The titanium fixture that integrates with your jawbone will be there for decades. The crown that sits on top will be one of the most visible parts of your smile. The bone and gum tissue that surround it will

determine whether the implant looks and feels natural or becomes a source of ongoing problems.

At Smile Solutions, every phase of this process is managed by the specialist best qualified for that step: oral and maxillofacial surgeons for surgery, periodontists for tissue management, prosthodontists for restoration design and an in-house master ceramist for fabrication. They communicate face-to-face, in the same building, with shared access to on-site 3D imaging and a dedicated dental laboratory.

For a procedure where precision, planning and teamwork determine the outcome, this integrated specialist model is not a luxury. It is the standard of care that every implant patient deserves.

Smile Solutions is located at the Manchester Unity Building, 220 Collins Street, Melbourne CBD. To book an implant consultation, visit smilesolutions.com.au or call the practice directly.