



## PRESS RELEASE

### Vascular International develops pulsatile arm model for shunt surgeons

Hands-on training with simulation models is designed to help improve further education of vascular surgeons. On the one hand, the surgeons learn the principles of simple and complex interventions in a short time and, on the other hand, they master new industrial implants perfectly. Since 1991 Vascular International (VI) has offered stress-free and systematically structured simulation courses for future vascular surgeons. The models have constantly been further developed under the maxim of highest quality in order to meet the participants' requirements. Since the end of last year a pulsatile arm model, which serves as a training simulator for various access paths for patients in need of hemodialysis, has been developed.

Fürigen, April 2013 – “With the new VASCULAR INTERNATIONAL arm model, we can train more than eight different vascular accesses for hemodialysis patients. Besides arteriovenous fistulae, plastic prostheses may be implanted, the implantation of hybrid prostheses can also be trained,” explains **Matthias K. Widmer**, VI tutor and vascular surgeon at the University Hospital for Cardiac and Vascular Surgery, Inselspital Bern. Widmer has defined the specifications for this all-in-one concept of the arm model. Under the patronage of the European Society for Vascular Surgery he has also offered training courses for young surgeons on specially prepared corpses since 2009. However, these preparations are extremely expensive and not always available. Widmer explains: “As secretary of the Vascular Access Society I have gained some insight as to how great the demand is and how important the training facilities are, so that vascular surgeons – especially in Asian emerging nations or in Saudi Arabia, for example – are able to take care of the ever increasing number of patients with renal insufficiency, who need a dialysis.” The modular arm model serves to reach a high standard of surgery of hemodialysis accesses. Common arteriovenous fistulae and prosthesis shunts as well as hybrid processes can be practised.

#### **First prototype**

Based on Mr. Widmer's plans and with the support of Toni Meile, managing director of VI, a first model was produced by Synbone AG in Malans, Switzerland, in December last year. In January a second model was developed, which has been expanded to become the first prototype and will be introduced to the public during the coming weeks. Vascular inlays are integrated in a “basic arm” with prefabricated channels and the arterial vessels are connected to a pulsatile pump. Everything is then covered with a synthetic skin which may – like the vascular inlays – simply be exchanged after use.

At the end of March 2013 the first vascular anastomosis was sutured successfully. A few amendments have to be implemented prior to serial production. ATRIUM/MAQUET has played a key role in bearing the development costs of this arm model, which can be transported in a box after use, well protected and ready for the next mission.

### **About VASCULAR INTERNATIONAL**

In 1991 the workshops started for the first time under the name of VASCULAR INTERNATIONAL. In 1996 VASCULAR INTERNATIONAL was established as a foundation by Professor Jens-Rainer Allenberg, Heidelberg, Professor Georg Hagmüller, Vienna, and Professor Jon Largiadér, Zurich. In 2009, VI was handed over to today's foundation board members Professor Hans-Henning Eckstein, President and Head of Vascular Surgery at the Klinikum rechts der Isar, Professor Afshin Assadian, Head of Vascular Surgery at the Wilhelminenspital Vienna, Professor Jürg Schmidli, Head of Vascular Surgery at the Inselspital Bern, Professor Hardy Schumacher, vascular surgeon at the Klinik Hirslanden in Zurich, and Hanspeter Kiser, entrepreneur. In June 2010 the VASCULAR INTERNATIONAL School AG was founded as part of the realignment and extension of the activities under the management of Toni Meile.

The VASCULAR INTERNATIONAL foundation and school is committed to the idea of enhanced training and learning of vascular surgery techniques using lifelike models. With top priority on maximised patient safety, it is the goal of the VASCULAR INTERNATIONAL Foundation and School to constantly improve vascular surgery training in order to support safe and efficient open vascular and endovascular patient care.

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