



# 2022 SIGN INTERNATIONAL ORTHOPAEDIC CONFERENCE

## SIGN Conference Returns

### *“Looking with New Eyes at Fracture Treatments”*

by Lewis G. Zirkle, MD

We were very happy to hold the SIGN Conference in person again this year, after a two-year hiatus. As we prepared for the event, we asked ourselves “Why do we hold a conference? Is it worth the time and expense to bring surgeons from around the world into one room?”

We determined the answer to be a definite “yes”. We learn more from the group coming together than we can on our own. **We learned to look with new eyes at fracture treat-**

**ment, which was the theme of the conference, and develop new ideas.**

Though the attendance was smaller than in previous years, we invited mentors who will teach their fellow orthopaedic surgeons when they return to their countries. We have been using webinars to educate SIGN Surgeons, but I know that in-person teaching and hands-on training provides better learning and more opportunities to gain insights together. We used the new SIGN Bioskills Lab

to immediately apply learning from lectures, which helps surgeons retain information and gain surgical skill.

I am humbled to have the opportunity to work with SIGN Surgeons around the world. We continue to look for areas of improvement because the patients have no choice in their care. We must offer them the best care possible. Whole families depend on these results because stabilizing the fracture properly determines whether the patient can return to work.



2022 SIGN Conference



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## *Bioskills Lab*

The conference highlighted the new SIGN Bioskills Lab. Every surgeon participated in six sessions to get hands-on experience with procedures for hip, pelvic, ankle, and elbow fractures, as well as flap procedures. Many surgeons noted that the smaller group enabled them to get more practical experience and attention from session leaders. Support from Medtronic, Surgical Training Institute, Science Care, Sawbones, and many other partners made these lab sessions possible.



*Above: Dr. Pierre Woolley, from Haiti, (center) co-led the Bioskills lab on hip fractures. Top: Surgeons from around the world work together in the Bioskills Lab.*

## *Mentors*

This year's conference was smaller than previous years, but focused on SIGN Mentors from 16 countries, who will return home with new skills to teach their colleagues and

improve surgery in their hospitals. Some surgeons had the opportunity to guide discussions around each presentation, taking the next step in SIGN leadership.



*Above: Dr. Billy Hoanga, from Tanzania (tan jacket) moderates discussions after Dr. Daniel Sciuto's (white shirt) presentation. Right: Dr. Biruk Wamisho, Ethiopia*

## *Teaching*

SIGN Surgeons presented research and case studies from their hospitals, sharing their insights and innovations with the whole SIGN Partnership. SIGN Surgeons can find recordings of each presentation on The Hub.



# Engineering

At the SIGN Engineering Demonstrations, surgeons discovered products that the SIGN Engineering team is working on and provided real-time feedback about how these systems can be used and improved for use in their hospitals.



SIGN Surgeons experimented with the SIGN HV Plates for femoral neck fractures (left), SIGN Skin Graft System (above), and SIGN Reamers for extracting bone graft material (right).



# SIGN Spine

The day before the SIGN Conference, 8 SIGN Surgeons gathered with spine experts from North America to learn and practice spine surgeries. The pilot project for SIGN Spine will

be launching soon, with plans to train spine surgeons and provide affordable and effective care for people with critical spine injuries.



Left: SIGN Spine surgeons used Sawbones and human tissue to practice procedures in the Bioskills Lab. Above: The SIGN Spine team



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