All-on-4, screw retained denture or hybrid denture; three different names all the same appliance. Let’s clear up the confusion, the three names of these appliances are just that, names. They are all fabricated in the exact same manner.

Let me go through a simplified overview of the dentist’s and laboratory’s thought and procedure sequence.

**First, ALWAYS BEGIN WITH THE END IN MIND.** What are the patient’s esthetic desires, function desires and fit desires? Once the dental team and patient agree on these parameters, the rest is just filling in the blanks. If the patient is currently wearing a dental appliance, we want to know what they like or want changed. This question discovers what we need to know to satisfy the patient. We could talk bone density, number of implant sites, type of implants used, etc, etc. Once the restoration is delivered to the patient all that really matters are fit, form and function. The rest of the decisions are between the surgeon, the dentist and the laboratory.

In my opinion, the first and most important determinant to satisfy is esthetics. If the patient is satisfied with the esthetics of their current appliance, we are well on our way. If the patient is not satisfied with the esthetics, we will need to fabricate a transitional appliance to understand what are the patient’s esthetic desires? During the esthetic evaluation, we also will be determining function in the same manner that you evaluate any dental appliance you fabricate. You have now satisfied two parameters: esthetics and function. All that is left is left for us to satisfy is fit. Simple so far, right!

Using either the patient’s current appliance or the transitional appliance, we now fabricate a surgical guide or a CT scanning guide for proposed implant location and placement to satisfy the fit requirement. After implant locations and any additional surgical procedures necessary, bone grafting or reduction, have been determined the dental prosthesis is processed into a more durable material. This prosthesis may be the final restoration of just a transitional appliance.

At the time of implant placement, it will be determined if the implants are stable enough to support the processed approved restoration. If it determined they are stable enough, the prosthesis will be attached to the implant by means of implant abutments. If the implants are not stable enough at the placement appointment, the appliance will be worn as a removable appliance until osseo-integration and stability has taken place. At that time the appliance will be secured to implant abutments.

While this procedure at first glance seems difficult, working with an experienced dentist like Dr. LaVacca and an experienced laboratory these types of procedures go smoothly.