

Zooming in on perio: Seminar focuses on revitalizing hygiene department

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Dental hygiene is the backbone of any dental practice. For years the hygiene department was considered a "loss leader" within a practice. In today's economic climate, as the hygiene department goes, so does the practice. With approximately 60% or more of restorative work coming from the hygienist's chair, hygienists of today must be savvy businesspeople as well as good clinicians. While dentists are the hard-tissue experts, hygienists are the soft-tissue experts. A well-developed hygiene team (whether that be a team of one person or 10 people) can produce four to five times their salary with excellent case acceptance.

Jayne Carey, RDH, has developed a curriculum for the entire team on "The Comprehensive Transformation Program-Revitalizing Your Hygiene Department." The program can involve a continuing education component but is geared for in-office training and support. Jayne wants participants to:

- Learn communication skills for case acceptance
- Create a win-win partnering environment for the patient, hygienist, doctor, and practice
- Develop and implement a successful periodontal program to increase patient health and practice profitability
- Implement proven successful systems and protocols for excellent patient care

Jayne believes it's an exciting time to be in dentistry and dental hygiene. With new research and technologies, dental professionals of 2016 can better treat and maintain patients' oral and systemic health. Patients are much more educated about dentistry in general due to their access to social and traditional media, and because the medical profession recognizes the importance of oral health.

Yet there's a huge gap between patients' knowledge and periodontal health. It is estimated that approximately 75% of adults have some form of periodontal disease. Many hygienists and dentists recognize this and treat appropriately. Since the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) and the AAP (American Academy of Periodontology) recognize periodontal disease as a major public health concern, it's important to inform and influence proper health care through continuing education, and Jayne's program addresses this issue. The course reviews:

- The basics of periodontal health
- The role of biofilm on oral and systemic health

- The moral, ethical, and legal responsibility to inform patients of their health or disease status
- The codiagnosis approach of the dentist and hygienist
- The ability to develop a periodontal program within time constraints of the hygiene appointment
- The tools necessary for total team engagement

Jayne discusses two primary dental diseases-hard-tissue disease and soft-tissue disease. She says dentists address the hard-tissue component, and it's the responsibility of the hygienists to gather information on the soft tissues and present their findings to the doctor. After the appropriate dental diagnosis, Jayne feels it is the hygienist's task to answer patient questions or concerns and present the appropriate treatment recommendations. Doing so creates the codiagnosis triangle of the doctor, hygienist, and patient, which has been shown to increase overall case acceptance. This triangle also promotes trust and value for patients in a practice and can be a great referral source not only for the hygiene department, but also the restorative side of the practice.

Jayne is a graduate of Middlesex Community College in Massachusetts and has been a clinical hygienist for over 20 years in several general practices. She is currently working in a progressive, comprehensive general practice, North Shore Center for Cosmetic and Family Dentistry, where the doctor and team are committed to providing exceptional care and education. Her experiences here and in other practices, along with coaching by Beverly Maguire Fink and Perioadvocates, LLC, have taken her career to new levels as a leader. Her "Comprehensive" program has grown from her experiences and she presents it in PowerPoint with an organized, systematic approach to care for patients and practices. She provides the organizational tools needed for implementation of a successful periodontal program for the entire dental team. She does not provide a cookie-cutter approach because each practice is unique and she treats participants as such. She firmly believes in the principle, "Tell me and I will forget; show me and I might understand; involve me and I will understand."

Jayne enjoys crafting a standard of care that reflects the mission and vision of practices while assisting teams to come together for the benefit of patients and practice. When patient case acceptance improves, everyone in the practice benefits. Transitioning a practice can create stress, but even subtle changes can have huge impacts.

As a member of the ADHA, Jayne believes it's important to support organized dental hygiene. Changes within dentistry and dental hygiene are occurring, and without a voice, outside forces will try to guide patient treatment.

Jayne enjoys her family, friends, traveling, and living every day to the fullest by the principle of CANI—Constant and Never-ending Improvement. She strives to learn new things, whether within dentistry or life. Early in her career she wanted to become involved in health care and started working for an orthodontist. Jayne enjoyed being involved with patients, and decided dental hygiene would be the career for her. Jayne enjoys making a difference in people's lives, providing elementary school educational programs, presenting continuing education programs, and working with teams as part of her perio management consulting company.

When she began practicing "diagnosis-driven dental hygiene," she realized what a difference it could make in the lives of her patients and the practice. It brought back her

enthusiasm for dental hygiene, and she found it to be professionally and personally rewarding. She was successful, her patients were healthier, the hygiene department was profitable, and the practice was growing! The doctor and other team members were rejuvenated with how simple changes could improve so many things. When the team helps patients choose the right treatment, the money flows naturally! Providing comprehensive care allows for a more efficient, productive, motivated, and less stressed hygiene department. As the hygiene department goes, so does the entire dental team! For more information on Jayne's program or Perio Management Consultants, contact periomc@comcast.net or www.perioconsultants.com.

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