

Getting in to Practice: Basic Concepts



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The purpose of any business is to generate profit. The business of dentistry is providing high quality clinical care in a high –quality environment. The challenge in the business of dentistry is to provide it profitably and in a way that makes patients appreciate and value the treatment they receive¹.

Practice by Definition:

It is an independent existence wherein an individual earns his bread, butter & jam thro' the offering of professional services from his professional establishment. It is amazing that not a single lecture is devoted for private practice for the purpose of earning a livelihood.

Type of Practice can be broadly grouped as:

- Exclusive specialty
- General dentistry
- General with specialty

Clinic/Organization must have specific: Goals / Mission / Vision / Objectives

Goals:

Should include mainly performance measures:

- o Business result (outcome)
- o Employee satisfaction
- o Patient satisfaction
- o Meeting requirements
- o Satisfying needs
- o Meeting expectations
- o Keeping promises
- o Taking proper action on complaints
- o Quick responses
- o Timely deliveries

Mission:

Is to deliver high Quality, Cost effective & family oriented services through good environment

Vision:

We continuously strive to provide latest in dental care by upgrading the technology and introducing the most modern equipments. We have to keep pace with rapidly changing technology by introducing best facilities at our clinic.

Quality:

- Meeting OR exceeding patient requirements, needs & expectations
- All features of product & services that enhance patient satisfaction

Quality is never an accident; it is always the result of high intension, sincere effort, intelligent direction and skillful execution. It represents the wise choice of many alternatives.

Objectives (Quality Policy):

- Fast & prompt service
- Consistency in result
- Attended by specialists when required
- Continual improvement

Consumerance:

We are living in the world – where customer driven commerce is the norm of the day. Patient is the nucleus around which the practice revolves. Courtesy establishes - successful patient relationship, “What goes around comes around”. Direct correlation among patient retention, referral.

Important aspects:

- Municipal Permission

- State Council registration
- Commercial power supply
- Bio medical waste management

Municipal Permission:

Permits you to practice in that area, to be renewed annually by 31st March. Valid from 1st April to 31st March next year.

State Council registration:*

Karnataka State Dental council which is a Statutory autonomous body created by an act of parliament (Dentist act-1948). It gives you license to practice. Valid from 1st Jan to 31st Dec. Can be renewed for the upcoming year during the month of Oct/November.

Commercial power supply:

It is a must to have a commercial power supply to practice dentistry as it needs more than 1-2 KV or even more depending on the equipments. If commercial supply is not obtained it may lead to initial notice later may end up in heavy penalty payment.

Biomedical Waste Management : (BMWM) Has been briefed earlier².

Basic needs are

- Clinic
- Patient

Clinic needs:

- o Personnel: - Specialists, Assistant doctor, Receptionist, Attender etc.
- o Materials & equipments, emergency drugs for immediate need etc.
- o Environment

Waiting hall: should be provided with

- Reception: Receptionist (Insulation) a good efficient staff will help insulate you from patients & relatives. Newer trends speak of putting up barriers between patient & doctor.
- Drinking Water
- Comfortable Seating area
- To spend Time-Apart from TV, news paper and magazine (new once only), aquarium, Ht. & Wt. chart, weighing machine, toys for kids etc.
- Display – personal achievements in profession & other areas, degree, municipal permit, state council reg., etc.

* Official address for communication - Registrar, Karnataka State Dental Council, No.23., Appajappa Agrahar, I Main Road, Chamrajpet, Bangalore-560 018, Ph : 080 26674068. First to have its own Office premises in the country for any state, including Dental Council of India.

A patient is the most important person in the practice, by correspondence or thro the telephone.

The patient is not dependent on us; we are dependent on him or her.

The patient is not a statistic or a mouth. He/She is a human being with feelings and emotions like our own.

The inquiring patient is not an interruption of our work; he /she is the purpose of it. We are not doing the patient a favour by treating him/her; he/she is doing us a favour by giving us the opportunity to do so³.

☐ Number of patients :

A session of 4 hrs – appro.15 patients, (each given 15 minutes) which allows to give quality care ,if more it would become quantity only with compromised quality. Preferably treat patients by appointments so that your planning and execution goes well.

At chair /working area : have instrumental/classical music background while working on patient, which has been proved, to enhance practice. This also avoids unpleasant noise of airtor, suction apparatus etc.

Attempt should be made to impress the patient with one's own competence rather than degrading a competitor.

Free time find areas where it needs attention. Keep feed back forms which can help you to attend to this ,get it duly filled once the treatment procedure is over.

Upgrades every six months minimum, attend to CDE/conferences to know the recent trends.

One has to be extra – than ordinary to excel in practice.

Patient needs in Practice:

- Good treatment
- Hygiene
- Pleasant environment
- Timely attention

ABC of Dental practice:

Understanding the Psychology of the patient is half battle won. Patients primary needs & wishes are that they be treated respectfully, ethically & professionally

You can expect punctuality, only if u r punctual. Always stand as an example

Success in Practice:

- Beautiful clinic
- Sashay staff
- Fancy instruments
- Stupendous communication skills
- Hygienic operatory
- Money that is charged
- Patients have become extremely aware of their surroundings & expect a perfectly planned & high quality dental treatment for the huge sum that goes from their pocket

Communication can make / break practice

Basis is to build relationship with patients, between patients & staff, Specialists & referring staff

Records:

- OP Card / Case Sheet/Prescription: according to council every prescription must have qualification recognized by dental council and registration number.
- Radiographs - *IOPA, OPG, optional - Cephalogram, RVG and others depending on need. ➤ Photographs :Intra oral camera
"A picture is worth thousand words". With the help of I.O. camera you can conduct tour of the mouth exploring 10–20 magnification. It helps to explain problem list to the patient. Treated cases photographs help in motivating and making the patient aware and accept the desired treatment protocol.
- Study cast for Orthodontic cases(minimum to be maintained in a clinic)and also for other cases needing special attention
- Others(referral letters, systemic problem evaluated if any)
- All document stored in computer
Buy Dental software available in market with suitable configuration.

Ideal qualities required for successful practice:

- Positive attitude towards work
- Proficiency in the clinical dentistry
- Good communication skills(verbal, non-verbal and written)
- Interpersonal skills
- Self confidence
- Critical thinking and problem solving skills
- Flexibility
- Self-motivation
- Leadership
- Team work

Merits are important- we all need to know where we, are where are we going, and how long it takes to get there. Prioritize your destinations and plan the route. Stay focused, because, as someone once said, the road to success is lined with many tempting parking spaces.

The three's that help: 3 P's":

Performance, Productivity, Punctuality

3 Criteria's:

- Ensure good service
- Quality treatment
- Good work environment

Instructions –

- Specific about procedures
- Consent form
- Feedback form
- Every procedure is a must
- All surgical procedures needs to be explained – written consent

Consent:

According to sec.13 of Indian Contract Act 1872

"When two or more persons agree upon the same thing in the same sense they are said to consent "

(18 yrs).

Consent needed:

For Surgical procedure which can include extraction for correction of pathological lesions / cosmetic surgeries / Orthodontic procedures etc.

Sample Consent Form: (Orthodontic treatment)

Date:

Ph./ Mobile No:

I..... Age M/F Son/Daughter/O.....

Address

Have been explained about the orthodontic treatment (Braces/clip) with regard to

- Treatment procedure
- Duration of treatment
- Extraction of few teeth deciduous/permanent if required during course of treatment
- Surgical correction required during /after treatment
- If instructions of doctor not followed (not maintaining appliance/ appointments) the consequences like – end result effected, damage to teeth, TMJ problems etc.,
- The total cost of treatment & mode of payment

I have fully understood the above statements & agree to follow the same

Sign. of patient

Sign. of parent/ guardian

Doctors signature

Feedback form is preferred to analyze growth areas and weak areas.

Rule of thumb: “KISS – Principle” – Keep it simple

“Tell, Show, Do” - follow in general to all patients

“Under Promise & Over give” - never commit more, commit less give more

Fees:

- Is the remuneration you receive for the professional service rendered
- Friends / Relatives / Doctors / VIPs / Politicians
 - Charge less / free
 - Internal marketing

Material Stock:

- Specialty wise- segregate, it is easy to trace
- Minimum – always make a note when to buy
- Exp. date – very important, more so the ones used in surgery- emergency drugs followed by other materials.

Annual maintenance contract - AMC's:

It makes all the difference in the clinic, have AMC for

- Chair & equipment
- Generator / UPS
- Bio – medical waste management

We must have three types of days:

- FOCUS days – you are working for what you are getting paid for, selling your product
- BUFFER days – which you spend time on administration , updating yourself: some research
- FREE days- you relax, recuperate & reconnect yourself

World has become hi-tech so why not introduce some in dental clinic

- Computer – must : Screen as note board & key board as pen
- Perfect sterilization protocol – train the staff
- Finance – “money is a good servant but a bad master” – Francis Bacon: maintain & have control
- Dental practice is a team game: train the staff so that they have same motivation, drive - to achieve the vision

Remember dates (Yearly)

- o Income tax: 31st March – to pay advance tax, 31st July – Individual / Professional
- o Municipal permission - 31st March
- o State council registration - 31st Dec

Goals for Dental office Infection Control ⁴:

Golden rules for infection control in the dental office to ensure ⁶:

1. Each patient that he or she will not receive any residual blood, saliva or microorganisms from other patients.
2. Each patient that all office personnel will use universal precautions to minimize possible body fluids transfer between office personnel and the patients.
3. That level of general office cleanliness and sanitation will be maintained within the professional standards of care in dentistry.
4. Patient that the office will use only the most effective infection control materials available without comprising their use for reasons of office convenience efficiency or cost.

Consumer protection act: (COPRA)

This has been brought to existence to protect the rights of the consumer.

- Was passed in 1986 in India
- 10 years – debated, in 1995 : SC Pronounced that medical services are covered under CPA
- v Senior doctor – liability of his junior doctor committing some mistakes-Principle “Vicarious Liability”, Senior held responsible for junior mistake.

Supreme Court has made following observations

- o Setups where all the patients are charged shall be covered by the COPRA.
- o Where some patients are charged and others are treated free of charge and where the cost of the free patients is borne by the paying patients, all the patients shall be covered by the COPRA.
- o In an organization where all the patients are treated free of cost regardless of their income or ability to pay, the service shall not be covered under the COPRA (ex. conducting treatment camps thro organizations like Ida)⁵.

Dental Tourism:

- Cost of treatment(<7-10 times)
- People have started to club their tours with dental treatment, ending up having a grand holiday almost free!
- India is highest dentist producing country in the world

Possibilities:

- Emergency care to have emergency drugs
- How many clinics have autoclave (statistics shows only < 2 -5% clinics have)
- Calibration of light cure – checking on regular basis of once in 6 months
- Restorations done without band & retainer

Patient can be gauged depending on satisfaction level:

- Patients who get less than they expect- LEAVE
- Patients who get what they expect- RETURN
- Patients who get more than they expect- REFER

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