

Dental Practice Reports September 2004 Cover Story

21 common sense ways to boost your profits now

Hygiene departments can easily transform from “loss leaders”, producing \$600 - \$800 daily, to “production leaders” achieving \$2500+ when employing a comprehensive periodontal therapy program.

Many practices maintain a *mechanical* model, which focuses on removing calculus, plaque, stain and performing root planing one quarter of the mouth at a time. Treatment plans will commonly segregate each quadrant of therapy by two weeks. In reality, many cases never come to fruition until months later, at which time the initial quadrants have become re-infected by bacteria from the latter quadrants.

Research now directs us to a *medical* model, decreasing the bacterial load in the entire mouth, with treatment completed within 24 - 48 hours. Although longer appointments are necessary, proper use of ultrasonics increases efficiency, rendering one or two one and a half hour appointments rather than four one hour appointments. The incorporation of locally applied antimicrobials, during initial therapy as well as maintenance, enhances clinical outcomes and substantially augments the services and profitability of the hygiene department.

Practices offering services based on current research and trends in periodontal therapy see hourly production rates soar from \$90 - \$120 to \$150 - \$400, with the average patient producing \$ 400 - \$700+. Embracing this model, hygiene departments can flourish into indispensable channels of both quality and profitability.

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