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HOT TOPICS FOR SUMMER

- 10** The Golden Rule is Great...But There is One Area in Which it is Lacking.
- 12** Good News for Independent Practitioners in the Ever-Changing Marketplace of Dentistry
- 16** Visioning and Resource Assessment: Vital Tools in Pre-Planning Your Office Design Project
- 18** We are All in This Together: The Latest Happenings in Colorado's Nonprofit Community



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what's inside?

pg. 16

10 The Golden Rule is Great...But There is One Area in Which it is Lacking.

12 Good News for Independent Practitioners in the Ever-Changing Marketplace of Dentistry

16 Visioning and Resource Assessment: Vital Tools in Pre-Planning Your Office Design Project

18 We are All in This Together: The Latest Happenings in Colorado's Nonprofit Community

departments

4 President's Letter

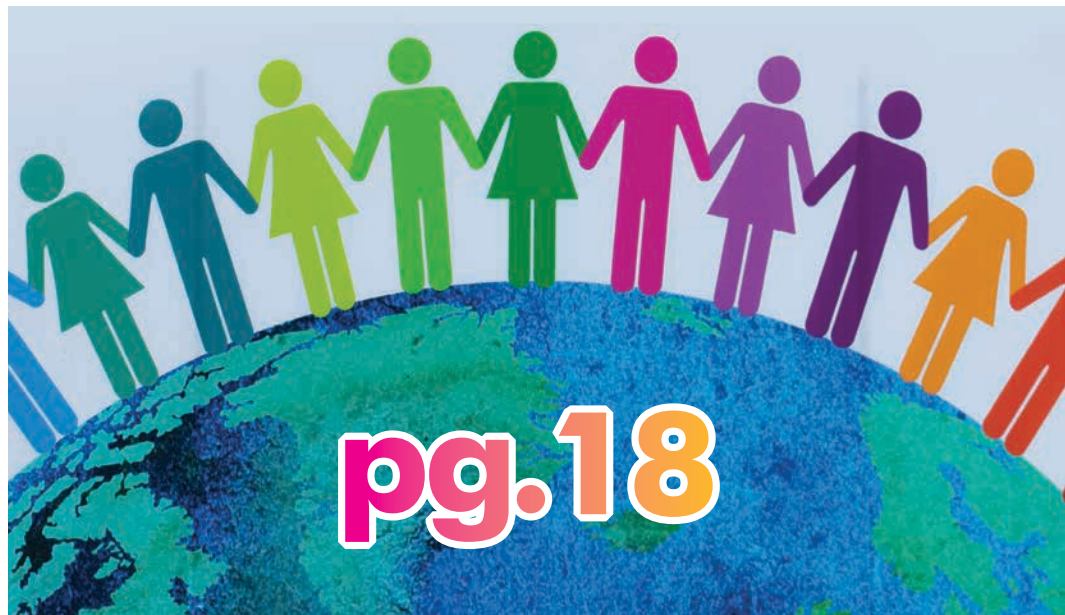
6 Reflections

8 Member Matters

23 Tripartite News

26 Event Calendar

27 Classifieds



pg. 18

Advertisers Directory

ADS Precise Transitions
adsprecise.com 17

Berkley Risk Services of Colorado
colorado.berkleyrisk.com 23

Carr Healthcare
carrhr.com Back Cover

CDA
cdaonline.org Inside Front Cover, 25

Copic Financial Services Group
copicfsg.com 9

CTC Associates
ctc-associates.com 22

Dente Vita
dentevita.com 5

Dentists Professional Liability
Trust of Colorado
tdplt.com 7

Denver Implant Study Club (DISC)
<https://disc.events> 26

Meisinger USA
meisingerusa.com 14-15

Miller Professional Upholster
e-dentalupholstery.com 5

SAS Transitions
sastransitions.com 13

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Could the Pandemic be a Blessing in Disguise?

By **Kevin Patterson, DDS, MD**



Many of us were fortunate to emerge from the past year intact — physically, mentally, and financially, giving us so much to be thankful for. We have the opportunity to use this experience to become more thoughtful and intentional and less

judgmental and reactive. We could appreciate more and criticize less. We could, for a lack of a better word, be kinder.

If history is any guide, we are at risk of putting this behind us as soon as possible, as we dive back into life with abandon and push boundaries again. We are consumed with “getting back to normal,” but does this mean returning to the ways we did things before 2020? Are our past actions the “normal” we want back?

It is vitally important to not lose sight of the lives cut short by the COVID-19 pandemic. As of May 2nd, 2021 deaths from the novel coronavirus are over 575,000 in the U.S. and 3.2 million worldwide. Countries like India are currently registering over 400,000 new cases in a single day, which will certainly lead to a large spike in loss of life. This pandemic has been an eye opener on so many fronts, we can't miss this chance to make beneficial changes in how we treat our fellow man and our home...planet Earth.

Many things have been learned over the past year and so many of us have been made aware of our mortality as we were faced with the uncertainty of how the virus would affect us, our family and our friends. As we are coming to live longer, we have become more focused on what will happen to us way in the future (cancer, Alzheimer's, etc). The pandemic gave many of us our first real look at what could happen to us today.

Is this to say that we should not look towards the future and focus solely on today since tomorrow is truly an uncertainty? No, I believe it is important to be very careful and respectful of what we do each day and, of course, we need to enjoy each moment, but we cannot become complacent that the future will be OK without our help. The pandemic and the surrounding events need to sound an “alarm bell.” Moving forward we need to look at what we have done in the past, evaluate how it has influenced our today and learn from it. Now is not the time to be

naïve and think that what we do today will have no influence on the future.

Our eyes should remain open to the myriad of inequities exposed as a result of this pandemic and make changes in what we do today in order

to halt the continuation of these inequalities. Each and every person should have access to a safe and affordable place live, fresh food, quality education and safe passage as we go about our days. The increase in senseless violence against innocent people, the continued increase in mass killings, the continued tension between law enforcement officials and those they are charged to protect needs to stop and we have the power to do this.

So has and/or will the COVID pandemic be a blessing in disguise? In my heart I believe yes - I hope yes!

We are an intelligent, innately caring species so I do believe that we have the power to make changes to what we are doing in the moment to ensure a bright, prosperous and safe future for the next generations.

I want to thank all of you for reading (at least I hope you have read) my articles over the last year as my time as MDDS President is coming to a close. The seven years I have spent on the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee at MDDS has been the most rewarding period of time in my professional life. I can't express the satisfaction of not only identifying issues to address but to actually play a part in developing solutions to these issues with the help of other similarly focused and dedicated individuals. We, the Colorado dental profession, the residents of Colorado, the United States and planet Earth cannot make lasting changes unless we are all committed to the cause, so please find time in your life to enact change in whatever little way you can. In closing, I would like to leave you with a quote I recently came across that you will hopefully carry forward in your daily life.

“Someday we will look back on this moment, and it will forever remind us to never take little things for granted. It will remind us to hug with all of our hearts, to pause to appreciate holding someone's hand, and to live in the moments that we are surrounded by others.” -Laura Jones ■

"We are all consumed with 'getting back to normal,' but does this mean returning to the ways we did things before 2020? Are our past actions the 'normal' we want back?"

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Is it Time to Make Some Changes?

By **Allen Vean, DMD**



What will you tell your children, grandchildren, and hopefully your great grandchildren about the events of the last fourteen months? What an incredible part of American history we have all witnessed. Unfortunately, this part of history that has affected our profession is not quite over.

As we progress to some sort of herd immunity with vaccinations and other precautions, the effects of the pandemic are still with us. The patient that refuses to comply with CDC guidelines, staff that are unsure about being vaccinated, employees testing positive for COVID-19, and a one-star review on social media out of the blue are just a few of the multiple issues that confront us.

To say that we live in a high stress and anxiety environment is probably an understatement. Add to that the events of the last fourteen months and one has a recipe for potential disaster. We strive for perfection. That is our nature. Most of us love our profession and do the right thing for our patients. However, many of us who have practiced for any length of time, know that many times this is not achievable. The causative factors involved are too numerous to list. How one deals with these issues can be the difference between a successful career or just going through the motions. Let me tell you some of my story and perhaps you can take a way a few pearls (as they say in dental education).

I was fortunate to have a dental education that was quite positive. I have no horror stories from dental school. I knew that I would specialize in pediatric dentistry at some point in my career. The realization came when I fabricated a new set of dentures for my great aunt who had worn the same dentures for 30 years (bad decision). She came to the office every two weeks for an adjustment, whether she needed it or not. At one appointment she had her newly fabricated maxillary denture in place with her old mandibular denture and wondered why her bite was off. I thanked her for coming and that night completed my application to a pediatric residency in Minnesota.

My family history is one of short-lived genes. My mother passed at age 49 and my father passed at age 62. I had entered a profession I truly enjoyed and cherished the interactions between the children, young adults, and parents knowing that I might make a small difference in their lives. But I was not going to let my career dictate my life. For example, the practice established office hours so I was able to attend most of my children's

extracurricular events and take time for me. The staff loved the schedule as they were able to spend more time with their families as well. Did I lose patients because of this policy? Did I forfeit income? Of course, but how many times have patients wanted that last appointment of the day and then called five minutes before the appointment time and cancelled or even worse, failed to show up all together. Our nature is to be giving. We have a difficult time saying no. I found the practice took on the

culture of myself and the staff. When you come to the realization you cannot treat everyone, you are left with a practice of patients who appreciate you and the dentist-patient relationship becomes quite strong. Funny thing, these patients refer the same kind of patients to the practice. Patient care was always the priority. In addition, my philosophy included not being the richest dentist in the cemetery.

Although I do not have hard statistics, I am concerned with the number of dentists who are experiencing burnout or wanting to leave the profession after ten to fifteen years of practice. Is striving for perfection and the anxiety of trying to please all a driving force? Did the pandemic exacerbate the situation? Some are questioning whether they made the right choice

of dentistry as a profession and are struggling daily. I have not even addressed the financial issues that come with the life of a dentist. I am certain that the mental health issues that have enveloped our profession during this time will be with us for an extended period. Please be assured that we are here to help. Making that contact with the MDDS or CDA may be the first step.

For all dental professionals, we and your patients need you. Are there changes in your personal and or professional life that would help? I know I had peers who acted as mentors to me. I was truly grateful for their guidance and direction. They were not only my peers but dear friends, not competitors. Reach out to peers. You might be surprised how much you have in common. Take care of yourself and your family both mentally and physically. You are no good to anyone when you are not in a good place. Be aware we are human and are not perfect. How you deal with the imperfections is so much more important. I hope you consider some of these changes.

As a postscript, please accept deep thanks to all of you who have participated in becoming vaccinators. I, too, have been certified by the state and have been doing assignments when asked. It has been an honor to work with such dedicated volunteers. Hopefully, we may be able to vaccinate our patients in the near future. ■

"...I am concerned with the number of dentists who are experiencing burnout or wanting to leave the profession after ten to fifteen years of practice. Is striving for perfection and the anxiety of trying to please all a driving force?"

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Dentist members safely enjoyed the great outdoors and Colorado's winter weather on a guided hike in February.



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New Members, Welcome!

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Dr. Rita Taylor

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Community Outreach Committee - Mountain West Dental Institute



The MDDS Community Outreach Committee met this April to create bags with oral health care supplies for distribution in the community and to stock Denver Community Fridge locations around the metro area.

Welcome MDDS 2021-2022 Board of Directors!



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The Golden Rule is Great...But There is One Area in Which it is Lacking.

By **Laura Brenner, DDS**



Howard Farran recently wrote a column in Dentaltown titled, “Follow the Golden Rule.” In it, he offered excellent examples of how we can share our greatest and highest good with patients. When it comes to clinical care, we should only do treatment on patients that we would choose for ourselves. I like that. It

allows us to lead with our integrity. Equally as important, he dives into how we treat patients on a personal level. We can get so caught up in the nitty gritty of the dentistry that we sometimes forget we’re treating human beings. We sometimes forget about personal connection, the very key that creates the satisfaction we give and receive from our work. Sincere thank you’s after finishing a root canal and apologies for being late make all the difference in the world.

Connecting and building relationships help our patients feel important, and it gives us the warm fuzzies we all want from our work.

It’s so important, and as I read this article, it leaves me asking another question. I can’t stop wondering... what about how we treat ourselves? It’s great when we can help our patients. Being of service is crucial to creating life satisfaction. However, sometimes we can be of so much service, that we tend to neglect ourselves. When we leave out the self-care, our service to others becomes unsustainable over time. As you continue reading, think of this article as a giant

“YES, AND...” to Howard’s column about the Golden Rule.

We need a second rule. The rule should be: Treat yourself the way you would treat others.

Think about it. We tend to be pretty hard on ourselves– especially as dentists! As caretakers, we create the need to be perfect or to be the hero who jumps in to save the day for our patients. We put so much pressure on ourselves that when anything goes slightly wrong, we beat ourselves up for it. Many of us may waste hours of our time outside the office worrying about the root canal we did that day, wishing we had done something differently. We might even dip into our precious sleep, waking up at 2am obsessing about the ledge we couldn’t smooth on the box floor of the DO on #14 that we did while fighting with a fearful patient’s tongue! Reading that sentence alone is exhausting, isn’t it?

If we said out loud to another human what we thought to ourselves in these moments, we’d burn through a lot of relationships. The reality is, we’re often so much kinder to others than we are to ourselves. Why do we do this to ourselves? What are we trying to accomplish?

Somewhere along the way we were taught that we have to be perfect. Maybe it happened in childhood when our parents taught us the importance of getting

straight A's in school. That was only highlighted it in dental school. The constant emphasis on doing the perfect prep on a typodont tooth set us up to believe that all of our preps had to be perfect— even in a world with lips, tongues and saliva— not to mention personalities. Many of us missed the memo that perfection in an imperfect world is impossible to attain. I'll never forget a statement that was, ahem, drilled into my brain: Once you touch a tooth, you own it.

For me and my career, that was the single most destructive lesson I ever learned in dental school. I've asked around, and many dental schools taught this. I get it. It's a really important message to share with green dental students. The point is we need to learn to choose our case acceptance wisely. However, for some of us, it also sends a damaging message. It tells us that we have to carry the sole responsibility over this tooth the minute we touch it.

"We need a second rule. The rule should be: Treat yourself the way you would treat others."

This ideal created my need to be perfect, and I'm not alone here. From this lesson, we learn that if we can be perfect all the time in practice, then we will protect our patients and ourselves from consequences. The problem, as we all know, is that nothing is ever perfect. And even when it is perfect, that is never a predictor of success in dentistry.

Perfection works out great when things go well. We can take credit and feel good about ourselves. However, when things don't go well, we believe that we now own the tooth we touched as well as the entire patient experience. This is a heavy burden for a human being, as we then begin to define our self-worth by our "failures." This is where we begin to sacrifice our own well-being by creating unrealistic expectations for ourselves in order to take care of our patients.

This pressure comes from a place of genuine concern. We want the best for our patients. Their one, single tooth means the world to us— in fact, we care more about that single tooth than many of our patients do. Because we know how important teeth are, we put enormous pressure on ourselves to do it all right. That's a good thing. Patients want a dentist who cares immensely for them, their health, and yes, even their single tooth. However, we take it one step farther than we need to. We put so much pressure on ourselves to get it right, that we diminish the personal responsibility our patients have for their own health. We take on that responsibility to be 100% ours.

How can we turn the Golden Rule on ourselves?

I've noticed a difference between the dentists that love or like dentistry and those of us who feel anxious and stressed in our careers. This is the difference, right here: The anxious ones (like me,) struggle to let ourselves off the hook. We carry the weight of the world on our shoulders. We often don't even realize it, but we effectively do it voluntarily.

When I speak to dentists who enjoy dentistry, I see some common trends:

- They've learned that it's "just a tooth." Yes, they care about the patient and their health, but they've gained the perspective that things will be okay as long as they are following the Golden Rule.
- They commit to doing good work. I didn't say perfect work— I said good work! When we commit to perfection, we do it to try to protect ourselves from problems or consequences. That actually creates a situation where we are practicing defensively. Instead of practicing to help serve patients, we are practicing from a place of protecting ourselves. That can chip away at our self-confidence over time.
- They practice self-compassion. When things go wrong— which they do— they recognize that things just happen in life and in dentistry. Instead of berating and punishing themselves, they give themselves a break. They learn to let it go and forgive themselves.

Next time you're spiraling in worry, practice this: Think about how you'd talk to a friend. If your friend called you up after a day of work blaming themselves and worrying about the implant that unscrewed while removing the healing cap, what would you say to them? You'd be kind and try to convince them to simply let it go. Most likely you'd empathize and tell them that they did their best. You'd remind them that things sometimes happen in dentistry, and we can't control everything. You'd encourage them, cheer them on, and tell them that there's no sense in worrying and beating themselves up about it. You might even forgive them.

Basically, you would say the opposite of what you say to yourself when you are in this situation!

The next time you find yourself spiraling and thinking that worrying now will help you be perfect the next time, take a pause. Forgive yourself and think in your head exactly what you'd say out loud to a friend. This takes practice. You've likely spent years developing that habit of self-judgment, so give yourself a break if you don't even get this right the first time around. And remember, you're not only doing this for yourself. You're doing this so you can give better care to your patients too. ■

About the Author

Dr. Laura Brenner graduated from Baylor College of Dentistry in 2001 and moved to Denver to establish her dental roots. She worked in private practice for 10 years until she left clinical dentistry behind for good. As the author of the Lolabees blog and "10 Reasons Your Dentist Probably Hates You Too," she began connecting with other dentists from around the world who wanted more from their careers. This work inspired her to become a Certified Professional Coach who is passionate about helping dentists find joy in their careers again.

good news!

for Independent Practitioners in the Ever-Changing Marketplace of Dentistry

By **Marie Chatterley, CTC Associates**



So much good news to report in the ever-changing marketplace of dentistry! I am thrilled with what we have seen over the last two years in practice transitions and with the growth of practices owned by independent practitioners. Dental professionals are seeing positive changes in buyer makeup, lending ability, sales

price, lease negotiations, new patient flow and revenues.

Quality of Our Independent Buyer

One of the most relevant changes in the marketplace of transitions is the quality of our independent buyers. Current buyers are older and more experienced than ever. They are focused on high-quality work and a positive work environment. Buyers seeking to acquire a practice are looking for their forever family. They are looking for Sellers who mirror the quality of care they have been striving to achieve since leaving dental school.

With an increase in corporate buyers, don't overlook the growing number of independent buyers looking to fill the shoes of a high-quality clinician. They are in a position to be just as competitive as a DSO when it comes to bidding for and acquiring a practice.

There also seems to be an influx of buyers moving from other states mid-career, bringing high-quality skills and financial stability. These buyers are continuous learners, always striving for improvement and growth through extensive continuing education.

Increased Lending Ability for Independent Buyers

The second remarkable change in the marketplace is the approval of higher loan amounts by lenders specializing in dental practice acquisition financing. Lenders are adapting to the market and have started approving loans at a higher percentage of gross collections than in the past. This is a gigantic win for independent buyers.

"Dental professionals are seeing positive changes in buyer makeup, lending ability, sales price, lease negotiations, new patient flow and revenues."

With the help of this progressive approach among lenders, independent buyers can be just as competitive as a DSO or better when it comes to tendering an offer on an ideal practice.

Increase in Practice Sales Prices

Valuations have not seen a significant impact from the COVID-19 closure. In general, practices continue to sell at the same percentage of gross and net as in prior years. Over the last 15 years, practices in Colorado have generally sold for values within 50-75% of gross collections or an average of 130-190% of adjusted net income. However in the last two years,

practices have sold for an average of 55-100% of gross collections or an average of 145-200% of adjusted net income. There has been a substantial shift in the buyer's perception of value and premium practices are selling for premium prices.

Many are approaching practice appraisals differently, considering the weeks of closure in 2020. A standard valuation may account for a weighted average of three years' financials, and now we are considering four years of financials. Additionally, we annualize earnings for 2020, removing the weeks of closure or a ramp-up period. This provides a more accurate representation of what practice

earnings would look like had the practice not been closed or slower for a portion of the year. Thankfully, most practices have similar, if not higher, collection numbers for 2020 compared to 2019.

Greater Leverage in Real Estate Negotiations

There has also been a significant change in leverage within the real estate market for anyone looking to lease or purchase commercial real estate. If your lease is coming up for renewal soon or if you have an option to purchase, now is a great time to engage a real estate broker to assist you with more competitive rates. If you are considering buying or selling a practice in the next few years, reach out to the local network of real estate brokers to assist with a lease agreement that will be advantageous when you sell.

Increased Growth and Health of Our Independent Practitioner

Many independently-owned practices are seeing higher numbers of new patients and have become busier over the last two years. There are multiple reasons for this growth. Many are aware of the ever-increasing growth rate in Colorado in conjunction with the local patient base becoming more educated and seeking out practices with high-quality care. The blessing of increased volume has been additional openings for high-quality associate

opportunities with independently-owned practices offering outstanding mentorship for young providers.

Additionally, a surprising number of offices are moving away from in-network PPO dental participation. This has had a positive impact on cash flow for offices that have made this transition successfully. These practices have also attracted and maintained higher quality staff as they can pay higher wages or offer greater benefits.

At times it may feel as a dentist you are practicing alone on an island, but if you are an independent owner of a practice, many are cheering for your success. If you notice it, you will see that patients are loyal even when you change insurance participation. Additionally, new patients are seeking you out because you are doing all the right things.

It is a blessing to be a part of the dental industry, and I hope to see many more positive changes in the years to come! ■

About the Author

Marie Chatterley is a partner at CTC Associates, a practice transition consulting company that has helped facilitate over 1,500 practice transitions in the last 29 years. You can reach her at info@ctc-associates.com.



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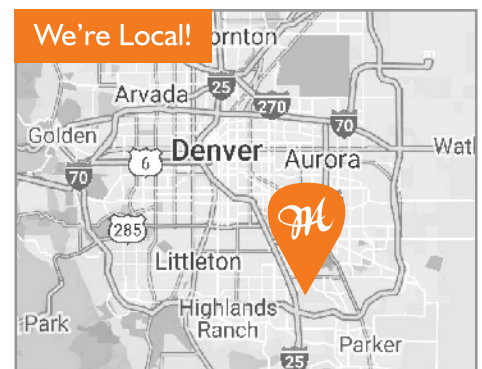
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Visioning and Resource Assessment: Vital Tools in Pre-Planning Your Office Design Project

By **Paul Battista, Battista Design Group**



For many patients, visiting a healthcare provider can be an emotion-filled experience, with feelings ranging from nervousness to apprehension. But your facility can set the stage for your patients' experience. The atmosphere your patients encounter upon stepping through the door can go a long way toward putting them at ease and the right ambiance will compliment your caring professional services. The physical surroundings of your office can influence the perception of the quality of your care and the value of your practice.

So, what do you want your space to say about your practice? By working with a qualified and experienced architect, you can make your practice more efficient, beautiful, profitable, and ultimately more valuable, projecting a caring image and creating a positive experience for your patients. To get started, you will want to consider the overall design of your space, the functional needs and possibilities, the essence you want to project. These things, of course, must be balanced with available resources (your budget and physical space).

Visioning Your Project

When you first meet with an architect, look for someone who begins by asking you to consider a few questions that will establish the vision for your planning.

- What is the current image of your practice?
- What is the personality of your practice?
- What image do you want to present?
- Who is your current or desired clientele?
- What is the character of the surrounding environment/neighborhood?
- How can you make your practice more efficient, profitable and valuable through design and space utilization?
- Is your current physical environment holding you back?
- Do you need or want to explore a new location?
- What are your goals for the short-term and long-term?

The answers to these questions will help establish a clear vision and inform all involved about the direction for your project. Once the architect understands your goals, they can share knowledge about current trends and design ideas to further help guide a plan for your office. This exchange of ideas and information is critical to the success of your project. For instance, more recent trends include carefully considering patient privacy and separation; topics that are more important due to



Rocky Mountain Dental Specialists - Longmont, CO

changing patient requirements in an evolving treatment landscape. Specifically, many dental professionals are making virus-related updates.

"In our design concept discussions, I talked about ideas I have had for years regarding planning a clinic facility with the engineering controls to handle needs brought on by COVID-19 and make the job easier of keeping dental treatment rooms clean and safe on a daily basis," said Dr. Larry O'Neill, of Running Creek Dental Center, Elizabeth, Colorado.

Choosing a New Space

Choosing a new office space is not dissimilar from choosing a new home. You have already spent so much time in the current space, a list of what is lacking can be easily created. So, you have your personal wish list. But with design in mind, what should you be looking for in a new space?

An experienced architect will tell you that relatively square or rectangular spaces are more desirable, while odd-shaped spaces can be less efficient and

more difficult to design and space plan. Ideally, the space should be mostly free of interior columns and other internal obstructions. And East or North facing windows work best for treatment room orientation, while South and West facing windows can make rooms extremely hot and uncomfortable. Of course, location and the corresponding demographics are often the most important factors -- are you geographically desirable to your target demographic -- and after that it is up to the design team to maximize the potential.

An architect's primary responsibilities are first, to ask questions and listen to your responses. Second, to understand your goals, needs, vision and budget. And third to implement your goals and vision for your new office via the plans and design details.

Budget Planning


So, you have a vision and you have a canvas -- your space. The final part of planning is budgeting. Practice owners should be aware that construction cost is only a part of the total project cost. Other costs that must be considered are furniture, fixtures, new dental equipment, operating capital, financing costs, professional fees, marketing, etc.

People sometimes mistakenly think about construction costs as a fixed price that can just be named and then the office will be magically built for that price. But design drives the construction cost. As part of the planning conversation, an architect should get clarity on and have respect for your budget and design accordingly. You should also know realistically what you will get for your money. Costs will be based on the agreed upon design and, of course, the current construction market costs. With material and construction costs on the rise and lead times increasing, it is even more critical now that the design vs. budget discussion take place early in the process. For example, the price of lumber has nearly doubled over the past year. Other products such as doors and light fixtures lead times are increasing. It is more important than ever to start the planning process earlier for a new office project.

The physical location of your business -- the place where you deliver service -- is a critical component of your practice. When you are ready to invest in updating an existing space or designing a new one, make sure you have a partner who can interpret your vision, share information about the state of the art, and deliver a beautiful and functional space that meets all of your needs and expectations -- as well as those of your patients. ■

About the Author

Mr. Paul Battista is a licensed architect with more than 30 years of experience in specialty architecture and design in gaming and hospitality, retail, restaurant, and corporate offices. He also is one of the most highly regarded medical and dental Office architects in Colorado. Over the past 18 years, he has made dental office and dental specialty office architecture and design his emphasis.



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WE ARE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER

The Latest Happenings in Colorado's Nonprofit Community



What Office Organization and Children's Orthodontics Have in Common

By **Alexandra Gage, Colorado Orthodontic Foundation**



In 2020, a very tough year for non-profits, the Metro Denver Dental Society (MDDS) found a way to make one of their annual fundraising events more successful than ever! The

2020 MDDS Shred Event was held in late September—pushed later in the year due to COVID delays and caution—

brought in more boxes of materials to be shredded and a record amount of funds raised. Held at Rocky Mountain Orthodontics' headquarters in Denver for the past five years, the event benefitted the Colorado Orthodontic Foundation (COF) a 501(c)3 non-profit with a mission to connect low-income children and families across the state with affordable and quality orthodontic care options.

The MDDS Shred Event has existed for more than 15 years and benefitting COF since the summer of 2018. Each year the event grows, and more and more of the dental and surrounding communities find ways to participate. According to Dr. Neal H. Engel, DDS, an attendee of multiple Shred Events over the years, the fundraiser "runs like a well-oiled machine. It is very convenient and quick and reasonably priced. Plus, it is for a good cause."

One of the most unique aspects of the event, which makes it so valuable to the dental community, is a feature that happens weeks before the actual Shred Event day. As part of an ongoing commitment to patient privacy and compliance with State Board rules and regulations, MDDS provides the opportunity for individual offices to take part in a joint advertisement in The Denver Post—this advertisement lists the names of dental offices disposing of patient records, allowing those patients the opportunity to respond. The advertisement runs for four consecutive weeks, fulfilling the State Board obligations to post a legal notification. Even better, the charge is only \$85/doctor or practice name, whereas an individual legal posting could cost upwards of \$400!

Dr. Jenn Thompson, owner of Blue Sky Pediatric Dentistry (MDDS and COF Board Member) shares her perspective of the event, "The MDDS Shred Event

has been great for my practice. After our office's 'COVID clean out', I had many old patient records that needed to be disposed of properly. MDDS made it easy to place an ad and bring all the charts to drop off at the event's convenient drive-through location downtown. I will definitely be participating again this year!"

"While convenience is a huge benefit, also keep in mind the proceeds of the event support the mission of the COF. Over 650 children in Colorado have received treatment from COF since its inception in 2009."

While convenience is a huge benefit, also keep in mind the proceeds of the event support the mission of the COF. Over 650 children in Colorado have received treatment from COF since its inception in 2009. The program has worked with over 100 local Colorado orthodontic providers to offer this much needed service to families who would otherwise be unable to afford braces for their kids.

The MDDS Shred Event is happening again this summer, generously hosted by Rocky Mountain Orthodontics at their headquarters in downtown Denver. The 2021 Shred Event Drop-off Day is Saturday, August 28 from 9:00am – 12:00pm at Rocky Mountain Orthodontics, conveniently located just east of I-25 at 650 West Colfax Avenue, Denver, CO 80204. One "banker-sized" box (approx. 10"H x 12"W x 15"D) is just \$7 to shred. Larger boxes are \$12. Pay on-site by credit card, cash or check (payable to MDDS). For more information about the 2021 MDDS Shred Event, please contact the MDDS at membership@mddsdentist.com. ■

About the Author

After growing up in Southern California, Alexandra Gage moved to Denver in 2008 after working for the Massachusetts Institute of Technology outside of Boston. Her affinity for non-profit work led her to the Colorado Orthodontic Foundation (COF), where she has been acting Managing Director since December 2010. She has helped grow the organization to involve over 100 local Colorado orthodontic providers in caring for local children in need. She currently lives in Louisville with the COF Mascot, her pug, Fezzik.

The KIND



A Case Study in Equity

By **Krista Barnes, Kids in Need of Dentistry**



Persistent inequities continue to exist with relation to oral disease numbers locally, nationally and globally. The dental community sits in a distinct position to actively engage in promoting oral health equity, both

for their own patients and the wider

community. Kids in Need of Dentistry (KIND) and Dr. Kevin Patterson, DDS, MD were on the front lines of this effort recently as Colorado State University Professor, Dr. Eric Ishiwata, reached out to KIND looking for help for immigrant, “DREAMer”, first-generation college students.

Some of his students were visiting a local unlicensed dentist who was pulling teeth without proper tools or care, because they were without other options and in extreme pain from their wisdom teeth. KIND was able to connect seven students with donated oral surgery services, thanks to Dr. Kevin Patterson of Denver Metro OMS, and KIND Board Member. Some of the students had not visited the dentist since age eight or nine, if ever.

The term “DREAMer” has been used to describe young, undocumented immigrants who were brought to the United States as children. These individuals have lived and attended

school here the majority of their lives and in many cases culturally identify as American. The term DREAMer originates from the bill in Congress of the same name and the DREAM Act but has double meaning for the undocumented youth of this country, who have big hopes and dreams for a better future.



Donated dental services were made available to the “KIND 7” through the generosity of KIND, Dr. Eric Ishiwata of Colorado State University and Dr. Kevin Patterson of Denver Metro OMS.

Born in Calvillo, Aguascalientes, Mexico, Alan M. grew up in Rifle, CO and admits he experienced extensive racism -- and extensive tooth pain. The support he received from the KIND community never would have happened had he not felt comfortable approaching his professor about the great anguish his teeth were causing him and opening up about not being able to afford getting them removed.

Alan describes, “At first it was really, really bad. I would always grab at my jaw and try to massage it, try to open my mouth and close it constantly -- try do something that would mitigate the pain.”

After completing an initial exam and intake at the KIND Commerce City clinic, Alan will join Dr. Patterson for his first consultation on May 13. Alan said his throbbing teeth had become such a common occurrence, he had learned to just try and live with the years

of chronic pain. This experience has encouraged Alan to take action in his local community among other immigrants he mentors.

“...We started to think about other things students might not be able to do because of financial reasons. So, I spearheaded this project, a health survey, for students on campus to figure out what’s going on with their medical, dental and mental health.”

He created a 16-question health survey for CSU students. Alan explains that one data point showed, because of financial hardships, over 80% of participants have been prevented from obtaining medical services. He is quick to point out this is a common theme throughout the survey and more than half of respondents had not been to the dentist in over a year.

Maira O., a beautiful, joyful, inspiring CSU junior, gives back to immigrants in the Poudre School District, where she grew up. She’s also currently active as a promotora working to help encourage COVID-19 vaccinations in Hispanic communities.

Her story starts in an all too similar way. Maira received dental services through a school program in California when she was in 6th grade (similar to KIND’s Chopper Topper program), and said, “that was my first and only experience going to the dentist as a child.”

“My parents couldn’t necessarily afford to take me to the dentist -- we didn’t have insurance...flash forward to when we moved to Colorado. I had a dental emergency where some of the gums behind my wisdom teeth had flared up, and they were swollen. I could not close my mouth because they were so irritated. My family had to push and pay out of pocket for that...it was about \$600, which was way out of our budget, and was a huge sacrifice for my family.”

She adds she wasn’t able to get all of the needed work done either, just those most urgent.

The stories of these students offer a reflective look at some of the important work that is happening with diversity, equity and inclusion -- locally, nationally and globally.

Like many in the dental community, KIND has been trying to learn more about projects and initiatives, especially those that align with KIND’s

"I don't think I've ever received this kind of help; it's been really new. It was very unexpected...this help is just unimaginable. It's beyond me. I can't comprehend that people are willing to donate their time and resources to help students like me and my peers." ~ Maira

missional goals around increasing health equity for youth in underserved communities, and in providing dental care that utilizes innovative and collaborative models. Part of this has included participating in a recent equity summit hosted by KIND’s valued partner, the Early Childhood Partnership of Adams County’s (ECPAC).

During last month’s “Building Racial Justice: Analysis, Reflection & Practice” KIND -- along with other participants including Children’s Hospital, CASA, Growing Home, and Community Reach Center, enjoyed lively discussion as groups shared learnings and perspectives on positive equity efforts and improvements needed in the DEI space. Topics like oppression and structural racism were explored.

The meetings were built as a safe place, without fear or judgment, where attendees openly expressed feelings, shared ideas and presented challenges. Moving forward, KIND and ECPAC are doing the following to support racial justice and health equity:

- Initiating Family Partner Councils to inform collaborative efforts of each organization, with the hope of reflecting the community we serve in decision-making and amplifying partnership in service design.
- Redeveloping educational curriculums to be culturally competent and supportive of the diverse needs of communities of color.
- Partnering to offer care coordination services that support whole-person patient health, not only dental, but through efforts like the C4 -- the upcoming KIND clinic in Commerce City that centralizes health services with other organizations (C4wellness.org) and focuses on access and elevating community voice.

This work will also, hopefully, touch students like Alan and so many more.

As Alan adds, “Growing up a lot of times it seems as if we’re doing everything on our own. We have a lot of pressure...we have that sense of we’re working really hard and not getting anywhere. So, when we get stuff like this -- when it’s a hand reaching out with a gift essentially -- it really relieves a lot of the stress. And it makes us feel welcomed and part of the community. Seeing KIND and Dr. Patterson wanting to help us out, specifically us -- who never really get any help, really makes a difference. It makes a world of difference.”

Please contact Krista Barnes at KIND, for questions or comments at kbarnes@kindsmiles.org. If you’d like to support the work KIND does, please visit <https://bit.ly/3epolwv>. ■

About the Author

Krista Barnes is the Community Engagement Manager for KIND. Ms. Barnes is a former KIND volunteer, teacher, communications professional and is a self-described KIND super-fan after seeing the impact the organization had on her students and family.

Relief at Last to Colorado Woman With a Dizzying Array of Health Issues

By **Claire Diones, Dental Lifeline Network**

Imagine living with severe vertigo. Every time you get to your feet, you feel dizzy and off-balance. This is everyday life for Tina, a 53-year-old with Meniere's disease. In addition to vertigo, Tina also has neuropathy in both of her feet, experiences hearing issues, asthma, and osteoarthritis. She used a cane, and sometimes a walker, just to get around.

In addition to multiple physical challenges, her dental health was deteriorating. Tina had severe dry mouth, receding gums, gingivitis, and needed several crowns. These extensive health issues became so debilitating, she had to leave her job as a tax accountant.

Tina was relying on a Social Security Disability benefit and food stamps to make ends meet. She simply could not afford the much-needed dental treatment and relief seemed out of reach.

Fortunately, Tina found Dental Lifeline Network and the Donated Dental Services (DDS) program. She was linked to two generous volunteers who restored her dental health -- and provided her with hope.

Dr. Lindsay Compton provided a comprehensive exam and several X-rays. She restored one tooth, and with the help of Sonbeam Dental Lab, donated six crowns.



Dr. Lindsay Compton and Tina

"It really wasn't a different practice model. We did not treat her any different. She just became one of my patients," said Dr. Lindsay Compton, DDS Volunteer. "My philosophy on this program is if we just did a little bit, it would make a big impact."

Dr. Compton is one of the 15,000 dentists nationwide who volunteer to provide relief for people in need. Even just seeing one patient per year, you can make a big difference in the lives of individuals with disabilities, the elderly, and those who are considered medically fragile.

We have more than 300 people in need in Colorado waiting for treatment. Will You See One?

To volunteer with the DDS program, visit WillYouSeeOne.org or contact Dianne at djohnson@DentalLifeline.org. ■

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Rocky Mountain Dental Convention (RMDC)

By **Shelly Fava, MDDS Executive Director**



Ever wonder how the Rocky Mountain Dental Convention (RMDC) including a robust, high-quality educational program, fun networking events and hundreds of exhibit booths happens? It may seem like magic, but it's actually the careful planning and direction provided by your member colleagues working together on the Convention Arrangements,

Programming and Exhibits committees. These MDDS committees collaborate to make sure the various aspects of the convention create a fulfilling experience for all members and their teams. The Convention Arrangements Committee (CAC) has overall responsibility for the convention. They put together the schedule and types of events, determine registration fees and plan special events including the Opening Session and Friday Night Party. In only two to three meetings per year, the CAC works efficiently to get a great deal done.

The Programming Committee is a sub-committee of the CAC. The dedicated members of this committee put together the educational program. They perform needs assessments to determine the best, most needed courses for all members of the dental team. Finding speakers to fill those needs involves reviewing course descriptions and speaker biographies, as well as traveling to scout those speakers at other dental meetings. As you can imagine, a speaker who looks good on paper may not live up to the hype at the front of a course room. Of course, the reverse is sometimes true as well, and the committee might miss a dynamic speaker if they

don't see them in person. Because creating a three-day educational program takes a good deal of time and effort, the Programming Committee generally meets ten times a year (once a month).

The Exhibits Committee is the other sub-committee of the CAC. This group is responsible for everything you see in the Expo Hall. They work to identify potential exhibitors, create the floor plan, establish booth fees, set exhibitor policies and plan special events in the expo hall. If you found a great deal, played video games, enjoyed a drink or picked-up fun ribbons to put on your badge at the 2020 RMDC, you have the Exhibits Committee to thank. At the 2021 RMDC, the Exhibits Committee was responsible for the virtual, interactive expo hall. Like the CAC, Exhibits packs a lot of action into two to three yearly meetings.

All three of the RMDC committees work in concert and with the MDDS professional team to make the RMDC magic happen. If you want to make a tangible, visible difference to the quality of dentistry in the Rocky Mountain region, joining one of the RMDC convention committees may be for you. MDDS is always looking for new and diverse voices that reflect the audience of RMDC. If you're interested in getting involved by joining any of these committees, please email Korinna Milam, Director of Convention & Events, at rmdc@mddsdentist.com.

Looking to get involved and volunteer?
Visit mddsdentist.com/volunteer/get-involved
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The Path Forward...

By **Greg Hill, JD, CAE, CDA Executive Director**



In 2016, the Colorado Dental Association (CDA) began a five-year strategic plan focused on growing membership and restructuring its governance to increase internal capacity to better serve its members. As that five-year plan is nearing a conclusion, I want to reflect on a few of its key successes and discuss the work that is going into our next strategic plan.

While membership continued to grow during the first half of the 2010's, the CDA's market share began a decline that ultimately resulted in nearly ten-percent loss in its market share. As has been reported to the House of Delegates in previous years, this loss of market share resulted in substantial unrealized income loss to the association. The 2016 Strategic Plan focused directly on membership growth and increasing the market share of the CDA. The result of this plan has been a stabilization of the market share resulting in significant increase in revenue, with no increase in dues for two consecutive years.

"A goal many forward-thinking associations have been trying to achieve is the creation of a customized member experience to meet the specific individualized needs of each CDA member."

Financially, we repositioned our reserves, which underperformed the market for much of the decade, into a strong, revenue-generating asset that is offsetting nearly \$100,000 in program and administrative costs in the operational budget. This has allowed us to grow the organization and provide more funding into the programs and services without increasing dues. The board has also funded a secondary reserve to support added legal and governmental relations needs, continued upgrades to the IT (Information Technology) infrastructure, and to support the strategic plan.

A goal many forward-thinking associations have been trying to achieve is the creation of a customized member experience to meet the specific individualized needs of each CDA member. Information, products, and services that you engage with as a member are unique to you. The CDA has engaged the services of our managed IT firm to aide our selection of a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software solution. This solution will stack on the Aptify membership system to allow us to become smarter in how we communicate and market products and services to our membership. In time, this will create an experience unique to you, just as you have come to expect with services you use every day like Amazon and Netflix.

Our for-profit subsidiary, CDA Enterprises, continues to grow. We are working to change the perception of our strategic business partner solutions

(endorsed companies) by moving away from a discount club model, focused on cost savings, to an engaged business partner solution for you and your practice. We have made significant changes to our partner portfolio, bringing stronger business partners to help your dental practice succeed. As a mark of that growth, CDAE has launched an innovation incubator we call the Dental Enterprise Institute. This arm is focused on developing non-dues revenue and to leverage the innovation and entrepreneurship within the profession. The first venture is a podcast focusing on the business of dentistry, connecting dental industry leaders with dentists and dental partners across the country.

During our last strategic plan, the board was asked what success of the plan looked like. One comment that has always stuck out to me is a comment from a board member who said the "CDA is running like a very efficient business." This leads to the next iteration of the strategic plan. Through the lens of business resilience, the board recognizes that COVID has dramatically accelerated business change and the technology pushing that change. If the CDA is to remain the innovative leaders in the dental profession, it must move the needle significantly forward. By putting modern business tools in its toolbox, such as CRM solution, business analytics software, artificial intelligence, and software collaboration, the CDA is in a much stronger position to empower members success in the future.

The next strategic plan is designed to invest deeper into that business model, create better engagement opportunities, and enhanced customer service to better serve you and your practice. The CDA has hired a facilitator who brings extensive healthcare innovation and industry connections. Through this work, we have begun to identify comprehensive solutions to member's challenges. As this work continues, we are looking to reshape our value proposition as a key day-to-day part of your practice success.

As you can no doubt see, the work the CDA does across the enterprise is complex, but you are fortunate to have an outstanding team of staff, leadership, board, and council members who are passionate about the profession and are working to ready this association for its future. ■

About the Author

Greg Hill, JD, CAE has served as the Executive Director of the Colorado Dental Association since June of 2014. Prior to joining the CDA, Greg was employed by the Kansas Dental Association for 15 years and served as the Assistant Executive Director of the CDA and Executive Director of its Foundation. Mr. Hill is a 1999 graduate of the Washburn University School of Law in Topeka, KS and a 1994 graduate of Kansas State University with a Bachelor of Science in Economics. He became a Certified Association Executive (CAE) in 2016. In addition, he serves as Co-Chair and Treasurer of Oral Health Colorado; on the Board of Directors for the Colorado Dental Lifeline Network and the Colorado Mission of Mercy; and is a member of the Denver Tech Center Rotary Club. He and his wife, Gwen, are the parents of daughter, Haven, and son, Camden.

Morning Workout on the Rocks!

July 17, 8:00 a.m. or 9:15 a.m.

\$7 for Members

Start the day with a guided full body workout for all levels at Red Rocks Amphitheater. Option to hike afterward. Instructors, snacks and water provided.

Learn more:

cdaonline.org/event/workout-on-the-rocks

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BY NIGHT

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Learn more:

cdaonline.org/event/glowstick-paddleboard

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MD June 11
DS **HANDS-ON Nitrous Oxide/Oxygen Administration Training**
-Dr. Jeffrey Young
Mountain West Dental Institute
925 Lincoln St Unit B
Denver, CO 80203
8:00am – 4:00pm
(303) 488-9700

MD June 13
DS **MDDS Trails & Ales Hike**
North Table Mountain Park &
New Terrain Brewing Company
4400 Co Rd 193
Golden, CO 80403
9:00am – 1:00pm
(303) 488-9700

MD June 16
DS **Wiped Out? Burned Out?**
Jump Start Your Office Culture Today!
- Dr. Brad Guyton, Dr. Anil Idiculla, Dr. Amisha Singh
Mountain West Dental Institute
925 Lincoln St Unit B
Denver, CO 80203
6:00pm - 8:00pm
(303) 488-9700

MD August 19
DS **CDA & MDDS Celebrate Diversity Block Party**
Edgewater Public Market
5505 W 20th Ave
Edgewater, CO 80214
6:00pm – 8:00pm
(303) 488-9700

MD August 28
DS **MDDS Shred Event**
650 W Colfax Ave
Denver, CO 80204
9:00am – 12:00pm

MD September 8
DS **CPR & AED Training**
Mountain West Dental Institute
925 Lincoln St Unit B
Denver, CO 80203
6:00pm – 9:00pm
(303) 488-9700

MD September 10
DS **Botulinum Toxins (Xeomin, Dysport, Botox) and Dermal Fillers Training, Level 1**
-American Academy of Facial Esthetics
Mountain West Dental Institute
925 Lincoln St Unit B
Denver, CO 80203
8:00am – 5:00pm
(303) 488-9700

MD September 11
DS **Frontline TMJ & Facial Pain Therapy, Level 1**
-American Academy of Facial Esthetics
Mountain West Dental Institute
925 Lincoln St Unit B
Denver, CO 80203
8:00am – 12:00pm
(303) 488-9700

MD November 9
DS **CPR & AED Training**
Mountain West Dental Institute
925 Lincoln St Unit B
Denver, CO 80203
6:00pm – 9:00pm
(303) 488-9700

MD December 3
DS **HANDS-ON Nitrous Oxide/Oxygen Administration Training**
-Dr. Jeffrey Young
Mountain West Dental Institute
925 Lincoln St Unit B
Denver, CO 80203
8:00am – 4:00pm
(303) 488-9700

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SPEAKERS

- Marco Brindis, DDS, Prosthodontist, Professor
- Sreenivas Koka, DDS, MS, PhD, MBA, FACD, FAP, Prosthodontist
- Aldo Leopardi, BDS, DDS, MS, Prosthodontist
- Neal Patel, DDS, Dentist, Certified, Dental Technician
- Daniel R. Cullum, DDS, Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeon
- Joseph Kan, DDS, MS, Prosthodontist, Professor
- Paul S. Rosen, DMD, MS, Periodontist

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Jobs

Hygienist Needed - Our general dentistry office is currently looking for a hygienist to help out starting in June. Ideal candidate would be someone who is a team player and enjoys forging long lasting relationships with patients. We don't push unnecessary treatment on patients. Our office goal is centered around patient care and to improve the oral health of our patients. Days/hours are flexible based on your schedule. Looking for either short term or long term team member!!

Aspen Springs Dental in Centennial, CO is looking for a rock star dental hygienist to help complete our team. Our great reviews and number of new patients lets you know that we treat our patients like gold. We have hired a Hygiene Assistant to help with room changes, charting, x-rays and to give the hygienists an opportunity to complete notes and take breaks between patients. We offer a sign on bonus of \$2,000, a competitive salary, daily bonus, and benefits such as health insurance and PTO.

Our office is equipped with the latest technology such as lasers, same day crown setup and iTero scanner. Out of the office we celebrate our successes with team activities such as snow tubing, Top golf events, barbeque grilling and Holiday gatherings. We look forward to your call.

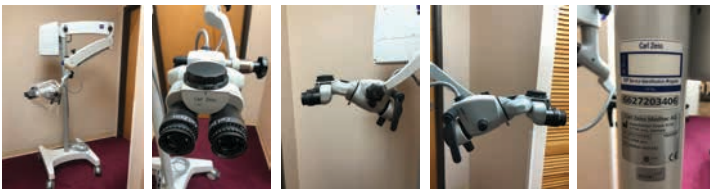
Benefits:

- Salary of \$45 - \$48
- Sign on Bonus \$2,000
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- Exceptional dental team members and location

Current available hours for part-time and full-time. Send resume to janet.rmdp@gmail.com.

For Sale

Endodontic Microscope: We no longer have an endodontist at our practice so we would like to sell this microscope to any endodontist who is looking for one. Price: \$12,500 + shipping 2015 5100 OPMI Pico ZEISS Microscope - SIP-No: 6627203406



Real Estate

DENTAL PRACTICES FOR SALE in Greater Denver area. Single and multi-doctor practices. Annual collections from \$300,000 up to \$2,000,000 /year. Visit omni-pg.com or call 303-529-9438 for info or to find out how to sell your practice!

Established GP for sale in Denver. Great Location! 3 Ops, \$450K in collections. Seller prefers a Dawson Trained Dentist. Dr. Retiring. For information email: jed@adsprecise.com or call 303-759-8425. For more listings visit www.adsprecise.com.

Established GP for Sale in South Metro Denver (CO 2015) Collections of \$1.1M. Practice occupies 1,530 square feet and consists of 5 fully equipped operatories. Dr retiring. For information email: jed@adsprecise.com or call 303-759-8425. For more listings visit www.adsprecise.com.

GP for sale in Colorado Springs (CO 2106) Collections \$650K, 2,043 sqft, 5 OPS. Sales price \$475K, net income \$250K. For more information please call 303.759.8425 or email jed@adsprecise.com For more listings visit www.adsprecise.com.

GP for sale in North Denver Metro area (2013). Annual Collections \$400K, 3 Ops, 1,100 sqft – Dr. retiring. For more information call 303-759-8425 or email: jed@adsprecise.com. For more listings visit www.adsprecise.com.

Specialty only Dental Building for sale (CO 2007) in Federal Heights, 4,700 sqft, built in 2010, custom alder woodwork and granite throughout, fireplace in upper lobby, could subdivide for multiple organizations. For more information, please contact us at jed@adsprecise.com or call 303.759.8425. For more listings visit www.adsprecise.com.

GP for Sale: Colo Springs (CO 2010) Annual Revenues \$319K, 3 Ops fully enclosed, 1682 sqft – Dr. Retiring. Sale price \$239K. For more information call 303-759-8425 or email: jed@adsprecise.com. For more listings visit www.adsprecise.com.

Perio practice for Sale: North of Denver Metro area (CO 1909) Annual Revenues \$500K, 3 Ops, 1,323 square feet. For more information please contact jed@adsprecise.com or call 303.759.8425. For more listings visit www.adsprecise.com

GP for sale in Colo Springs (CO 1908) Collections \$465K, 2,043 sqft, 5 OPS. Sales price \$250K. For more information, please contact jed@adsprecise.com or call 303.759.8425. For more listings visit www.adsprecise.com.

GP for sale in Colorado Springs (CO 1904) 4 Fully Equipped Ops, \$250K in collections, 2540 sqft, Dr Retiring. For more information please contact us at jed@adsprecise.com or call 303.759.8425. For more listings visit www.adsprecise.com.

GP and free-standing Building (sold with practice) for sale in beautiful Pikes Peak area (CO 1803). Dr retiring, 5 OPS. Room for growth! Practice price \$250K and Building price \$495K. For more information please contact jed@adsprecise.com or call 303.759.8425. For more listings visit www.adsprecise.com.

Dental Building for sale (CO 1706) in west Denver. Purchase Price \$1.15M for 4600sqft + 1400sqft basement, 5 OPS. For more information, please contact jed@adsprecise.com or call 303.759.8425. For more listings visit www.adsprecise.com

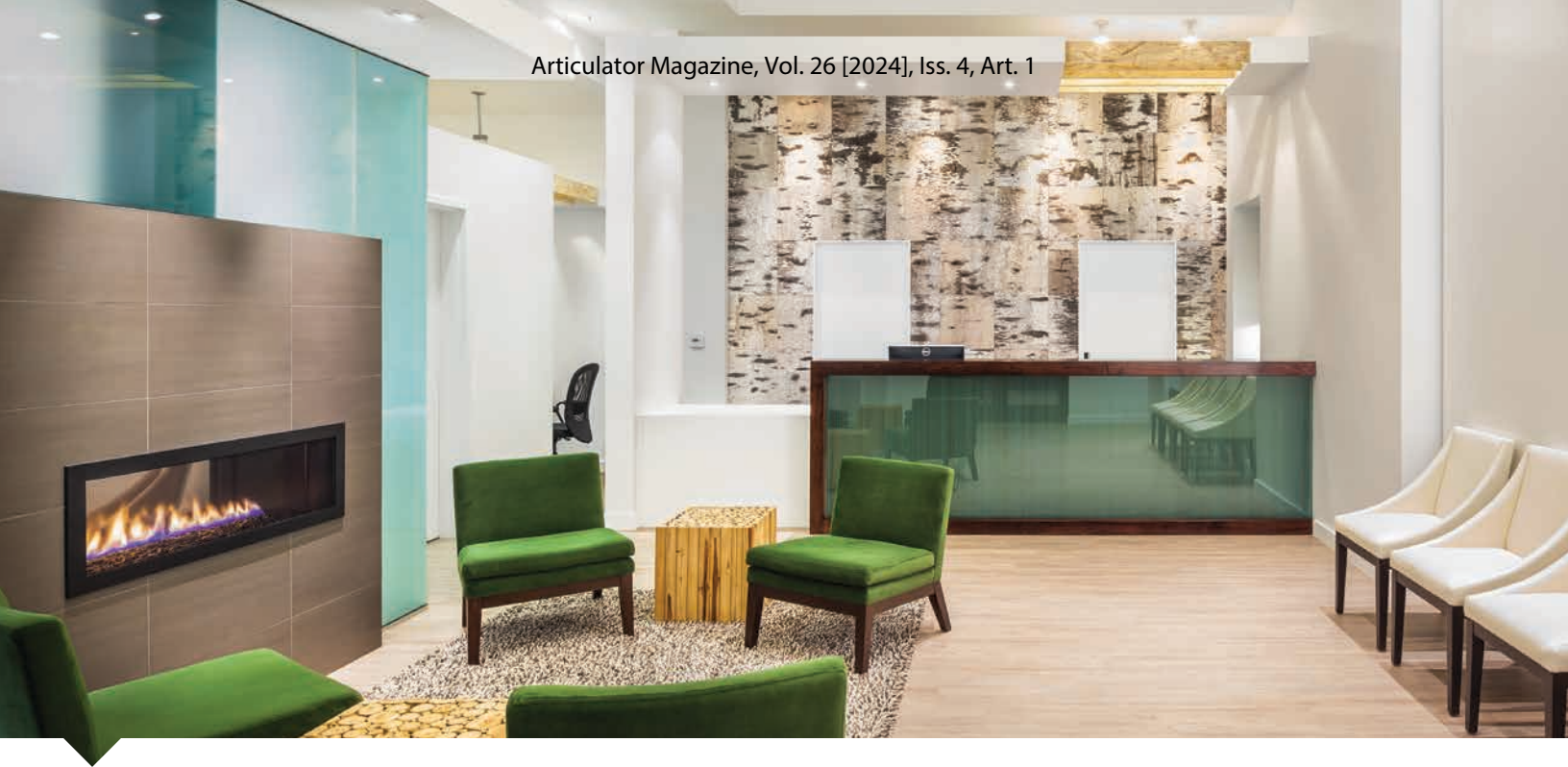
GP for Sale: North Eastern CO (CO 1735) 4 Ops, approx. \$900K in collections, Stand-alone bldg. sold w/practice. Dr. retiring. For more information please contact us at jed@adsprecise.com or call 303.759.8425. For more listings visit www.adsprecise.com.

OMS practice, western mountains near Vail and Aspen, (CO 1350) Annual Revenues \$840K, 3 ops, 1,300 square feet, adjacent to hospital, price \$299K Excellent GP referrals, Great Opportunity! Dr. retiring. For more information please contact us at jed@adsprecise.com or call 303.759.8425. For more listings visit www.adsprecise.com.

GP for Sale: Pueblo, CO (CO 2006) 4 Ops, 1900 sqft office, \$393K in collections. Dr. retiring. For more information please contact us at jed@adsprecise.com or call 303.759.8425. For more listings visit www.adsprecise.com.

Pediatric Practice for sale (CO 2019) in beautiful resort mountain town with 7 OPS. \$900K annual collections. For more information please contact jed@adsprecise.com or call 303.759.8425. For more listings visit www.adsprecise.com.

PRACTICE FOR SALE: ASPEN AREA GP Well established Gross \$660K. Net \$212K 4 + 1 ops., 3 1/2 days/wk. Practice appraisal \$389,000. Price \$200,000. Great opportunity. Price less than net and 30% of collections. Peter Mirabito, DDS 303-229 2302 peter@pjmnow.com



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