

Spring Hygiene Cleaning



As a little girl, every year I looked forward to my mother's leadership with spring house cleaning. First of all I knew I was going to be able to spend some *one on one* time with my mother. I come from a family of four children, so any time with my mother, without my siblings present, was cherished. There was also the cheerful anticipation of finding things that had been forgotten about or lost, and of weeding out old possessions to make room for new ones. Spring house cleaning was our special time to take assessment of what we had, what we felt was important to keep, what we could discard, and to see what was missing in our lives that could positively impact our current daily activities. By the end of the process we felt refreshed, renewed and organized!

There are many comparable opportunities for you to create the *spring house cleaning* effect within your hygiene department. With a little bit of exploring, you might come across visuals and brochures that you have forgotten about, that still are beneficial to patient education. You can also take assessment of what is valuable within your current daily practice, and what you should discard to make room for new technologies and products that offer your patients higher levels of clinical health. You may discover inconsistencies within your chart documentation that are vital to comprehensive patient recordkeeping. The most important objective within *spring hygiene cleaning* is your mental re-organization process regarding patient appointments. A refreshed and renewed attitude is a great motivational tool to bring passion back to your patient communication and education, which results in increased patient retention and case acceptance.

There are several different ways to accomplish your *spring hygiene cleaning*. Please utilize the checklist below, which provide a format to follow as you have fun discovering just what is in hygiene patient charts, drawers and cupboards!

Chart Analysis

Please follow the listed objectives of chart documentation. Pull ten random charts per hygienist. Review the documentation. Make a list per each patient record of the ten charts. You may find that one or two key items are missing from all records. It is important that you are not excessively critical of yourself for any missing documentation that you may uncover. Any constructive assessment begins with knowing that the process is about reviewing, refining, and keeping the end result in mind. The number one priority is to discover what areas need refinement. The next objective is to formulate what is needed in order to make the refinements occur. If the hygienist is spending a good amount of time with case presentation, and through the discovery process there is not enough time for efficient documentation to support the comprehensive health of the patient, the practice may see the necessity for a hygiene department support person.

Please feel free to add any of the documentation assessments that may be individualized to your practice.

CHART ANALYSIS

CHART ANALYSIS FOR _____ DATE _____

Please mark each item listed with a "Y" for yes, "N" for No, or "N/A" if not applicable.

- _____ Health History Update signed and dated at last hygiene visit.
- _____ Health History Update signed and dated at last doctor visit.
- _____ Periodontal Screening documented at last hygiene visit.
- _____ Bleeding tendency recorded at last hygiene visit.
- _____ Comprehensive Periodontal Evaluation completed annually on all patients.
- _____ Oral cancer screening documented at last hygiene visit.
- _____ Blood pressure recorded annually.
- _____ Current Radiographs present in record:
 - _____ BWX (within 1 year of last visit)
 - _____ FMX (within 3 –5 years of last visit)
 - _____ PANO (within 3 – 5 years of last visit)
- _____ Notes re: patient's current co-therapy recorded at last hygiene visit.
- _____ Informed consent prior to periodontal therapy recorded with a patient signature, OR
- _____ Patient's verbal informed consent prior to periodontal therapy recorded.
- _____ Patient's decline for diagnosed treatment recorded and signed, if therapy was declined.
- _____ Patient's current periodontal condition can be determined from documented data.
- _____ Patient's current diagnosed interval for hygiene can be determined from documented data.
- _____ Treatment rendered reveals a patient with disease without a diagnosis and / or treatment plan.
- _____ Patient has incomplete restorative or aesthetic or periodontal treatment.
- _____ Date restorative treatment was diagnosed is documented.
- _____ Clinical indications for restorative treatment documented. (Caries, fractures, open margins, etc.)
- _____ Initials of provider recorded.

Technology

Take an assessment of all of the technology present in your operatory. Ask yourself the following questions: Is it all in good working order? How often is the technology utilized? Do you need to attend a workshop on how to increase your efficient use of the technology? How would that expedite your time management? Does it make you run behind when you utilize the technology? Would using the technology add value to your patient's experience by increasing clinical health or by increasing case acceptance? And of course last but not least, provide a thorough cleaning and sterilization of every nook and cranny of the equipment

For example, review your operatory utilization of *The Casey System*. A common pitfall in dental practices is to purchase technology and then not utilize the technology to its maximum capacity. Two of the most common stumbling blocks to implementation are not having the proper training and not knowing how to incorporate time management into treatment appointments. With any technology, the number one issue to address is how much patient and practice value is lost by lack of usage. Efficient utilization of quality dental practice technology such as *The Casey System* increases the value of your service with every patient procedure.

Within your assessments, if you discover technology that is under utilized or not being utilized at all, take the time to discuss with your doctor what structure needs to be in place in order to integrate the use of the technology, or to determine that it is obsolete and needs to be moved out of the operatory.

Co-Therapy Tools

How many gadgets do you have for co-therapy compliance that seemed like a good idea at that time and now have lived in your hygiene drawer for more than a year? It is time to take an assessment of the co-therapy tools that you feel work the best and produce optimal patient compliance. We all have our favorites, however, over the 25 years we have been in business, the one co-therapy tool that The JP Institute has found that gets the best tissue results and great compliance is the Philips Sonicare power brush. You can dramatically reduce the stock of co-therapy tools that you keep on hand by providing the opportunity for the patients to purchase a Sonicare. The patients place more value on it because they had to invest in it, and they just like using power brushes. *As an aside, power brushes are the absolute best co-therapy tool, and a must for any aesthetic dentistry.*

Assessing and organizing your co-therapy drawer can certainly aid with limited space in your operatory, and give the spark to renew your co-therapy patient motivation.

Instruments

Do you have old P-10 non-functioning cavitron inserts in your cupboards? How many dull and over-sharpened instruments do you own? Do you have your instruments color banded with tray sets ups? It is amazing the amount of times we will open hygiene drawers to mounds of old non-usable instruments. Assess the wear of all of your instruments whether they are hand instruments, EMS Piezo inserts, or microultrasonic

inserts. Most companies will give you guideline visual cards to gauge when it is necessary to replace your piezo or microultrasonic tips. Proper instrumentation is crucial to patient results and to the time management of your appointment. The assessment of your instruments should be scheduled on a monthly basis. Monthly assessment also allows for your inventory reorders to be minimal versus submitting an instrument order once every 6 months that equals a huge ding in your supply budget. Doctors are usually much happier in making small purchases that they can budget monthly, versus paying out hundreds of dollars for a single expense.

Expediting your appointment to allow more time for relationship building and case presentation is key to building long term patient retention. Proper instrumentation will give you the benefit of both.

OSHA and Environmental Supplies

Deep down at the very back of the cupboard underneath the sink lives a plethora of opened sterilization supplies that were just the thing to use until the next best product showed up on your doorstep. Take an inventory of what you have, and then get rid of the bottles you are not currently using.

A fun and therapeutic replacement for the new found space is to add some aromatherapy antibacterial soap and hand lotion to your daily operatory use. There are new products that offer the therapeutic value of the aromatherapy oils combined with the antibacterial ingredients of a good dental hand soap and lotion. The aroma provides a new and pleasant change of scent for the office as well. You also just might find enough room for a diffuser so that you can enhance your dental environment with the delightful fragrances of essential oils. The scents are fabulous and their therapeutic value for eliminating anxiety, uplifting moods, and sterilization properties are quite impressive!

Visuals, Brochures, and Hand Outs

Okay, now you are getting close to completing your *spring hygiene cleaning* project! You are in the last drawers and cupboards that house a massive amount of patient education materials. As mentioned earlier, there may be some fun surprises way down at the bottom of the drawers. That perfect brochure on implants that you had forgotten existed is waiting to be found. Once again, it is important to discern the value to the patient and to the practice success. If you are not sending visual documentation of the diagnosed procedures home with your patients then you have another missed opportunity of perceived patient value. Handouts of published articles pertinent to the patient's diagnosis are also wonderful adjuncts for those analytical type patients. A hanging magazine file works great as a organization tool to hold loose articles that can benefit patients understanding of the dental services that your practice provides

Celebration

It's time. You have completed your *spring hygiene cleaning* project!! You should feel great about all that you have accomplished! You found some great 'hidden' brochures and articles you can utilize for better patient understanding. You have identified the missing documentation that can assist you in comprehensive follow through with your

patient care. You have assessed the technology and patient products that work for your practice and you scheduled workshops with the doctor and team to refine and maximize the use of the technology. You have made room for new and inspiring products that can spark the passion of your commitment to the dental profession. Celebrate! Give yourself the acknowledgement that is deserved as you enjoy your refreshed outlook, your renewed commitment, all wrapped up with a bow of an organized and ultra *hygiene* clean environment!

Peggy Sprague, RDH, is a Co-Founder of The JP Institute. The JP Institute offers continuing education training for the entire dental team. JP specializes in analyzing and refining practice philosophies, business systems, hands-on implementation of clinical skills, technology and product integration. Call The JP Institute for information on our Mastership Certification Courses, Dental Spa Product Line, and our In-office Consulting Services.

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