

Embracing change

The Picasso laser

By Dr Agim Hymer

In my 22 years of practising dentistry many advances have taken place. When I graduated, amalgams were the main material of choice, full clearances were a daily occurrence with immediate dentures, gloves had just come into use, protective eye wear was a choice, masks were never worn and dental records were on a small piece of cardboard. And the nurses use to warm themselves up in winter time as they gathered around the water boilers that cleaned the instruments.

Bringing dentistry into the future is like being transported in time to some science fiction movie. This is what I love about the profession and what keeps me going with excitement.

My practice now exists with implants with bone grafting and sinus lifts, digital x-rays, 3D imagery, computer records, iPads, digital photography, internet, email, cerec, composite, 4th/5th/6th/7th generation bonding and class B sterilisers with print outs.

Prevention with fluoride and tooth mouse is now reducing the amount of fillings that are done. Hygienists and therapists have gladly taken on this aspect of dentistry so that I can concentrate on the other things that I have been trained in. For example, undertaking a skeletal anchorage orthodontic case and using implants to replace the missing teeth.

Kings and queens of many years ago strived to achieve the perfect smile. They would have the world's best carvers use ivory to make teeth to attach to their own. I believe that dentistry is actually where we wanted it to be all those years ago. Stem cell research is probably the next dimension in our field.

I have never been one to buy equipment as soon as it comes out. I watch as others purchase and trial the equipment and then when the price is to where I think it is feasible I then purchase it.

For years I watched the laser users. Seeing the courses that were in the magazines and listening to the users and hearing only positive comments – I finally purchased one: the AMD Picasso laser. This to me was a very cost effective unit and I had watched its progress in the USA and was happy to see it come to Australia. I always bragged that I could buy 8000 No. 15 scalpel blades for the cost of an \$8,000 laser. I never had an issue with the scalpel so why would I need one. The Picasso came in way under this price and the Picasso Lite is a fraction of this.

But now that I have one I cannot do without it. I still use my scalpel but for fewer reasons. In my practice I now have two lasers and I can see this number increasing to have one in each surgery as the associate comes and often grabs it. I initially purchased the AMD Picasso and then the AMD Picasso Lite.

The Picasso laser has a higher intensity and higher output and this is used when bigger periodontal jobs are required, as its output is more consistent over time. And the Picasso Lite is what is used more commonly in the surgeries. The highest the units are ever taken to is 2.2mv and both units can achieve this.

There are many uses for a laser and as others have said: the longer you have one the more uses you will find for it.

There are two ways to use the tips of the laser, uninitiated and initiated. An initiated tip is when the laser tip is ready to cut tissue and this is achieved by burning the tip of the laser fibre onto a cork. If this step isn't done then the laser will not cut.

Uses for the laser:

Uninitiated tips:

1. Many articles are written on the use of lasers for the treatment or aided healing of apthous ulcers and cold sores. No definitive research is available but being a cold sore sufferer myself and using it on myself catching them when they are just starting and tingly I have never had a full blown one since. Patients that it is used on have experienced this as well.
2. Periodontal treatment
3. Sterilising an endodontic canal



Initiated tips:

One of the amazing reasons for using the laser is the quicker healing times for all procedures below and the less pain that is experienced by patients and bleeding is basically nonexistent.

1. Periodontal treatment. Deep pockets have been healed in many a patient using the techniques that are available for this procedure without having raised a single flap.
2. Frenectomies
3. Biopsies
4. Gingival troughing on crowns or fillings. Being a cerec/composite only user this is excellent as you can have a subgingival margin where the tooth margin is exposed with no bleeding or seeping and no retraction cord required.
5. Exposing implants
6. Fiberotomies before debanding an orthodontic case. The scalpel causes bleeding for a long time in these procedures.
7. Cosmetic gingivectomies
8. Raising flaps for surgical procedures such as when placing surgical screws for skeletal anchorage in orthodontics. The unattached mucosa that is cut just doesn't bleed so it becomes a simpler procedure
9. Pericorinitis

From a marketing perspective patients truly and rightly believe that the practice is more advanced, especially when they are having less trouble with difficult procedures.

I am sure that as time progresses this list will just get longer and longer. And our patients will only be happier -which makes us all happy. ♦

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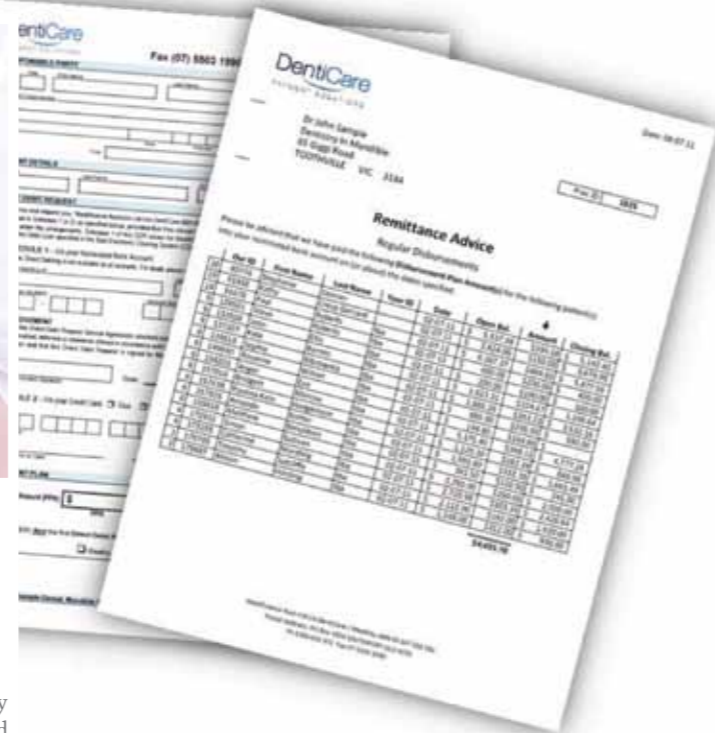


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"DentiCare is integral to the Payment Option mix that we offer our patients. It makes perfect sense to our patients and our practice, particularly for cases lasting several months. Offering DentiCare Payment Solutions to our patients as a payment option has increased our treatment acceptance rate and increased our bottom line. An interesting element of the solution is that the topic of payment becomes an easy task for all concerned. I'd recommend it to every practice."

Dr Mark Peddey
Dentistry in Elwood

DentiCare: Payment Solutions

The no interest and guaranteed patient payment plan alternative to credit.

If you offer your patients payment plans you should read this.

If you don't offer payment plans you should ask yourself - Why not!

For most patients dental treatment is something they would rather do without. It is generally considered expensive, takes up valuable time, can hurt, is usually of an emergency nature and often happens when they don't have the cash readily available. In fact most people would rather spend their money on other things other than their teeth.

Today's dental patient is also more financially savvy than yesterdays and is reducing their reliance on credit cards as well as other consumer credit facilities and are reducing debt levels where ever possible. We have also seen an explosion in debit cards with which consumers are making their regular monthly payments, such as rent, car payments, gym memberships, phone, utility bills, etc and using their own cash instead of credit.

DentiCare Payment Solutions is a simple no interest payment plan option to offer your patients. Used extensively by many orthodontic and general practices DentiCare Payment Solutions is now available to general dental practices as well.

DentiCare acts as the transaction house between

the patient/client and the practice. We remove all the mundane administrative process and risks involved in running a payment plan system in-house.

The main benefit of DentiCare and its unique point of difference for the practice is that we still guarantee the Payment Plan even if the patient misses a payment, defaults or becomes a bad debt. This guarantee applies when the clinic has provided 100% of the quoted service to the patient.

The system is very simple and can be implemented into just about any dental or orthodontic practice. Practices with large Payment Plan books can expect to receive well in excess of \$40,000 each and every month, whether they are working or not.

Once registered with DentiCare a Practice is provided with specially coded Direct Debit Request (DDR) forms. These forms are a simple one page A4 form that captures the Patient's and Payment Plan details. Once completed each DDR is forwarded by fax or email to the DentiCare office for processing.

Each patient is sent a payment schedule notice detailing each scheduled payment. DentiCare also handles all payment queries from patients freeing up staff at the front desk.

There are no nasty credit contracts for the patient to fill in and the dentist can use it for any patient they

wish provided they are gainfully employed and are a permanent Australian resident.

With each DentiCare patient the clinic collects an initial minimum deposit of 20% of the quoted treatment fee. This minimum deposit helps cover the clinic's immediate out of pocket costs and also helps commit the patient to the agreed financial payment plan. The balance goes on the DentiCare Payment Plan over terms ranging up to 25 months.

The doctor decides what payment term he will give each individual patient.

The automated computer system allows patients to make scheduled direct debit payments via their credit /debit card or bank account. They can choose weekly, fortnightly or monthly cycles to coincide

with their wage. They can also change their cycle any time and can make lump sum payments or finalise their payment plan at any time.

The system generates each patient transaction on the scheduled day, which is the most efficient way of collecting money. Long gone are the days of raising an invoice sending it out and waiting for the money come in and then sending out a receipt.

Payments to clinics are normally made five days after the scheduled payment from the patient.

Some clinics however prefer to receive their payment just once or twice a month (i.e. 1st &/or 15th of the month) the choice is theirs. Cash funds are deposited directly into the clinics account - no

waiting for cheques to clear. A detailed remittance advice is emailed to the clinic for each payment made into their account. Additionally there are no credit card merchant fees or GST implications with DentiCare saving your accountant valuable time. ♦

For more information contact:
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DentiCare
PAYMENT SOLUTIONS

"DentiCare has been great for our business. From an administration perspective it has provided an easy billing process, freeing up staff time. It has also allowed patients to pay for their treatment progressively, enabling more patients to access treatment."

Dr Jon Skilton
Simply Orthodontics

"DentiCare Payment Solutions has indeed made a difference to our business. With numerous incentives and minimum hassles, it has integrated seamlessly into our practice protocol. Now we have more starts than ever before! More patients and more profit - we highly recommend it!"

Rochelle
Practice Manager
OrthoSmile Orthodontics

"Practicing in Narrandera which is a rural area where times have been tough, DentiCare has allowed us to help patients who otherwise just could not afford to have dental treatment"

Bernadette Trainer
Practice Manager



Patient Payment Plans Build your Business And Help Your Patients Get the Treatment they Need



- Guaranteed Payments**
- Planned Cash Flow**
- EFT Cash Payments to You**
- Higher Treatment Acceptance**
- Happier Patients**

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