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BULLETIN



Bill Rossi

DENTAL DOW THIRD QUARTER

Still Going Strong:

In the first nine months this year, practice production was up **8.3%** and collections were up **8%** over the same period last year. Patient flow was up **3.2%**. New patients were up **5.9%**. The production per exam was up **5.9%**. All strong showings.

Hygiene hours worked were up **4.7%** and that no doubt has helped. Doctor Downtime (cancelled/failed) was down **5%**. Doctor productivity was up almost **7%**.

This is the strongest showing since the post-pandemic recovery year of 2021. Make hay while the sun shines!

LET ME TELL YOU SOMETHING YOU ALREADY KNOW!

Hygiene wages have gone up a lot in the past five years. See the table below.

Hygienist Wages

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Metro	\$39.05	\$39.37	\$40.24	\$42.89	\$46.03	\$51.20
Outstate	\$37.11	\$37.44	\$38.76	\$40.54	\$43.20	\$45.98

So, Metro Area Hygiene Wages increased 31% and Outstate Area Wages increased 24% from 2019 to 2024.

You can't control the **market**. However, you can control the **results**. You are going to be paying top dollar, expect top performance. If your hygienists' hourly wages went up \$10 in the last few years, you want their productivity to go up by \$30. How do they do that? Ask Brooke! – There are a lot of ethical ways to add to your treatment staff's contributions.

What's Inside?

- Dental Dow Third Quarter
- Let Me Tell You Something You Already Know!
- Happier Patients = Better Outcomes
- Top Ten Things That Patients Praise About Their Dental Practice
- Experience the Double Bounce!

CRDA Wages

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Metro	\$27.52	\$28.28	\$29.28	\$30.31	\$32.19	\$34.24
Outstate	\$23.91	\$24.53	\$25.61	\$27.52	\$29.16	\$29.71

CRDA pay in both Metro and Outstate areas increased about 24%.

HAPPIER PATIENTS = BETTER OUTCOMES



Brooke Ackerman
 MSDH

Treatment presentation is a difficult skill to master. The average treatment acceptance rate is around 40%; this would be a failing grade in school! Why aren't patients moving forward with recommended treatment?

The tendency is to tell them what they need without understanding their goals. It's not necessarily about **what** we are recommending, its more about the **why**. Patients don't always understand why we recommend treatment because we tend to jump quickly to the solution, leaving the patient behind at the problem.

Without knowing your patients' expectations for both their oral and overall health you have zero insight into what is important to the patient and what their goals are. We need to get the patient to tell us what is important to them and what their expectations are.

When patients ask questions such as: "*It doesn't hurt, why would I do anything?*" and, "*How long can I wait to fix this?*" they do not have a full understanding of the problem OR they do not have expectations for their oral and overall health.

If you tie the findings to **what patients want** for their health and smiles, they can be empowered to make decisions for themselves. We can identify goals by using statements and discovery questions.

"There are many different reasons people go to the dentist. Some are in pain, some want a clean mouth and fresh breath, many to save money long-term. You took time out of your busy day to be here, tell me what matters to you."

We Believe In You!

We believe that Independent Private Practice is the best way to deliver dentistry. It is best for the patients, the doctors and the staff. Private practices can be more selective with their continuing education and technology. They can also be more adaptable and efficient. **Most importantly, the people who make decisions about patients' dental care are the ones in direct contact with them.** We also believe that professional management support helps **good practices be better** and thrive in a competitive environment.



Listen and you'll know what motivates them to come to the dentist. This is the key to better treatment presentation, and in turn, acceptance.

Other discovery questions:

"What do you want your teeth to be like in 10, 20 years?"

"On a scale of 1-10, how healthy would you like your teeth or gums to be? How healthy do you feel they are right now?"

"On a scale of 1-10 how important is it for you to have a beautiful smile?"

"When would you like to know when there is an issue or a problem? Early, a little later, or when it's more severe?"

"On a scale of 1-10 where do you think your dental health is now? Where do you want it to be?"

When patients give a score that doesn't align with their goals, ask them, *"What is keeping you from being a 9-10 (or stated goal)?"*

These questions take less than 10 minutes and allow you to get the patient to tell you what is important to them and what their expectations are. When you do need to recommend treatment, you can easily connect your findings back to their stated goals.

"If I heard you right, things aren't going in the direction that you said you wanted your health to be. So, with your permission I'd like to show you what we recommend to better align your health with what you said is important to you."

TOP TEN THINGS THAT PATIENTS PRAISE ABOUT THEIR DENTAL PRACTICE:

The following are the top 10 things that patients praise about their dental offices online (in descending order).

- 1) **Friendly and Professional Staff:** Patients consistently appreciate the friendly, welcoming, professional demeanor of the dental office staff, including dentists, hygienists, and administrative personnel.
- 2) **Clean and Modern Facilities:** Many reviews highlight the cleanliness and modernity of the dental facilities, including comfortable waiting areas and state of the art dental equipment.
- 3) **Short Wait Times:** Patients praise offices that maintain short waiting times for both appointments and procedures, emphasizing efficient scheduling and time management.
- 4) **Pain Free Procedures:** Positive reviews often commend dentists for providing pain-free or minimally painful procedures, and highly effective pain management techniques.
- 5) **Clear Communications:** Effective and clear communications with dental providers about diagnosis, treatment plans, procedures, and follow up care is highly appreciated by patients.
- 6) **Quality of Care:** High quality of care including thorough examinations, accurate diagnosis, and effective treatment are frequently praised.
- 7) **Easy Appointment Scheduling:** The value of ease of scheduling appointments, the ability of convenient time slots and

the ability to reschedule without a hassle.

- 8) **Billing Transparency:** Transparent and straightforward billing practices, where patients understand the charges and what the insurance covers receives positive feedback.
- 9) **Personalized Attitude:** Reviews often mention the personalized attention to care provided by the dental staff, making patients feel valued and well cared for.
- 10) **Comfortable Environment:** A comfortable and relaxing environment, including soothing music and comfortable seating is commonly noted in positive reviews.

Of course, none of the above are big surprises to anyone that works in dentistry. **Still, they beg the question. Is your dental office and team consistently working on refining the above?** Are you sure that patients that have been in a previous dental office will know the difference in *your* dental office and *your* strength in the above attributes? If nothing else, it is good for you and your team to review this as an affirmation of why you do all that you do, and how that extra effort in customer service is important.



Matt Lahn

EXPERIENCE THE DOUBLE BOUNCE!

Whether you're selling your home or your business, taking a few extra steps prior to selling can improve the curb appeal, profitability and sale price. For example, getting your office systems/staff operating at top levels can immediately increase the practice's profitability leading not only to a raise for the Doctor, but to an increased practice value. With higher staff costs, supplies and equipment, many doctors haven't seen increased profitability in several years. Since practice appraisals generally look at the latest 3 years of data, increasing practice profitability can also make your practice value increase. You make more income **and** increase the value of your practice, i.e., the Double Bounce! We can help train staff to get them to that next level, tune up your office systems, increase your profits (and thus, **your** paycheck), and guide you right on down to the final sale. Just call! 952-921-3360 or Email Matt Lahn at: Matt@AdvancedPracticeManagement.com.



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