

Unique Periodontal Treatment Benefits Both Patients And DSO Bottom Lines



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As chief clinical officer of a 60+ office DSO operating in Florida and Georgia, I have established that one of our bigger struggles here at Sage Dental is getting patients to truly believe that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. Nowhere is this more evident than in preventing periodontal disease.

As a DSO responsible for managing the dental health of tens of thousands of patients, we strive daily to find highly effective treatment protocols easily implemented across multiple locations and staff experience levels. The Sage Dental network has a *Total Care Solution* philosophy that puts everything a patient needs in one place and simplifies oral health treatment planning. While treating nearly every dental condition that might arise, we strive to be mindful

of patient dental care budgets without letting this drive treatment recommendations. Ultimately, Sage Dental wants to see each of our patients smile with confidence.

Getting More Smiles

One of our fundamental beliefs is that efficient use of patient dental budgets helps each of our 60+ offices retain more patients. Taking care of preventable problems, like periodontal disease, improves overall systemic health, resulting in better quality of life. For instance, studies show patients who keep their teeth, live up to ten years longer.

Because such a large percentage of patients have no dental insurance, expensive treatments like root planing and flap surgery can be financially out of reach. Untreated periodontal disease has been associated with increased risk of complications during pregnancy, increased risk of heart disease, respiratory disease, diabetes, worsened COVID-19 outcomes, Alzheimer's disease and even erectile dysfunction.

Sage Dental has determined that patients appreciate spending lower amounts of treatment dollars on perio in order to free up treatment dollars for higher tier items like crown & bridge, cosmetic procedures and orthodontia. Big smiles come from helping each patient improve their self-esteem and more satisfied patients lead to greater referrals.

Limitations of Current Perio Treatment

My observation in leading Sage Dental's clinical teams is that several products have limitations in treating periodontal disease. For starters, site-specific antibiotics are not indicated for repeated long-term usage nor do they reach all areas of the mouth. Honestly, it becomes more complicated and more expensive to treat many individual sites at once.

What I am really looking for is broad coverage, fast biocidal activity and daily usage that patients can easily comply with. Ideally, a 15 to 30-second rinse would be best. Several oral rinses like chlorhexidine offer broad coverage, however, they tend to stain teeth, cause dental calculus build-up, taste bad and are indicated for short-term use only. Povidone-iodine provides multisite coverage, good antiviral and anti-bacterial efficacy. However, taste and staining remain an issue and is not appropriate for oral cavity usage. Believe me, no one comes to the dentist for stained teeth. Finally, hydrogen peroxide has limited

and root planing. ioGel™ Periodontal Gel is prescribed for take-home use in severe cases.

Dental treatment follows a protocol where several forms of ioRinse™ molecular iodine are administered. Treatment using different forms of molecular iodine has repeatedly reversed the trajectory of periodontal disease across our 60+ offices.

Your large practice group may treat periodontal disease differently than Sage Dental, however, I encourage you to investigate molecular iodine as a safe and effective treatment protocol.

We appreciate that using these products helps to elevate our standard of care. Our patients appreciate this non-invasive, easy-to-follow, cost-effective treatment regimen. Patient at-home use of these products also generates an important and new profit center without consuming valuable chair time.

Interested in learning more?
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Dr. Roark, who serves as Senior Vice President and Chief Clinical Officer at Sage Dental is responsible for overall clinical leadership, including enterprise-wide clinical strategic planning, developing and improving clinical protocols, researching new technologies and services, overseeing quality assurance, and providing professional development opportunities to clinical team members. She brings more than 18 years of private practice, non-profit, and DSO experience to Sage Dental. Dr. Roark received a Master of Science in Health Care Management from Harvard University and earned her D.M.D. Magna Cum Laude from the Henry M. Goldman School of Dental Medicine at Boston University. To read other articles by Dr. Roark, click [HERE](#).