

The Global Adventist Dental Connection

Christian Dental Professionals, United to Advance God's Healing



Edition #3
May-December 2017



YOU ARE AN IMPORTANT PART OF GOD'S WORK ON THIS EARTH

YOU CAN COLLABORATE WITH HIS CHURCH TO FURTHER HIS KINGDOM

WHAT YOU DO FOR PATIENTS IS NOT ONLY HEALING AND EVANGELISM BUT THE TOUCH OF GOD'S HAND

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The Global Adventist Dental Connection

Introduction from the Editor

We're In This Together

We live in a time of almost automatic conflict and fierce individualism. The news in print, broadcasting, and the internet has for a long time now, very commonly focused on the divisions and acrimonious clashes between strident members of opposing racial groups, political parties, and legal positions. The militant polarization and automatic demonization of opponents in public life, business, and even churches concerns thinking people everywhere. It seems that elected officials would rather "win" against the opposition than accomplish good things for the people that elected them. In this cacophony of pitched battle, we find a quiet relief in the well-intentioned, tolerant, collaborative actions of those who truly wish to do good and those who follow the example of Jesus Christ.

While on earth, Jesus exemplified a dramatically different attitude, working together with people of different socio-economic levels, educational experiences, and people groups. He seemed to make almost no distinction between the ladies of the night and the respectable women of high society, between the slums and the country club, between the religious leaders and the abject sinners. His willing-

ness to cross societal lines and include all comers continuously shocked onlookers. In addition he made confederates and collaborators of anyone who responded positively to his message of love, acceptance and harmony.

He continues this pattern even today, preferring to make partners of willing but fragile disciples to whom He entrusts His Kingdom's advance, rather than to take things into his own hands and accomplish his purpose more effectively with His own overwhelming eloquence, persuasion, and power.

In the art and science of dental practice we also know of partnership and teamwork. Although we often talk about "solo" practice we all know that there is no such thing. Essentially every practice today requires at least a few, or more likely, very many team members to make things work to the advantage of the patients and the people who earn a livelihood in that dental practice. From the front desk receptionist, the back office assistants, the dental hygienists, the laboratory technicians, the custodian, to the many services that are commonly employed, dentistry is a teamwork enterprise. We depend

for our very ability to function on equipment technicians, supply companies, waste disposal companies, and numerous consultants to say nothing of the professional associations, utilities, insurance companies, continuing education enterprises, etc., etc., etc.

And so this Global Adventist Dental Connection has for its theme, teamwork and a celebration of the team that is involved with the healing of which we are privileged to be a part. We appreciate and thank the many who work together with us, including unseen angels and Our Heavenly Father. We thank you for participating with us in this endeavor and we hope that this publication will be meaningful and helpful to you and to what you do. We wish you the very best as we work together, as a team, to continue the healing work that Jesus so ably demonstrated to us.



Editor: Doyle Nick

Private Dental Practice as a Mission

Having been born and raised in Loma Linda (I was born in the Sanitarium just a few months after the first dental school class graduated) the Christian-witness and healing mission and purpose of the University is something of which I have always been aware. I worked at Loma Linda Medical Center from high school through dental school and I had an almost daily reminder of the University's mission, legacy, and heritage as I walked past the plaques at the A-level entrance listing the medical school graduates who had given of themselves to answer calls to mission service.

I would love to say that upon graduating and going into private practice, I had an immediate spiritual impact on my patients, but

that would not be true. Witnessing to patients was something with which I was not innately comfortable. I would occasionally say something and if there was a positive response would continue the conversation, but I was not always sure where to take the discussion.

It took me several years to develop the confidence to become comfortable sharing my faith with others. Part of my development came from recognizing and being aware of people who were hurting or in need, but the main component was my personal spiritual journey and growth. Offering to pray with a patient was almost always gratefully received and welcomed, but if not, I was okay with that; it was a big

step for me to realize that you could move on and the relationship would still be fine. Being able to share spiritually with patients became a very rewarding part of my practice. But, patients are not the only ones to whom you witness.

After I retired from private practice, I came to teach at Loma Linda University School of Dentistry. (One of the great surprises and great ironies in my life is coming back and living here again) I often have the opportunity to speak with students, about what "real-world" private practice is like. It was during one of these conversations that I realized that although it took me a long time to be comfortable sharing my faith with patients, there was another group of people that I had been automatically and effectively witnessing to from the very beginning. That group was my office staff. I wasn't trying to proselytize them, but many times they would be curious about what I believed. Being open to speaking with a staff very diverse in faith beliefs (Jewish, LDS, Catholic, Agnostic, Jehovah's Witness, non-denominational Christian and others), we would often have very interesting and meaningful discussions.

Even more significant is the example lived. Your staff sees you every day, when you're up and when you're down. They see how you respond to patients and the ethical choices you make. Do you have the patient's best interest at heart or is your wallet making the decisions? Is the treatment you gave just "good enough" or is it the best you are capable of providing? Your staff clearly know these things. More importantly,



they know how you treat them. Are you fair and respectful? Appreciative? All of these things, all of your interactions add up to make the witness that you are.

Even 11 years after retiring from private practice, at least 4 of my staff who were with me the longest still keep in touch with me. (Social media is wonderful in this regard.) If they are struggling or just feeling a need, they will contact me and ask me to pray for them. These requests and friendships mean more than any material gain ever could. In their eyes, I have a "special connection" with God. When I look back, I realize that my witness was far more effective than I ever thought.

God wants to use us wherever we are to touch the lives of all that we work with and serve. We just need to be willing to be His instruments.



Written By:
Greg Mitchell, DDS, MBA
LLUSD, class of 1984

Three Dental Receptionists, different places, different stories, same significance

The first voice people hear when they call, the first person they see when they enter the clinic, the dental receptionist plays a significant role in any practice. At the SDA Dental clinic in Kingstown, St. Vincent, patients have been known to postpone appointments because Marven King is on vacation. They want to see her when they come for dental care, which turns out to be more than dental. Marven has just completed 25 years as a receptionist at the clinic.

Loida Archbold had just retired at 61 as an accountant for the city of Palos Verdes Estates, California. Moving to Fortuna, California (population 12,000), when she met Ralph Roberts, DDS, at church. He invited her to

be the receptionist at his dental office for "a couple of years." Her social skills emerged as she became an integral part of the dental team. Loida's two-year appointment stretched into fourteen.

Neither Marven nor Loida planned to become a receptionist. Loida was enjoying retirement. Marven was recommended by someone who thought she'd be a great dental assistant. The presiding dentist said, "No, no. Everyone wants to talk to Marven. We need her at the front desk."

Marven did indeed get acquainted with the patients. When a weekend fire destroyed the clinic, the patient files were in ashes, Marven knew the names of

more than 100 patients. She called to cancel appointments, and then later she called to let the patients know a new, more substantial clinic had been erected.

Nine thousand miles away, in Bulawayo Zimbabwe, a smile and friendliness are the hallmarks of Mercy Jacobs, receptionist at the Adventist Dental Practice. Twenty-nine years ago Mercy undertook what she admits is an adventurous job: working as a receptionist with three dentists, three dental assistants, an accountant, and a janitor. She is prepared every day to hear of problems from patients, insurance companies, or even dentists. "Rather like a lot of children," says this mother of three and grandmother of four. She

C. Marven King, St. Vincent



major languages of the country. She is accustomed to teaching the dentists appropriate words such as “How are you?” or “Please close your teeth together.”

Receptionists take frightened patients in their stride. Marven often says, “In this clinic, you don’t need to worry. You will come out of that door with a big smile on your face.” The patients are likely to assure her as they leave, “You tell the truth.” Dealing with terrified children in the Bulawayo clinic, Mercy’s strategy helps. She grants the child a sense of power by saying, “You can choose which dentist you want to see.”

adds, “I love being a source of encouragement to all that I work with.”

For Marven in St Vincent, the job is essential. She lives with her widowed mother, two brothers, and a sister. The brothers maintain a vegetable garden at home—often raided by thieves. Jobs are rare in St. Vincent. Marven is the family’s sole wage earner. Her tasks are myriad: As receptionist she records and files patient information; issues statements, deposits payments, wires money to supporting laboratories, and has even prepared documents and work permits for people hired to work in the Caribbean Union Conference. Then when the offspring of patients show up in the waiting room, she entertains them. “Some want to sit on my lap,” she says.

In a land with Muslims, Hindus, and Christians, the Bulawayo dental practice has a distinctive message about the gospel of Jesus Christ. “Someone has a problem,” says Mercy, “and we pray about it. We pray for people who are afraid and we listen to them; sometimes all a patient wants is someone who will listen.” It’s all part of the clinic’s mission.

Loida says that as she got acquainted with patients, she was comfortable encouraging positive health habits. She would explain the negative effects of smoking, soda pop, tea, and coffee. She remembers the time a patient told her gratefully, “I’ve quit smoking be-



Mercy Jacobs, Zimbabwe

Loida was confronted with similar challenges in Fortuna, California. A patient would call to say, “I can’t meet my appointment today. I can’t find a babysitter.” With an eye on the patient load—and the patients’ need, Loida would say, “Bring the baby with you. I’m a grandmother. I’ll take care of it.” and then she would charm the baby.

Mercy Jacobs undertakes extracurricular tasks in the Bulawayo clinic, where the mission personnel frequently changes. She orients a new dentist’s family to the area, helping them find the police station, hospital, grocery store, vegetable market and best routes to the clinic. In the office she uses her translation skills in the three

cause you talked to me. I decided to quit.” The patient quit, cold turkey, she notes.

Marven knows the stories of her patients. “I meet patients all over town,”

she says. “We’re like one big family.” When a patient with stress-induced ulcers revealed a difficult relationship with her husband, Marven asked, “Would you like to pray about it?” The



Loida Archbold, California

grateful woman assented. On a subsequent visit, the woman reported the healing power of Marven’s prayer.

These dedicated receptionists compare the dental office to a family environment. The patients share news about their families. Loida observes, “Almost every time I go shopping I meet someone I know. They give me a hug. They’ll call and we meet for lunch.” As Mercy says, “I keep a song in my heart and a prayer at all times. I love my job. I love talking and interacting with the staff and dentists. I love meeting people every day and being a source of encouragement.” Marven agrees: “Going to the clinic and reaching out to people is a blessing.” In turn, these receptionists have become a blessing to the patients they meet at the clinic.

Edited By:

Dr. Edna Maye Loveless

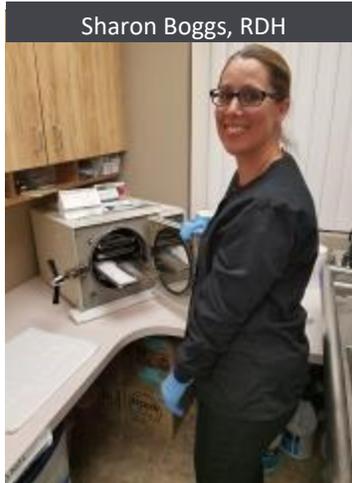


Part of the Team

I was asked to write something about Teamwork in the dental office, from the perspective of a Dental Hygienist. I have practiced as a dental hygienist for 24 years and I hope that I continue for years to come. I am good at my work because my training was excellent, because I have lots of practice, because I have experience in several dental offices, and because I am a good team member. It is my privilege to work with a great dental team in an American dental practice. I can't help but be surprised when I hear of practices and even whole countries that do not utilize dental hygienists because I think that the patients there miss out on something very good.

My work includes giving patients the cleanest teeth possible and a bright beautiful smile and I am proud of that but they deserve and receive even more. Teamwork is good for the doctors with whom we work, for each person on the dental staff, and it is especially good for the patients that we serve. They are cared for in a warm, friendly, communicative atmosphere and their care is more complete and of higher quality because we all work together.

In our office, the work day begins each morning with a meeting of the staff and doctor. We review the day's schedule, talk about what procedures will be performed, and explore particular patient's needs. I let the doctor know when I will be asking him to come in for an exam. This "huddle" facilitates an atmosphere of teamwork, emphasizes that each person's input is valuable, and insures that each person's opinions and concerns are heard. Normally this time together results in a very smooth day.



Sharon Boggs, RDH

Teamwork continues throughout the day with open communication between all members of the staff. I let the receptionist know if my appointment will be longer than normal and she keeps me apprised of any changes in patient flow. I continually communicate with the patient about oral conditions especially any that concern me and I pass those on to the dentist so that the dentist can diagnose any pathology or observe possible negative changes. I also provide communication between the dentist and the patient, informing the patient of the dentist's viewpoint and communicating patient's concerns to the dentist. The constant and open communication is vital to patient flow, patient satisfaction, and to maintaining a sense of teamwork in the office. Our teamwork provides the patients with one united front and in turn brings confidence to our patients.

We help one another whenever and however we can. If I have time, I help with sterilization and cleaning and room turnover. I also can serve as an assistant to the dentist as he treats patients. In turn they help make my work easier whenever they can.

I enjoy, so much, working with patients and building relationships with them is very rewarding. I get to see my patients a few times a year and these friendships and the bond that I have with my coworkers makes me a lucky person.

Written By:
By Sharon Boggs, RDH

Mission Equipment – a Collaboration

As many of you know, The National Association of Seventh-day Adventists is party to a very robust dental equipment program which accepts donations of dental equipment which yet has a useful life and we turn that equipment into serviceable free equipment to support the Adventist dental ministry. Over the years there have been millions of dollars of equipment pass through this program to begin new clinics, provide

emergency replacement of broken items, and help clinics avoid large capital expenditures.

Like most successful enterprises this is a team effort and one of the most significant players is a faithful, generous, and always willing dental equipment technician who owns his own business. Guillermo and his employee, Marvin, will pick up donated equipment, examine it, fix or rebuild

it, and then make it available to send in shipments to locations around the world that are in need. In the last year we have sent numerous dental chairs and units, pan X-rays, periapical X-ray machines, autoclaves, Dr. and assistant stools, ultrasonic scalers, amalgamators, cameras, loupes, handpieces, lab equipment, etc. etc. Sometime these items go in 40 ft. containers and sometimes in envelopes. Guillermo and Marvin are

Equipment cont'd on page 6

Equipment, cont'd from page 5

a critical part of this process and we try to remember to thank them on a regular basis.

Guillermo has expressed his desire to cooperate with God's work many times in the past and when we asked him to put into words, why he does what he does, he wrote: "The work that I do is to give. The way I see it is, we have to give to receive, if we don't give than we will never receive. When we receive donations, we are greatly appreciated and we pass it on. We help out people who need

in this process is Dr. Bob Darby, a patient, careful, active 84-year old retired dentist. He manages the collection and organizes, and sometimes even packs, the various shipments of equipment that are needed. At any time he has a five or six page list of items that he is working to accumulate and organize so that the receiving practice gets as many of the requested items as possible. He does this on a completely volunteer basis. He says, speaking of his wife and himself, "We think that the Lord has something for us to do and we



Dr. Bob Darby with wife Joann



Left to Right: Marvin and Guillermo

things and give them support. Everything is a blessing and when we pass on the blessing, we are given more. We are helping people with their careers and their lives by providing them equipment and support. The road runs both ways when I give I also receive a blessing. I will continue to pass on my blessing because that is part of the mission of my business. Our mission is to help others fulfill their goals."

feel that if we can do it we should. Once a long time ago, we were in New York City taking some CE so we would be ready to go on a short-term mission program. I was standing in front of a mailbox in front of our hotel and I was inspired to look at something in the window of a store across the street. We walked across the street and in that 20 seconds another man

stepped into the spot where I had been standing, four or five gunshots rang out, and he was killed. Ever since that event, we have felt like we owed the Lord our time and our energy. He has given us good health and vitality and we are glad to be involved. It is fun to do and very rewarding."

These are just two of the people in our program, others include, Jerry and Marcos, the AHI shipping team, Katie, who handles the paperwork,

Another incredibly important person

Mike, the shipping agent who arranges transportation, the shipping companies, and the people in the receiving country who manage the importation process. In addition when we see what we are able to accomplish with so little in the way of financial resources we are certain that God doesn't just provide the impetus for the work but is an active participant as well. We are very thankful to be on His team!

Edited By:
Dr. Doyle Nick

75th Anniversary Convention

The NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SDA DENTISTS cordially invites every interested person to join them at their 75th NASDAD Convention on the Island of Hawaii from October 12-16, 2018. You are sure to enjoy the Hilton Waikoloa Village Resort, return home having new friends & colleagues, enriched by continuing education, and blessed by the spiritual program.

For More Information, visit <http://www.nasdad.org/>



Creating our future. Celebrating our past.

Worldwide Dental Mission Opportunities In SDA Mission Dental Clinics

Globally, there are over 100 Seventh-day Adventist-owned dental practices, and some of them could benefit from your expertise and collaboration.

Here are some of the current opportunities

Long-term Service

Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo - SDA Dental Clinic needs a regular Adventist dental missionary in the Adventist Dental Clinic. This clinic in the capitol city of Democratic Republic of Congo and has the potential to attract the most influential and discerning people in the country. A dentist with skill, vision, and a sense of adventure can make a tremendous difference in God's work in this area.

Saipan SDA Dental Clinic – In 2018 a capable dentist will be needed to commit to a five-year posting on the beautiful island of Saipan. The position is clinical director and Dental Director. The Saipan practice is one of the most vibrant and consistently effective clinics in the Adventist dental system.

Short Term Volunteer Service

Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan – Any length of volunteer service without financial support in this conference-owned dental clinic. A young, newly trained dentist will be there shortly. The opportunity to get the equipment in top working order, begin the practice, and mentor the new dentist would be great fun for a capable, experienced dentist.

Grenada – An entrepreneurial dentists will soon be needed in this newly rebuilt, renewed and equipped Adventist dental practice on the Island of Grenada.

Glie, Togo - Needs a volunteer dentist who could serve for several months, preferably a year with room, board, and stipend provided.

Yaoundé, Cameroon – This dental clinic has been in the healing business for forty years. All of the dentists are from Cameroon but they would enjoy have a self-supporting volunteer to volunteer and work with them for a few months.

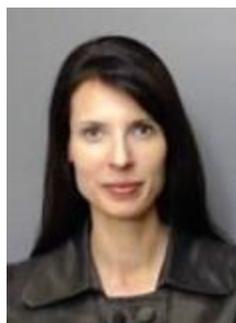
AMEN, Maranatha, World Health Dental Organization, Helping Hands, and many other similar organizations are often in need of able and willing volunteers to make important programs successful. These organizations have websites that inform volunteers of needs, schedules, and other details.

Burundi Union Mission July 6th-21, 2018 - 4 Medical Camp Meetings in 4 Big Cities – for more information contact Dany Ntihakose, Burundi Union Mission, Health Ministries Director, via email at ntihdany@yahoo.fr

For More Information about any of these opportunities & others, please contact Doyle Nick at 909-558-4607 or NickD@gc.adventist.org.

The editors would like to recognize the contributions of several skilled individuals

Translation to, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish are provided by Dr. Priscilla Taylor, Dr. Ruslan Zmievski, and Dr. Luis Mendez, respectively. Katie Layon, MBA contributes proof reading and editing as well as layout skills. We appreciate the contributions of the whole General Conference Health Ministries Team as well as those of Loma Linda University School of Dentistry.



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Dental Affairs, General Conference Health Ministries Department

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