

Success Strategies: Key to Implementing AI In Practice

Featuring

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Many practices are beginning to explore or integrate artificial intelligence (AI) into the practice to save time and improve efficiency, so they can focus on patient relationships and uncover new opportunities for growth.

To better understand how AI is being used in real practices today, two independent providers share how they are integrating these tools into their workflows. While each practice has approached AI differently, a

common theme emerged: when implemented thoughtfully, AI can remove operational friction and allow teams to focus on what matters most, caring for patients.

Ethan Erwin, DDS, owner Smile Hot Springs

Dentistry is unique in that there's a lot of the steps that require human touch. Right now we're in the integration phase of AI and I think it's probably the most challenging. Change is difficult. But the people adopting AI and fitting it to their specific practice and patient needs are going to be way ahead of the curve and, I believe, will experience exponential growth. Yes, we are using the AI already integrated into the technology and software we use. But here are two practical ways we have used AI:

Business and Personal Advice.

I use ChatGPT almost daily to help me drive my business forward. In my downtime between cases and other management

tasks, I am constantly asking for advice that would have taken me hours to research. Everything from asking "Which works best, billboard versus Google ads?" "What should

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~ Dr. Erwin

my marketing budget be based on my practice revenue and expense?”

“How can I improve my patient journey and overcome barriers to care?” It’s like having a smart friend at your side all the time. We’ve used it to create marketing pieces with simple prompts. It then looked at our website for our unique selling propositions, services, and brand. The first output wasn’t perfect but as you guide it, it gets better and better.

When you are a private practice, you’ve got

to manage the business aspects of dentistry – your debts, liabilities, risks, opportunities. I have over the course of months shared with ChatGPT all aspects of my practice as a business, just as I would my accountant and financial advisor. It knows all the loans I have in detail, my revenue, my overhead and expenses. When I need to make a business – or even a personal decision, I ask for advice. Recently I sold a lot on a nearby lake. With the help of AI, I quickly got financially fact-based advice on how to time the sale and the most tax advantageous ways to use the profit. AI helps mitigate risk and AI gives me more information, understanding, data, and analysis to make better decisions.

Dr. Brian Harris, Harris Family Dentistry

You can break it down into kind of two separate categories. One is AI within existing dental software which help with basic functions like confirmation calls or emails. The other area where it’s really starting to explode is AI agents. This is when a patient reaches out to the dental office and receives an email response that seems human - more empathetic and conversational instead of the chat bot where it’s obvious the answers are standardized. Here’s how my team started and where we’re heading with AI:

Start Simple:

Office managers are constantly juggling multiple tasks, jumping from one thing to the next. This often leaves them little time for their most important function which is to motivate, encourage, and manage patients and their team. These are the things that lead

to case acceptance and drive growth. First step is to start to understand how AI works. Using a simple, but very directive prompt to communicate to patients past due for hygiene. For example:

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Create a PDF to send to patients who are past due for hygiene with the prompt: Create an easy-to-understand patient education 1 page document that explains the value of routine dental hygiene – specifically professional cleaning. Include data points, research, positive outcomes of care, consequences of delayed hygiene care and use visuals. Use an empathetic tone.

Think Big:

As I mentioned, AI agents are the next big thing. In my practice, we developed an AI agent to enable patients to go on our Instagram page and click a button to get an AI simulation and immediate preview of what their smile could look like. We're calling it Claravue AI (<https://claraview.ai/>) and are starting to share it with colleagues to help them increase case acceptance. These types of AI agents are going to help

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us add massive value and help people understand what their options are when it comes to dentistry.

Technology and AI can give you immediate access to information that can help you grow your practice and make life a little easier. Another example of technology that benefits your practice is the CareCredit integration in your practice management software which enables you to see which patients on your daily schedule already have a CareCredit credit card and available credit – making the cost conversation easier.

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