

# The John Lewis Newsletter

April 2020



As your Patterson Dental representative, I'm committed to providing solutions that can benefit your practice—whether it's through innovative technology, dental equipment, consultative services, dental supplies or software. I hope you find some valuable tips and ideas in this edition of the newsletter!

- John Lewis



We have the most awesome blog at [offthecusp.com](http://offthecusp.com). Always great information and an excellent source of leading-edge data to keep you and your team focused and growing. I love this ABC idea. Read on and enjoy.

## Patient Communications: Say the Right Thing

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There's a scene early in the movie *Glengarry Glen Ross* where Alec Baldwin's character, Blake, in a machismo-fueled monologue, implores a group of salesmen to close their deals. "A-B-C," he says. "Always. Be. Closing."

When it comes to marketing your dental practice, there's a similar ABC: **Always Be Communicating.**

You should always stay in touch with patients. Whether it's right before they come in for an appointment, while they're in the waiting room, when they're in the chair, just after they leave an appointment, or during the lull between visits: Always Be Communicating with patients.

### Before visit

The most obvious pre-visit communication is a reminder. Since you treat recall like the marketing campaign that it is, remember to vary the messaging of your reminders. Email, text, send a postcard, make a phone call, and work all angles to remind patients about their appointment. Just be sure to stop sending reminders once you have confirmation.

Other pre-appointment communication can include pre-op instructions. Should the patient refrain from eating or drinking anything in advance of their visit? Do you prefer that patients not floss ahead of time since it inflames their gums and makes treatment difficult? Do you have electronic forms that enable patients to fill out their information before getting to the practice? Do they need to bring their insurance or

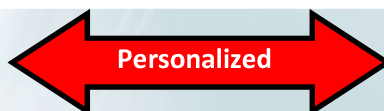
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"The only limits to our realization of tomorrow will be our doubts of today."

– Franklin D. Roosevelt



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identification card?

Tell people what to do (and what not to do) before their appointment, so they know exactly what to expect when coming in to see you.

### **During visit**

Think of the visit in three parts: the waiting room, the chair, and the checkout. Use your waiting room to educate patients on their treatments. If you have a television in the waiting room, broadcast dental-specific programming to show off your different treatment offerings.

Follow up with patients while they're in the chair. Touch upon the treatment offerings they saw in the waiting room. By discussing what they saw while waiting, you reiterate the importance of certain oral care routines.

As patients are checking out, ask about the day's visit and again discuss any further treatment offerings the patient might need. Verbally explain and print out any post-op instructions (if needed). Since you're going to be staying in tight communication with them, make sure all the patient's communication preferences are up to date.

### **Immediately after visit**

Getting in touch with a patient within 24-36 hours after their appointment is crucially important. For one, it shows patients you care about them even after they've settled their bill. It's also the premier time to double down on your marketing communications. Email any post-op instructions to a patient's inbox. In the off chance a patient was a little frazzled toward the end of their visit, this ensures they have proper care instructions.

If you have one, send a reminder about your patient portal. Inform patients that they can find all their past treatments and billing statements here. Not only does this give patient's a feeling of control over their account, but it also frees up your team from fielding questioning phone calls. Email follow-up treatment information.

Everything you told the patient throughout their visit is fresh on their mind. Now is the perfect time to practice your mastery of selling elective services, and really drive home the need for preventative or

cosmetic treatments.

### **Between visits**

Communicating between visits enables you to stay top-of-mind. The last thing you want is for patients to only remember your existence every six months.

Deliver holiday greetings via social media or send birthday cards in the mail. Show patients that, even when they're not thinking of you, you're thinking of them. Email monthly newsletters with topical dental information. Tell patients about new treatment offerings. Show photos of your new CEREC or SIRONA machines, explaining how they make visits easier and more efficient than ever before! Have an appointment open up? Send an announcement.

A patient might not be due for their cleaning, but maybe the opening is perfect for that whitening they've wanted. Unless a patient explicitly tells you so, do not feel like you're over-communicating. Your goal is for patients to have the best oral health imaginable, and every point of contact you make is with that goal in mind.

Don't have time to follow up between appointments? Let RW do it for you. Read more about how you can automate your patient engagement.

### **Truly stay in touch with RevenueWell**

If coordinating all of this communication feels a little overwhelming, we get it. If you were to build it all manually, it might drive you mad. Thankfully, the RevenueWell Marketing Platform allows you to automate your communication and stay in touch without running yourself ragged.

Check out a few of the tools that help streamline patient communication so you can focus on patient care:

- ▶ **Automated appointment reminders.** Follows up appointment reminders, and automatically contacts all unscheduled hygiene patients around their recall dates.
- ▶ **Two-way texting.** Text back and forth with your patients with RevenueWell Messenger.
- ▶ **Custom post-ops.** Send automatic post-op communications minutes after the patient walks out.
- ▶ **Social media.** Choose from a library of social media posts or share patient feedback right to Facebook.
- ▶ **Custom campaigns and newsletters.** 100+ predesigned campaigns that help with communication between visits.



*As your Patterson Dental rep, I will always strive to be a great resource of all things dental and provide information so that you will recognize me as a valued partner in your dental practice. This article provides some great insight into a membership club that Patterson recently partnered with, called Illumitrac. Please, enjoy the article and then give me a call to discuss how it may benefit your practice to be a part of a membership club. Helping your practice thrive is my commitment!*

## Why Your Dental Office Should Consider a Membership Club

Laura Hatch says that having a membership club has kept her dental practice thriving. Patients who otherwise could not afford their dental care can now receive regular care for a monthly fee.



Until about a year ago, I had no idea what a membership club was. I heard the words get tossed around here and there, but I never researched the idea. Finally, last year I stopped at the Illumitrac booth at the AADOM convention to learn more about membership clubs, and I'm so glad I did. We started a membership club in our office this year, and we love it. For anyone else who might want to know more I want to explain how a membership club benefits our practice.

Basically, a membership club is much like any other club you might join, such as a fitness club or a Costco. Specifically, when your office is able to offer a membership, the patient pays an upfront cost to be part of your membership club, and then pays monthly fees to receive certain dental care.

For example, the upfront cost to get into the membership club might be \$99, and then the patient might pay, say, \$59 a month. For that fee, over the course of a year they receive two cleanings, exams, and necessary x-rays. They also receive a discount on out-of-pocket costs for any dental work they need.

**Based on my experience, here are the top four reasons I think every office should consider a membership club.**

**1. You won't lose patients just because they've lost insurance**—Have you ever had patients say they can't come for their scheduled visit because they lost their dental insurance? Patients think they can't visit the dentist if they don't have insurance. They assume there's no way they could afford out-of-pocket costs for dental work. A membership program solves this issue by giving your office the ability to keep patients in the schedule who normally would cancel due to no insurance. The membership program shows patients

how they can pay a small monthly amount for the work they need, which lets them come in for dental work without fearing the cost. I would rather our patients pay each month and come for their cleanings so they remain active patients, instead of having them cancel and not return until they have insurance again (or until they're in so much pain they can't put off a visit any longer).

**2. Membership helps patients prioritize their dental health**—If we can help patients avoid canceling their recare appointments because of out-of-pocket costs, we can help them improve or maintain their dental health. On the other hand, if patients don't visit us for a long time due to lack of insurance or high costs, small oral issues might become big issues. As their dental office, I would rather they visit regularly to maintain their health and fix issues while they're small, even if we do it at a discounted fee. Honestly, giving a discount is better than not seeing someone at all, and this means we help our patients maintain their dental health.

**3. Your team looks like the good guys because they focus on dental health, not on costs**—With our office using a membership club, my team is able to focus more on patients' dental health, whether they have insurance or not. I know how frustrating it can be when patients need dental care but put it off because they're worried about cost or not having insurance. Having a membership plan allows my team to do better at helping all patients move forward with treatment. Our patients appreciate that we have something in place to help them receive dental care. It puts us in a good light when we aren't so focused on the idea of dental insurance. It also helps improve patient loyalty because what they perceive as a good deal for them, in addition to putting the focus on patient care.

**4. You'll get more new patients with a membership plan**—There are two reasons that a membership club will bring more patients to your office. First, prospective patients with no insurance often worry about the price of a procedure they need. Having this membership program allows us to get these patients in for their dental care, which has helped increase our number of new patients.

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Second, because we decided to work with Illumitrac, we have the ability to name our membership program after our office. I did not realize that this would be a benefit when we started, but it's been a huge help. Basically, Illumitrac is a software that helps us with the administration behind the program, which not only saves our staff time, it allows us to name our program Scripps Rock Dental Membership Club.

Here's why this helps with new patients: when our patients talk with people who mention they don't have insurance, our patients tell them that our office offers a membership club as a benefit, and it seems like it's 100% ours. This has increased our number of new patient referrals that we might not have gotten before we offered this.

As you can tell, I'm very happy with our decision to implement this membership plan into our office. I wanted to take the time to share with others why it has worked for us. If you and your team are tired of patients cancelling because they lost their insurance, I highly recommend that you consider a membership club for your office.

Author: Laura Hatch, BS, MS, FAADOM | Published on: Dentistryiq.com  
Laura Hatch is the founder of Front Office Rocks, a leader in online front office training.



*This is a great deal on financing. Let's visit about some of the promotions we are running on this and other great equipment for our fiscal year end.*

## M11 UltraClave Sterilizer

Today, more than ever, you need instrument processing products that are reliable and simple to use. From the largest capacity to a 6-minute turnaround, Midmark dental sterilization equipment is designed to give you the flexibility and speed to get the big jobs done and the small jobs done fast. Simple one-step loading, push-button start, automatic drying and hassle-free maintenance – Midmark dental sterilizers go above and beyond.

Midmark M11 UltraClave Automatic Sterilizers are easy to operate and are time tested for reliability. To operate an M11 UltraClave simply load it, set it and forget it. Select the cycle and the time needed. Press "Start" and the sterilizer will fill with the correct amount of water. Once the sterilization process is complete, the door opens automatically and quietly to dissipate the steam, giving you a fast drying time for your instruments. Less complexity means better reliability and a cost effective solution. It's real convenience.



*At Patterson Dental, we often talk about creating a great "patient experience" and why this is so important in your practice. I think we can all agree that patient's purchasing habits have changed over the last few years. The question is have we adapted to our patients? Are we creating more value for our services and building stronger relationships? I want to do this in my business and also want to help you do this in your practice. I believe we have great ideas to share and help implement in your practice. Let's work together and reach our potential and have some fun in dentistry!*



# The Tonya Lewis Newsletter

Example Two



As your Patterson Dental representative, I'm committed to providing solutions that can benefit your practice — whether it's through innovative technology, dental equipment, consultative services, dental supplies or software. I hope you find some valuable tips and ideas in this edition of the newsletter!

- Tonya Lewis

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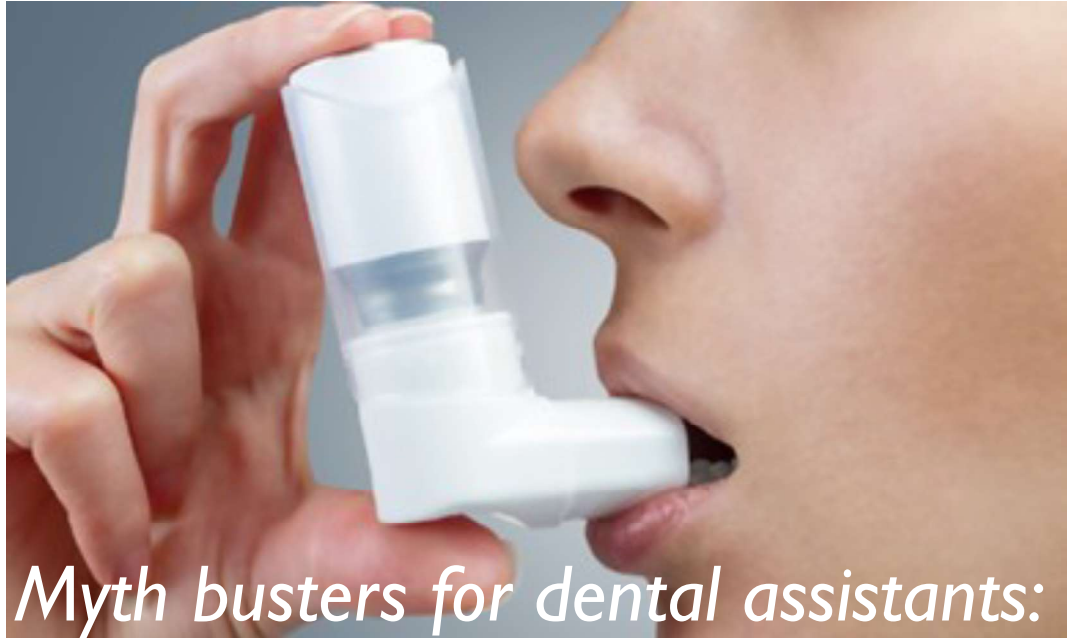
NUPRO FREEDOM® CORDLESS PROPHY PACKAGE WITH SMARTMODE® TECHNOLOGY AND FOOT PEDAL

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Questions arise when I am visiting dental practices regarding Cold Sterile. So, when I read this article on DentistryIQ.com, I thought it was very helpful and something worth sharing. The article was written by Tija Hunter.



## Myth busters for dental assistants: Cold sterile—glutaraldehyde

That crazy chemical referred to as “cold sterile,” in other words, glutaraldehyde, has been used for years in dentistry and in recent years has been the subject of much concern. Should you be worried? Before we talk about advantages and disadvantages, let's discuss the definitions of sterilant, disinfectant, and high-level disinfectants.

**Sterilant:** Physical or chemical agent or process that completely eliminates all forms of life, particularly microorganisms. This is needed for the really bad guys that cause diseases.

**Disinfectant:** An agent that destroys pathogens by physical or chemical means. Disinfection processes do not ensure the same levels associated with sterilization processes and can vary in how many microorganisms they kill.

The stronger pathogenic microorganisms usually need sterilization.

**High-level disinfection:** This is a process using a sterilant under less-than-sterilizing conditions. The process kills all forms of microbial life except for large numbers of bacterial spores.

Glutaraldehyde has been the go-to sterilant for years. It is classified as a high-level disinfectant. *When used properly*, it works just like the manufacturer says it does. Its properties as a chemical sterilant were initially recognized in the early 1960s as the industry looked for a safer alternative to formaldehyde. (Yes, I said formaldehyde!) In the years since its introduction as a disinfectant/sterilant,

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glutaraldehyde has been linked with a variety of adverse health effects including asthma, breathing difficulties, respiratory irritation, and skin rashes.

In some cases these issues can present immediately. In most cases, the long-term exposure creates a delay in reactions and causes concerns for oral health-care workers. The most serious adverse health reaction documented among oral health-care workers exposed to glutaraldehyde vapor is asthma, a chronic condition characterized by bronchial hyper-responsiveness.

**Exposure to glutaraldehyde usually occurs during the following activities:**

- ▶ Activating and pouring it into or out of the reservoir or container used to hold the solution
- ▶ Opening the container to immerse instruments
- ▶ Agitating the glutaraldehyde when removing or returning the basket
- ▶ Rinsing the instruments containing residual glutaraldehyde
- ▶ Handling the instruments that have just come out of the solution
- ▶ Disposing of used glutaraldehyde solutions to the water system

**What should be done to minimize exposure?**

Always wear your personal protective equipment (PPE), such as gloves, mask, and safety eyewear, and isolation gowns, lab coats, or aprons when working in the sterilization area. Think of these as standard precautions. Everything in that room should be considered harmful. Treat glutaraldehyde like everything else—with caution! Make sure you have proper ventilation and always follow the manufacturer's instructions for use.

**Why do we use it?**

Glutaraldehyde has long been used to disinfect medical equipment that cannot be subjected to sterilization due to intense heat. However, there are now alternatives, and not just in chemicals used. Due to increased awareness, we now have the ability to autoclave more items than ever before.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, dental instruments are classified into three categories according on the risk of transmitting infection. The classifications of critical, semi-critical, and noncritical are based on the following criteria:

1. **Critical** instruments are those used to penetrate soft tissue or bone, or enter into or contact the bloodstream or other normally sterile tissue. They should be sterilized after each use. Sterilization is achieved by steam under pressure (autoclaving), dry heat, or heat/chemical vapor. Critical instruments include forceps, scalpels, bone chisels, scalers, and surgical burs.
2. **Semi-critical** instruments are those that do not penetrate soft tissues or bone but contact mucous membranes or non-intact skin. These include mirrors, reusable impression trays, and amalgam condensers. These devices should be sterilized after each use.
3. **Non-critical** instruments are those that come into contact only with intact skin. These include the external components of x-ray heads, blood pressure cuffs, and pulse oximeters. Such devices have a relatively low risk of transmitting infection. Therefore, they may be reprocessed between patients by intermediate-level or low-level disinfection.

I've found that many offices are using a cold sterile solution for many things that are either disposable or that they can autoclave, and they don't realize it! Pay attention to what you put in your cold sterile. Are you positive something belongs there? Into which of the three categories above does it fall? Can you use a barrier on an object to protect it rather than use cold sterile? Also, single-use items should never, ever be reused!

Four years ago our office went cold sterile-free. We either autoclave or throw away items. The solution we use is expensive, takes up room on the counter, and is considered a hazardous material by the Environment Protection Agency (EPA). In some cities and counties you must call a waste management system to find out how to properly dispose of something. The answers will differ, but the office may need to have it collected and removed. Of course, this comes at a cost to the practice.

This is just one of the chemicals referred to as cold sterile. There are several others on the market today. Seriously examine what you use it for. Are there alternatives? Learn all you can about the solution you use and why you use it. You may surprise yourself and save yourself some health issues!

American Dental Accessories always has some great tips in their blog for dental equipment and I could not agree more with this information on compressors. We stand ready to provide a routine check on critical equipment in your office so that you have less downtime and more production. We want to be your first source for all things dental!

## How to Get the Most Life From Your Compressor

The compressor is one of the most important pieces of equipment in the dental office. We cannot overstate the importance of routine maintenance to keep your compressor running well. Not only will this help extend the life of your compressor, but it will also save money by saving energy.

Compressors use electricity, the harder they work the more electricity you will use. In addition to routine maintenance, how else can you reduce the load of your compressor and save electricity?

### PROBLEM: Leaks

Air leaks mean your compressor runs more frequently (in extreme cases constantly), which can not only lead to a shorter compressor life, but it is a tremendous waste of power. A telltale hiss will usually be your first sign of an air leak, but how do you find the leak so you can correct it? A simple method is to coat suspect joints or fittings with soapy water. Mix a solution of about 25% dish soap and 75% water and brush it onto suspect areas. If there is an air leak, the solution will bubble.

Worn or cracked hoses should be replaced. If the leak is near one end, you may be able to trim the hose and re-attach with a fresh end.

You should use Teflon tape where possible for threaded fittings, although Loctite (usually the yellow or blue formula) will work well too. Barb threads should be sealed with a washer gasket.

Worn o-rings can also result in leaks. Lubricate o-rings regularly with silicone lubricant to keep them supple and well sealed. Sometimes replacements are in order. Keep spares on hand.

### PROBLEM: Clogs

Clogged lines can put strain on your compressor. A classic symptom of a clog is rapidly dropping pressure.

It's common to have good pressure, but as soon as you use your handpiece the pressure rapidly drops off. You hang your handpiece up and a minute later you again have good pressure, but it again drops off quickly. This is classic obstruction behavior.

The line is obstructed and you will have minimal air flow.

While not in use, the "dribble" of air builds up into solid line pressure, but as soon as you begin to use it the pressure drops off, as the obstruction prevents maintaining line pressure for a prolonged period.

To find the clog you need to trace the line backwards from the point you've noticed a performance drop until you find solid consistent line pressure. The clog will usually be at the next junction, AFTER you've found good pressure again.

Make certain to check your filters regularly (we recommend every month) to help prevent clogs. You should have filters in your junction box.



Master On/Off Valve with Regulator, Gauge, & Filter

While you're in your junction box, you should double check your pressure. Most units recommend running at 80 psi of air. You should have a regulator with a gauge on it to indicate what your air pressure is. Excessive pressure can cause your compressor to run too frequently. Verify correct pressure on the gauge and then hold down the air button on your syringe and watch the gauge. Does the pressure hold steady? Does it decrease? If the pressure drops off, check for clogs (as above), but also check your compressor. The regulator in the units can only step the pressure down. It's very important that you have your regulators set to a pressure less than the output of your compressor; otherwise they may not actually be controlling pressure at all. To provide a steady 80 psi in the ops, your compressor should be set to 90-100 psi. Of course, you don't want your compressor set too high, so keep it within this range (barring special high

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*How to Get the Most Life From Your Compressor... Continued from Page 3*

-pressure equipment). If your compressor is set lower than 90-100psi, you will almost certainly fail to achieve proper pressure in your ops and can encounter a host of problems, like cross over.

Many things in the dental unit are air activated (including your water), so it's important that your air pressure isn't too low (actually, this is something we see more often than excessive pressure), but it's good to avoid excess; "more" isn't always better.

Of course, as with most things, try to make sure to turn units off when not in use to conserve power. If an op will be out of use for more than an hour, shut the unit off using the master toggle on the front of the unit. This will shut all air & water into the operatory off.

**PROBLEM: Moisture**

Moisture can have a horrendous effect on your compressor. Moisture can lead to corrosion of components, loss of pressure, and even cross-over affecting other equipment downstream. Make certain you have proper filtration and drying systems in place.

Many filtration and drying systems will have moisture indicators to show if it's time to replace elements. Check these indicators regularly and keep spare filter elements/drying media on hand.

After changing filters, it's a good idea to check indicators again to verify that the excess moisture is not in the system from some other source.

Many compressors will have a tank drain. Make sure this is operating properly and is drained every day.

Of course, it's also important that you get the correct compressor for your needs in the first place. A compressor that is too small will be working overtime and is likely to fail quite early. When purchasing a compressor, always pay attention to the user ratings. Dental compressors are rated for a number of "users." This number is equal to the number of dentists that

can be using a unit powered by the compressor at once. Hygienists are considered 1/2 user for purposes of compressor capacity. So, if you have a compressor rated for 3 users, you can have one dentist and 4 hygienists (1 + 4 x 1/2), or 2 dentists and 2 hygienists, or any of a number of other permutations.

The compressor is the heart of the dental practice, getting the most out of it will not only save by helping to minimize down time, but can help you save electricity and keep it beating for the life of the practice. So be sure to keep up with routine maintenance, watch your pressure at the compressor and in the ops, listen for leaks and make sure your air is dry.

Article at: [amerdental.com/blog/tech-tips-53](http://amerdental.com/blog/tech-tips-53)

**NUPRO Freedom® Cordless Prophy Package with SmartMode® Technology and Foot Pedal**

NUPRO Freedom® Cordless Prophy Package with SmartMode® Technology and Foot Pedal provides enhanced control, comfort, freedom and choice. SmartMode® Technology provides the latest advance in polishing speed control, without the need for buttons or foot pedals, while the foot pedal included in the package allows clinicians a choice in how they control the polishing speed, allowing for a more traditional experience.

- **Cordless design**
- **Electric motor reduces noise and vibration**
- **Battery operated via long-lasting lithium battery**



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