

Decision-Making for Multiple Prescription Dentistry

Presenter: Kevin D. Huff, DDS, MAGD

Presentation format: Lecture and Discussion (3 hours)

Intended Audience: Dentists, Dental Hygienists, Dental Assistants

Course Synopsis and Objectives:

Modern techniques and treatment modalities in dentistry today create unprecedented opportunities for therapeutic choices for treatment. The dental professional has an ethical obligation to provide appropriate care at an acceptable level of quality, while today's patient is much more aware of their treatment choices than ever before. The dental professional must weigh patient desires against what is in the best interest for the patient. This course is designed to address this dilemma with an objective decision-making methodology to diagnosis and treatment planning, focusing on three particular areas of dental care as examples.

One of the areas of significant controversy today is in the area of fixed prosthodontics. Esthetic demands of the modern patient along with expectations of restoration longevity have led to challenging approaches to dental occlusion. Advances in dental implant therapy and design offer an alternative to conventional fixed partial denture therapy or heroic post and core therapy, but the decision about which of these treatment alternatives is most appropriate for a given situation is often difficult. An appropriate approach to therapy must be based on ethical decision-making.

Another ethical challenge for clinicians today is how to appropriately treat a patient who is resistant to necessary periodontal therapy. Ultimately, the choice of treatment rendered or not rendered by the clinician must be based on a personal philosophical decision. However, application of an objective decision-making methodology based on ethics greatly assists clinicians in applying their philosophy appropriately.

Lastly, controversy surrounds the use of adjunctive oral cancer screening technologies. Although it is generally accepted that a conventional oral cancer exam is an essential component of a general dental exam, recently developed technologies are touted to enhance and facilitate this screening process. Again, the decision to implement these adjunctive technologies in patient care should be ethically based, using an objective methodology.

The intention of this course is to discuss the application of the principles outlined in the *ADA Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct*, as they have been outlined in several of the speaker's columns published in *Dental Economics*, *Dentistry Today*, *Parkell Today* and *General Dentistry*, to diagnosis and treatment planning in an interactive venue.

Upon the completion of this course, attendees should be able to:

- Understand and discuss basic principles of dental ethics
- Apply objective decision-making methodology to any dental therapy
- Discuss currently available adjunctive oral cancer screening devices and be able to argue why or why not they would be appropriate in their practice
- Understand how the implementation of a systematic periodontal diagnosis may facilitate the development of an ethical periodontal treatment approach