



go probe
through the
breakdowns

Go-Probe eliminates the breakdowns and frustrations clinicians face while attempting to maintain the standard of care in their practices.

Are dental offices across the country providing adequate assessment of each patient's periodontal condition? Is the general population receiving treatment of periodontal conditions in a timely fashion? Do clinicians evaluate the effectiveness of completed periodontal therapy in an acceptable manner?

The answers to the previous questions should be, "Yes", however the answers are all too often, "No".

The American Academy of Periodontology has stated 73% of dental offices do not diagnose periodontal disease. According to the American Dental Association, 50% of the offices diagnosing periodontal disease do not probe on a regular basis. This means, at best, 13.5% of dental offices across the country are delivering the periodontal probing standard of care to patients.

Why is this number so shockingly low? After speaking with many dental

personnel the cause of the situation seems to point to a breakdown in patient education, execution of periodontal treatment and follow-through after active therapy. If even just one of these critical elements is missing, patients fall through the proverbial cracks and do not receive the care necessary to ensure periodontal health.

Consider first, the role of education. A hygienist's formal education provides instruction regarding periodontal disease. This learning involves gaining necessary skills. The first and foremost skill to be obtained is that of periodon-

tal probing and recording of discovered conditions. Periodontal probing is an essential process for determination of the periodontal situation. This process informs both the patient and clinician of past periodontal occurrences as well as current periodontal state. Current standard of care requires patients to receive six-point periodontal probing and charting on, at minimum, an annual basis. Completion of this task on a regular basis allows disease to be caught at an early stage, which results in more successful treatment outcomes. Careful evaluation of data collected during the probing and charting process allows the clinician to make appropriate treatment recommendations. Patient education must be delivered once this task is completed and is paramount to gaining treatment acceptance. Breakdowns in this process typically occur, through no fault of the clinician, when:

- There is not enough time available for periodontal probing and charting to be accomplished
- There is not another person available in the office to assist with charting process
- No time remains before the completion of the appointment to adequately provide patient education
- Lack of a sound office periodontal protocol

If clinicians are not able to execute treatment, the patient remains in a diseased state. Current research supports that active periodontal disease affects more than just the health of the mouth. Leaving this disease untreated increases the possibility of heart attack, stroke, lung infections and diabetes just to name a few. These types of findings

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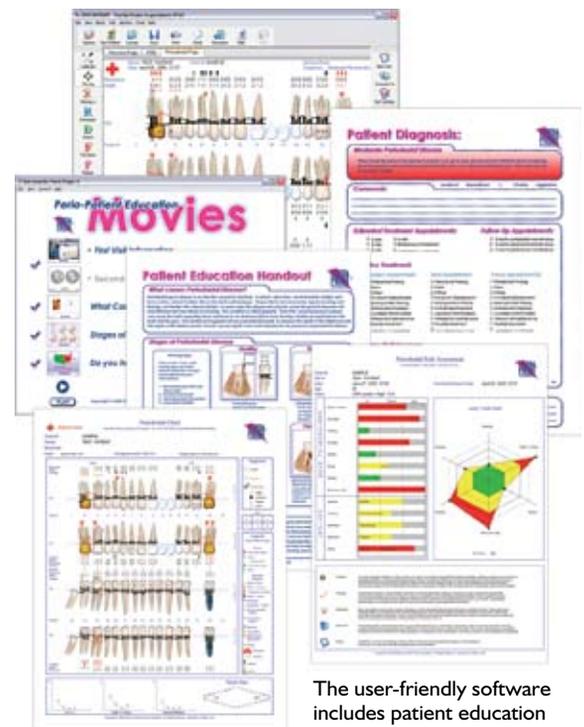
make the role of periodontal disease assessment, treatment and follow-up about more than the possibility of saving a few teeth. It becomes the possibility of saving a life. Patients who are aware of this information will choose to do the right thing. The lack of execution can stem from many situations. The following breakdowns are common throughout the country:

- Clinician is unsure of what to say to convince patient to accept recommended treatment
- The clinician may not want to deliver potentially bad news to the patient
- Lack of a sound office periodontal protocol
- Necessary equipment is not available

There are instances where the clinician delivers the required patient education and executes therapy, but does not follow through after treatment. Without proper follow through, the clinician and patient cannot know if treatment outcomes are favorable. Furthermore, it is essential for a patient who has had active peri-

odontal disease to have his or her periodontal condition monitored routinely to ensure continued oral and systemic health. When follow up is not accomplished it is usually due to breakdowns related to:

- Patients feeling follow up is not necessary
- Clinician not having access to good system for monitoring progress
- A lack of a sound office periodontal protocol



The user-friendly software includes patient education movies and generates several take-home handouts.

Florida Probe understands the breakdowns and frustrations clinicians face while attempting to maintain the standard of care in their offices and has come up with a solution to these issues. The solution is “Go-Probe.”



The Go-Probe Wireless Keypad is so easy to use, you can even ask the patient to input the numbers as you probe.

- Go-Probe is an icon driven data input device. This allows the clinician the ability to probe and chart without the assistance of another person. This solves one of the biggest road blocks to compliance with the standard of care requirement. If clinicians can probe and chart themselves quickly and efficiently, they

are more apt to probe and chart.

- Pocket depths, bleeding points, areas of suppuration, etc. are voiced by the computer, which serves as an authoritative third party. The computer takes the delivery of bad news off the hygienist. The patient hears results from the computer and the hygienist offers the solution to the problem. This makes the hygienist a hero rather than a bearer of bad news.
- Go-Probe includes software that:
 - > Provides patient education regarding periodontal disease
 - > Assists with the development of a periodontal diagnosis
 - > Assists with determining treatment recommendations
 - > Provides legal documentation to safeguard practices from litigation for not diagnosing periodontal disease
 - > Provides an easy-to-read periodontal chart
 - > Allows periodontal charting and probing to be compared with previous charting and probing to assess improvement or regression in periodontal condition
 - > Assesses patient risk for acquiring periodontal disease

Use of the Go-Probe improves patient education, treatment acceptance, and case follow up. This has a positive impact on the health

of patients and the day-to-day clinical operations of the hygienist/staff. Go-Probe also provides all the elements necessary to incorporate a sound periodontal program. All these components allow dental offices to improve their periodontal standard of care.

While Go-Probe addresses common breakdowns viewed from the clinical side, there is also a benefit on the production side. As periodontal education and case acceptance increase, hygiene production inevitably will also increase. In today's economic climate, many dental offices are looking for a way to increase production. Thoughts may turn to adding the sale of products, offering new services and seeking out more new patients. A logical win-win way to increase production is to incorporate Go-Probe and increase periodontal production with existing patients.

Go-Probe is the obvious solution to eradicate the breakdowns plaguing assessment, treatment and effectiveness of periodontal protocols. ■



ANGIE STONE, RDH BS, has been in the dental profession for over 24 years. She has had articles published in several magazines and journals, including:

Dentistry Today, Woman's Dentist Journal, RDH Magazine, Modern Hygienist, Nursing Matters, and Featured Hygienist In Access (ADHA Official Publication). She currently serves as Director of Hygiene for McKenzie management and is also the Editor-in-Chief of Hygiene Tribune.

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