

Multispeciality Dental Clinics - An Integrated Service towards a Better Dental Care

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ABSTRACT

With existing proficient experienced dental clinicians and new skilled dentists passing out every year from numerous government and private dental colleges in the country, India has plenty of dental professionals catering the needs of ever growing Indian population. With the advent of specialization courses and MDS degree, post graduate dental professionals are limiting their practice to a single discipline and focusing on a running a super-specialty practice rather than inter-disciplinary approach to dental practice. Inter-disciplinary approach involves several disciplines collectively identifying a problem, collaboratively diagnosis the condition and devising and executing a treatment plan in coalition. Advantages of multispeciality clinics for doctors include division of capital, easier diagnosis, better and easier treatment, easier to maintain records of all the types of treatments performed on the patients, easier management of mid-treatment complications and sharing of knowledge amongst the dentists. Patient is benefited by a better treatment. Patient does not have to visit several dentists for the treatment and get the entire treatment done under one roof thus maximizing patient comfort. Multispeciality dental clinic is currently the need of the society.

Keywords: Multispeciality dental clinic, dental care

INTRODUCTION

Dental health care system in India is flourishing. With existing proficient

experienced dental clinicians and new skilled dentists passing out every year from numerous government and private dental colleges in the country, India has plenty of dental professionals catering the needs of ever growing Indian population. Our country offers numerous specialization degree and certificate courses where a dental professional can master individual branches of dentistry like Orthodontics, Endodontics and Conservative dentistry, Pedodontics, Public Health Dentistry, Oral Medicine and Radiology, Prosthodontics, Periodontology, Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery and Oral Pathology. However with the advent of specialization courses and MDS degree, post graduate dental professionals are limiting their practice to a single discipline and focusing on a running a super-specialty practice rather than inter-disciplinary approach to dental practice. Interdisciplinary (ID) may be described as the mutual permeation of various specialties accompanied by expansion of the scope of each. This article advocates a dental set up where several super-specialists work together as a team in a multi-disciplinary dental clinic.

What is inter-disciplinary approach to dental practice?

Inter-disciplinary approach involves several disciplines collectively identifying a problem, collaboratively diagnosis the condition and devising and executing a treatment plan in coalition. Consider a

patient having multiple impacted teeth. This case can be diagnosed and treated better if a specialist in oral medicine and radiology, oral surgery, orthodontics and prosthodontics work together. A post graduate in oral medicine and radiology will help diagnosing the etiology and associated syndromes with the impacted teeth, radiologist would help determining the depth, site and angulation of impaction, thickness of the bone, surrounding vital structures which would eventually determine the fate of the impacted teeth. Few impacted teeth can be surgically exposed by oral surgeons and orthodontically brought into the oral cavity by the orthodontist or the oral surgeons can surgically extract the teeth with poor prognosis. Prosthodontists can then replace the missing teeth and restore the function of the patient. Thus the patient receives best diagnosis and treatment under one roof.

Why inter-disciplinary or multispecialty dental clinic?

Advantages for the dentist:

Financial Ease:

1. The capital needed to set up a new clinic is quite high owing to a steep rise in prices of dental equipments. If specialists come together and collectively open up a dental clinic, the capital is divided amongst the specialists making it more economical for the dentists.
Similarly, increasing rent or price of lands/ shops is also a grave problem for the dentist. This can be solved by teaming up and opening up a clinic.
2. Various taxes and registration fees like authorization of Biomedical Waste Management, Shops and Establishment Act, permission to use/ procure spirit under State Excise Department etc; collectively make setting up and running a clinic expensive. These expenses can be shared by the different dentists in the multidisciplinary approach.
3. Fees for dental and medical undergraduate and postgraduate courses are very high. When students pass out,

they are financial drained to start up their own clinic. Collaborative clinics help students overcome this problem.

Better treatment:

4. Communication is easier when the specialists are working under the same roof. There are minimal errors which are very common in cases where patients are referred to a different specialist due to lack of communication. Eg: An implantologist requires optimal space for putting an implant for a missing tooth. The adjacent teeth have migrated in the extraction space and he refers the patient to an orthodontist for opening up the space. The orthodontist finds it difficult to create desired amount of space as it is beyond the constraints of a normal desirable orthodontic tooth movement. This problem would have been avoided if the doctors had good communication with each other.
5. There are procedures where different disciplines are dependent on each other. If one of the specialist is unavailable or if the patient delays or skips his visit to the specialist, it may have negative effects on the treatment.
Eg: If the above example is taken other way round, if an orthodontist has finished his treatment and has planned for an implant for a congenitally missing lateral incisor. He created sufficient space for the same. However, the patient delayed the visit to the implantologist and the space closed down by few millimeters making implant placement difficult.
6. Management of mid-treatment flare-ups or complications is more easily possible. e.g.: if an orthodontic mini-implant fractures during placement, an oral surgeon can readily take care of it in office.
7. Best diagnosis is possible when specialists are under one roof.

Sharing of resources and knowledge

8. Increase in knowledge of dentists due to contribution of knowledge from different specialist.

Increased patient flow:

9. Every specialist has his own contacts and thus every specialists would contribute to the patient flow thus collectively the patient flow is added up and maximized.

Ease of function

10. Easier to maintain records of different records of various treatments.
11. Follow ups are easier.

Advantages for the patient:

1. Patient gets best service.
2. Patient doesn't have to roam from one specialist to other from different sort of treatment thus saving patient's time and effort.
3. Better treatment achieved for the patient with the help of different specialists coming together.
4. Easier for patients to take appointments, maintain records and maintain a track of the treatment as everything takes place under the same roof.
5. With life getting busier, one stop clinics are of a great comfort for the patients.

CONCLUSION

Multispeciality dental clinics have a great upper hand over single speciality dental clinics as it adds up to patient's ease and comfort. Better diagnosis and treatment is achieved and it is easier to keep a track of the different dental procedures performed on the patients. The dentists mutually can help each other grow by sharing capital, knowledge and contributing to the patient

flow. The current situation in the country demands multispeciality clinics.

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