

Decontamination in the fast lane

Principal of the Archway Dental Practice in Dursley, Steve Clark, explains why the correct siting of decontamination facilities in a busy practice speeds up workflow and can play a positive part in building patient confidence

Archway Dental Practice in Dursley, Gloucestershire has nine surgeries and something in the region of 25,000 registered patients. To describe it as busy is rather like describing Lewis Hamilton as being 'quite a fast driver'.

The place buzzes and its Principal, Steve Clark, sets demanding standards for its efficiency: "One of my highest priorities is decontamination. Not only do we have to be in line with HTM01-05, we also have to have a workflow procedure that is, to all intents and purposes, foolproof. Sadly decontamination is still seen as the Cinderella of dentistry but I believe that unless it is addressed correctly it is difficult to maintain a professional image."

Steve talked to a number of dental suppliers about the best siting and layout for his decontamination facility. It soon became apparent to him that, whilst most sales people were more than capable of selling him any number of washer disinfectors, autoclaves and the like, when it came to understanding procedures and protocol, they were flummoxed.

So finding Paradigm Design Solutions and talking to someone who actually understood dentistry was a pleasant surprise for Steve: "Gavin Willis was, and is, a revelation. We clicked from the start and his ability to assess and use available space (even when there appears to be none) is without equal".

The reality is that Gavin was determined to get to grips with the intricacies and the implications of HTM01-05 almost as soon as it was mooted. While Paradigm's competitors simply saw it as a welcome opportunity to sell washroom products, Gavin and his team focused on issues such as the positioning of the decontamination facility within the practice, minimising downtime, maximising energy efficiency and training staff.

All this experience and commitment has meant that LDU's (Local Decontamination Units) designed and fitted by Paradigm knock the spots off their competitors. "We're talking chalk and cheese here", says Steve, "you have only to look at Paradigm's attention to detail such as its cassette system for hand instruments, to appreciate why the decontamination rooms Gavin designs have such a dramatic and immediate impact on operational efficiency. It is no exaggeration to say our practice runs like clockwork"

The LDU at Archway itself optimises workflow and turnaround of hand instruments. One decontamination nurse supervises the facility and the entire nursing team has received comprehensive training from Paradigm. So pleased are Steve and his team that they proudly show patients where and how instruments are washed and sterilised. Far from being 'out-of-bounds', they see the LDU as a confirmation of the care they take with the health of their patients. And, of course, patients tell their friends.....

“Where so many dental suppliers struggle, Gavin calmly solves problems and comes up with solutions that work. He is with you all the way through the process and gives you informed, expert advice and on-going support. I would recommend Gavin and Paradigm wholeheartedly,” concludes Steve.

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