

Article 6

See your practice in a different light

Rarely will a patient comment on the lighting in a dental practice. Unless, of course, they trip down some unlit stairwell; but that's unlikely.

So for the dentist the lighting in a practice is no big deal, as long as everyone can see what they're doing. Right?

Wrong? And (as you might expect) I'm going to tell you why.

1. Poor lighting can suggest you've something to hide!!
2. In contrast, good lighting can highlight particular features/areas, enhancing where necessary
3. Modern, controllable LED lighting can, at the touch of a button:
 - set the mood
 - set the colour of lighting for taking shades of teeth
 - be reduced in intensity to avoid premature setting of composites
 - be set to maximum brightness for cleaners
4. Lighting can play a positive role in helping point patients in the direction you want them to go
5. An interior designer will utilise lighting to help create the mood and ambience of the practice. In conjunction with good quality paint, the right lighting will bring out subtleties in the pigment and depth of colour
6. Sympathetic lighting will create a restful atmosphere that will help patients relax
7. Appropriate lighting can give the impression of greater space
8. Good lighting can help reinforce your branding, your professionalism and your efficiency. Poor lighting simply says your practice looks tired.
9. Remember that natural light varies throughout the year. Work with your designer to create lighting that reflects the seasons
10. Obvious point of course, but bulbs that need changing and/or lights that don't work say a lot about your practice.....and none of it good. Same applies to dusty, dirty shades and appliances
11. Finally and again obviously, ensure that your lighting is functional, meets the needs of you and your staff, avoids eye strain and helps them do their job efficiently and effectively.

There may be other considerations of course. The type and age of your building should certainly be taken into account and your patient profile may be a factor. All these points will be borne in mind by an interior designer who knows dentistry and how it works best.