

Bruxism Monitoring and Dental Sleep Medicine

Growing Your Practice's Revenue

Treatment for bruxism and obstructive sleep apnea (OSA) have advanced in recent years to include more therapeutic options including a more central role for dentists.

Potentially, 1 in 5 of your patients has sleep apnea and may or may not be diagnosed.¹ And now that dentists are coming to the frontlines in the treatment of OSA, this presents a unique position to start integrating treatment into your practice. Since this service is more contemporary than common practices in a dental office, you need to get your entire team involved. From your Front Desk to your Hygienist and even your Office Manager, they should all be a collaborative group to make integrating dental sleep medicine into your practice as successful as possible. This quickly growing field can significantly increase your revenue by following a few simple steps.

My team and I completed the AAFE Bruxism Therapy / Obstructive Sleep Apnea and Medical Billing course on-demand. I then used the Medicare enrollment specialists at STATDDS for Medicare Part B Enrollment and a DME provider. The courses were very thorough, much better than any other course I have ever taken and took all the mystery out of the entire process. This knowledge has provided a new source of patient treatment and revenue which is quickly reaching a level of increasing our production by 50%. My thanks to everyone at AAFE and STATDDS.

- Dr. I. Stier, New York

Choosing a Proper Continuing Education Course

Most importantly, you need to find a proper training program that . Dental sleep medicine involves working with Physicians to coordinate treatment and they are expecting a level of

¹ <http://somnomed.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/SomnoMed-eBook-Grow-Your-Sleep-Practice.pdf>

knowledge that is collaborative with their training. Here are a few key features to look for when choosing a course:

1. Offer in-depth training on OSA and the different treatment options available to patients.
2. Integrate medical billing into your practice and learn how to avoid the pitfalls of outsourcing or even receiving reimbursement. This is a reimbursement source that patients are entitled to and can add significant revenue and case acceptance to your practice.
3. Networking is a must. You can gain referrals for dental sleep patients in addition to potential referrals for your dental practice as a whole.
4. Courses that offer insight into marketing and the pitfalls which may happen should also be taken into consideration. It is important to know when not to oversell yourself and what kind of cases you can handle. This should be true in any continuing education course for new services and procedures you pursue.

Create Goals

If you were to stay with the idea that even a fifth of your patients have OSA, you could choose not to add any additional money to your marketing budget and could look forward to profits ranging from \$3,000-\$3,500 per patient.² You don't even need to start with an extensive goal, yet confidence and the capability of both you and your team evaluating and consulting with your patients is what will build your revenue. By creating goals for your practice, you have a greater prospect of success. Training your team properly, assuring you are appropriately

² <http://www.aadsm.org/>

aware of medical billing issues, and networking with Physicians is essential to integrating dental sleep medicine in your practice and almost any dentist is capable of doing so. Additionally, creating a brand identity can serve you well; Patients will come to expect that you are interested and capable of taking care of them in a multi-level approach to their health by be able to refer them to capable Physicians and working with those Physicians to create a health plan that can change someone's life. Dental Sleep Medicine doesn't have to be overwhelming or difficult to integrate into your current practice by taking the initial step of finding a course that is right for you.³

The Bottom Line

The big challenge with dental sleep medicine is that sleep apnea must be diagnosed by a physician, not a dentist. Most patients with sleep apnea exhibit significant bruxism which is the brain's mechanism to open their airway during sleep. Bruxism is a dental condition which can be diagnosed by a dentist. Bruxism monitoring and therapy is the key component and bridge to collaborating with physicians and being able to deliver oral appliances that can treat both conditions at the same time. The American Academy of Facial Esthetics is the only program which combines bruxism therapy and dental sleep medicine to insure that dental professionals can work in conjunctions with physicians as co-providers of treatment and insure the best possible patient outcomes. This is also important so that dentists stay within their scope of dental practice and satisfy state dental board requirements.

³ <http://www.dentalsleepnetwork.net/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/Report-Facts-About-DSN.pdf>

Dental Sleep Medicine is a great opportunity to better serve your patients, expand your services, increase production, and grow your revenue. Now that dental professionals are at the front line of OSA treatment, it makes sense more now than ever to welcome the possibilities of what it can do for your practice. With no large, up-front investments and proper training available, your practice can easily achieve this success.