

HOW TO ATTRACT, GROW AND RETAIN YOUR PATIENTS IN 2022



Dr Tony Saad, owner and lead dentist at Dental Avenue Maroubra and Dental Avenue Parramatta talks with Henry Schein NSW Sales Manager, Rushan Dissanayake, on how Guided Biofilm Therapy (GBT) has maximised his revenues and efficiencies. Six months was all Dr Saad needed to start earning money on his investment. Learn how you can calculate a return with GBT immediately and continue to do so year after year.

Rushan Dissanayake: Guided Biofilm Therapy is rapidly growing around the world as clinicians see the power that GBT has to grow their businesses. Can you tell me a little more about what GBT is?

Dr Tony Saad: If you don't yet know about GBT, you must be living under a rock. GBT is truly a game changer for prevention and maintenance in the dental practice. In a nutshell, GBT denotes a method of biofilm management using AIRFLOW®, PERIOFLOW® and PIEZON® technologies in the least abrasive, most efficient and most comfortable method achievable. Clinicians traditionally debride biofilm and calculus simultaneously using repetitive, overlapping strokes followed by polishing pastes. GBT is a systematic, predictable method of biofilm management featuring the intentional removal of biofilm above and below the gumline using minimally invasive powder prior to the removal of calcified deposits. Since we're removing biofilm early in the appointment, total debridement time is less, which allows extra time for additional services and patient education.

Rushan Dissanayake: Patient education is a big part of GBT. How is this so?

Dr Tony Saad: Disclosing is an important step of a GBT appointment. It gets the patients engaged. Patients learn why oral care is so important, what happens in their mouth, how they can clean and better manage their teeth and gums at home. With GBT the dental hygiene appointment is more personalised. As a result, patients come back to their recall visits, very excited to see whether their oral care has improved since their prior appointment. Pre-GBT, it was much harder to achieve recall as patients were less motivated as they had less knowledge about their

oral care. With GBT, it's much easier and profitable to get patients into a recall system. We also ensure all our team are across our recall system – everyone from our nurses to our front office staff received a GBT treatment so they know how to explain it to customers, the passion that they feel for GBT, gets our patients excited as well. Having the team come together, regularly reviewing our interactions with customers, ensure that our recall system works successfully.

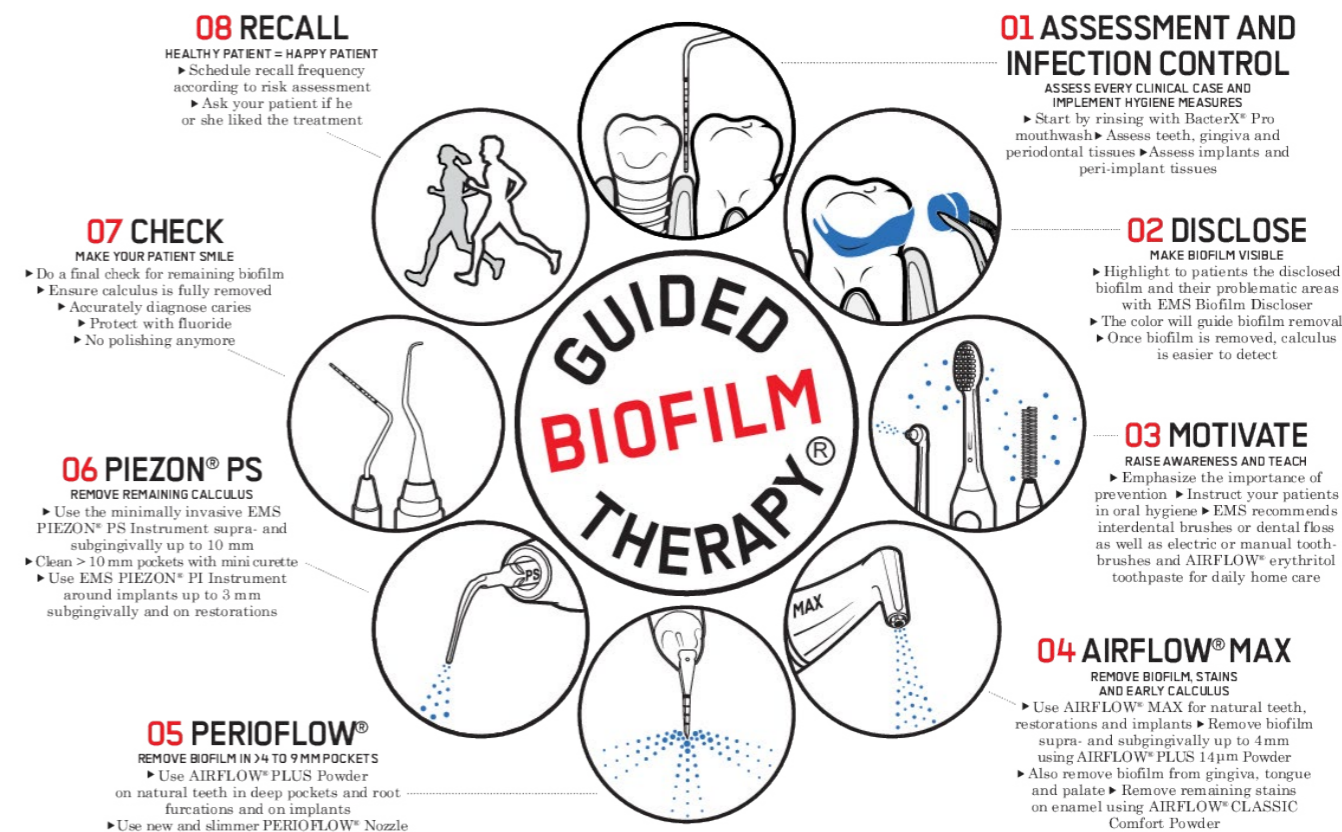
Rushan Dissanayake: How were you first introduced to GBT?

Dr Tony Saad: In 2019 when my lead hygienist, Kimiko, first trialled GBT, it blew her mind. Clinically it didn't take too much time to convince me. However, being a businessman, I asked her how do we recover the cost for it? We started considering a couple of ways to cover the costs including modifying our patient billing, itemising our procedures as we realised that we weren't itemising all our treatments and putting in place a monthly reporting system such as measuring recall percentages, income generated, new patients' percentage and their source of referral etc. We ordered a GBT machine for each clinic in the first instance and set up a thorough hygiene KPI program.

Rushan Dissanayake: What were the initial KPIs and how are these KPIs tracking now?

Dr Tony Saad: The targets we put in place were about ensuring we were covering all the costs involved when implementing GBT, this includes the capital equipment cost, on-going consumable costs and annual service costs. The targets we set out were, increasing the number of new patients attending the practice yearly by 30%, increasing the percentage of patient referrals to 50% of total source of referrals yearly, increasing the number of cleans done per year by 50%, increasing chair utilisation to a minimum of 85% per clinician and achieving a ROI on the GBT Machine of no less than 30%.

Rushan Dissanayake: Did you face any challenges during the implantation?



Dr Tony Saad: As you know, it's not always rainbows and butterflies in a dental surgery. We had challenges but it was a very small price to play to put in place the best prevention and maintenance program our practice has ever seen. We had to introduce a brand-new system to patients. Patients had been so used to our scaling, polishing and fluoride system but the machine speaks for itself. Once patients experienced GBT, they were easily convinced that there was no better way to clean their teeth.

Rushan Dissanayake: What has been the patient feedback since implementing GBT?

Dr Tony Saad: The general feedback from customers is that there was a significant improvement in their comfort especially patients with hypersensitivity, patients with periodontal pockets, extrinsic staining or root sensitivity. Patient satisfaction improved as the end results were shiny white clean healthy teeth in a much more comfortable appointment. Patients also feel they are getting more value for their money as they appreciate the additional care that's being provided and since the appointment is personalised, they are engaged and don't feel as though they are being lectured to. Since patients are more engaged, they are more motivated to keep their teeth clean, so we've noticed a massive improvement in patient oral hygiene and a noticeable decrease in extrinsic staining.

Rushan Dissanayake: With the challenges that were experienced with COVID lockdowns, were you able to generate a positive ROI?

Dr Tony Saad: We looked at the tangible costs of implementing GBT and how that relates to the value GBT brings our practice and over the initial 6-month introduction period of GBT in 2019, our ROI was 23%. The ROI was positive, meaning the investment was already covering the cost of having the GBT Machine in the practice and contributing to the profits in the practice, after only 6 months!

Then looking over the period 2020 and 2021 (during two large interruptions in the practice due to COVID lockdowns in both years), the ROI was a positive 32.37%. As a result, it was a very positive outcome for us.

Rushan Dissanayake: Besides the positive return on investment, were your other initial targets achieved?

Dr Tony Saad: The targets we achieved were quite impressive. We found that patients were making more recall appointments, and these were being made immediately so we spent a great deal less time following up. Patients were also booking 2 appointments, booking their hygiene follow up and an appointment for fillings/implants or whitening. So, we have had an increase in the overall practice turnover and profitability – this has been attributable to the hygiene departments. We have had an increase in



the number of new patients attending the practice by over 30% and a huge increase in the number of cleans done yearly by 50%. That's a staggering figure given that we'd effectively lost 3 months' worth of hygiene appointments due to COVID in both years. I checked and double checked those figures and I'm just amazed at the outcome. In addition, we had an increase in the percentage of patient referrals by 100%. Patients referring patients more than doubled in the last 2 years. That's one of the greatest compliments you can have as a clinician, when a patient refers a friend or family member because they declare the work you have done is special and worth sharing. The practice team have also never worked better. The outcomes and results we have achieved were not achieved by the clinicians alone, it was a group team effort. All team members work together to support the practice and support patients to help them understand the benefits of regular appointments.

Rushan Dissanayake: What would you say to clinicians who haven't implemented GBT?

Dr Tony Saad: Do it. Growth in our hygiene department has surpassed the ability of our existing GBT Machines so we have now purchased another unit for each practice as we had clinicians all vying for access to the GBT Machines. Patients request GBT and when our device may be out of action for an annual service, patients will rebook their appointments as they don't want to have the 'old clean'. A return of investment can be easily achieved and quickly and believe me, I have included every possible cost including servicing and O-rings. However, whilst measuring ROI is an indication of success in cost recovery, make sure you always look at the big picture.

GBT machines can be a self-sufficient investment if you have the systems and targets put in place and these are reviewed and looked at frequently. It's amazing how GBT has improved our systems and getting our whole team on board has been a huge win. GBT has impacted our practice in a positive way, and I'm convinced it will for you too.

Check out Dr. Tony Saad's webinar on Dental Education Hub: dentaleducationhub.com.au

To learn more about GBT and book a free trial in your practice visit: professional.airflowdentalspa.com.au

Dr. Tony Saad

BDS from Sydney University in 1992. For many years he has owned and operated several successful dental practices located in Sydney.

Holds a Master of Business Administration (MBA) at the Australian Graduate School of Management (AGSM), 2003.

Tony consulted to several international dental organisations. This has provided Tony with an array of experiences that range from the new dental product launch in the Australian market to the tailoring of specific in practice protocols.

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