



PRACTICE PROFILE

DENTAL PRACTICE

32 Pearls Family Dentistry
Granger, Ind.

Avis Barker, DMD

OFFICE

Square feet: 2,500

EQUIPMENT

- Accutron Guardian II Manifold System
- Accutron Digital Ultra Flushmount - Central System
- A-dec 311 Chair
- A-dec 511 Chair
- A-dec Accessory and Treatment Consoles
- A-dec 1601 Doctor's Stool
- A-dec 1622 Assistant's Stool
- A-dec 542 Side Delivery Units
- A-dec Preference ICC Sterilization Center
- A-dec Assistina Plus
- A-dec W&H Handpieces
- Midmark PowerAir/PowerVac System Package

Dentistry for the Whole Family

- Midmark M11 Sterilizer
- PLANMECA Dual Track and Trolleys with One SingLED Light and Monitor Mount
- PLANMECA ProOne Digital Pan
- PLANMECA Intraoral X-rays

TECHNOLOGY

- DigitalDoc IRIS Intraoral Camera
- Eaglesoft Practice Management Software
- Schick Elite Sensors

Located in Granger, Ind., 32 Pearls Family Dentistry truly lives up to its name. From the waiting area to the back of the practice, Avis Barker, DMD, designed every aspect of her five-operatory, 2,500-square-foot practice with families in mind.

In the waiting area, a kids-only nook puts children at ease, without making adult patients feel like they're in a pediatric office. Two entry doors to the operatories in the back of the practice – a standard door for adults and a smaller door just for children – make every patient feel at home. Dr. Barker's warm personality also contributes to the welcoming atmosphere at 32 Pearls. "She has a smile that can light up a room," said Equipment Specialist John Link.

Taking charge

In 2007, Dr. Barker joined a pediatric dental center immediately after graduating from dental school. There she met Luke Matz, who was the Patterson sales representative for the practice she was working for. Matz discussed different options with Dr. Barker about opening her own practice. "I explained to her the potential for starting out young and encouraged her to do it while the economy was down and building costs were lower," said Matz.

In the spring of 2010, Dr. Barker's employer forced her to make a difficult decision between working at one of its other locations with a much longer commute or cutting back to part-time at the current location. With a young son at home, Dr. Barker knew that neither option would be the right choice for her family. However, practice ownership would allow her to take charge of her location and hours.

After making the decision to go solo, Dr. Barker turned to Matz for his support and expertise. He introduced Dr. Barker to Link, who worked with her to find the best and most affordable location for her new practice. They conducted market research and toured more than 25 different locations in the Granger area, but Dr. Barker was discouraged by the high rental prices. She found one location in a strip mall that she liked; however, she felt a little uneasy with the price and held off on signing a lease.

She was driving through Granger one day when she spotted a vacancy in a strip mall just off a busy intersection. She toured the space, which was previously a bar, and found it to be ideal for her dental practice. The building's owner was equally excited to have a reputable dental professional in the building and offered her a great deal on the lease. She signed it immediately.

Smart equipment choices

Since she was just starting out on her own, Link took Dr. Barker on a VIP trip to the A-dec facility so she could try out different chairs and operatory configurations. Dr. Barker was unsure whether she wanted to work with children or adults, but the trip helped her to envision a family-friendly environment where she could care for patients of all ages.

The doctor opted to initially equip only two of her five operatories with A-dec chairs and cabinetry. She qualified to be a part of the A-dec volume discount plan, which allows customers to receive a »



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– John Link, *Equipment Specialist*



volume discount on all equipment orders placed within a year of the original equipment order date. Further details about the program can be obtained from your local A-dec territory manager or Patterson equipment specialist. Depending on her practice growth, Dr. Barker may equip additional operatories under the A-dec volume plan in the near future. "Most people think A-dec is too expensive, but I've found that once you figure in the volume discount plan, it's just as affordable," said Link.

Dr. Barker knew that she wanted to be completely paperless in her new office, and her Eaglesoft practice management software makes that possible – and also very simple. "I enjoy Eaglesoft because it's user friendly and easy to pick up on. When I have questions, I just click on the help button and find a step-by-step guide," said Dr. Barker. "I haven't had any problems yet, but I have many friends in the area who use Eaglesoft and if they ever run into problems they just make one phone call."

She has every imaging need covered in her practice, from a PLANMECA ProOne digital pan and PLANMECA Intra intraoral X-rays to Schick Elite sensors and a DigitalDoc IRIS intraoral camera. She loves that her digital images integrate seamlessly into Eaglesoft.

Two monitors in each room – one for staff and one for the patient – allow Dr. Barker to position a monitor directly over the patient when explaining problem areas and treatment recommendations.

"She was very smart with her equipment choices," said Matz. "She's not going to have any problems and she knows Patterson has her back if anything happens."

Getting started with supplies

Placing an initial supply order for a start-up practice can be a challenge because the doctor often doesn't know what types of materials work best. So Matz sat down with Dr. Barker and helped her with her first supply order. "Our catalog has thousands of products and she didn't yet know what she likes to use, so we just sat down and started going through the catalog," said Matz. "The first thing I did was open the catalog to private label. You can almost run an entire practice with that because the quality is great."

Matz worked with manufacturer representatives to get sample bags of impression material, crown and bridge and restorative products for Dr. Barker to try out. As Dr. Barker started seeing her first few patients, she was able to identify the products she liked best. She missed about 50 items in her first supply order, but with Patterson's next-day ordering, it was easy to order these items and have them delivered immediately.



Creating a family-friendly environment

Instead of paying an interior designer to decorate 32 Pearls, Dr. Barker opted to do it by herself, which allowed her to allocate more funds toward her equipment and technology investments.

The practice's color scheme, a palette of blues, tans and grays, was inspired by both form and function. Dr. Barker learned in dental school that she could take better shades on a blue background, and she also wanted colors that were kid-friendly, yet elegant and soothing for adults.

The entire family is at home in 32 Pearls' waiting area, which has a separate nook where children can play and watch videos. Whimsical illustrations and sophisticated black and white artwork on the walls appeal to patients of all ages. To make trips to the dentist less intimidating for little ones, Dr. Barker included a special small door from the waiting room into the clinical side of the practice just for them.

A successful start

In August 2010, just three months after construction began, 32 Pearls Family Dentistry started welcoming patients. Dr. Barker has marketed the practice through brochures in nearby businesses and a local television sponsorship; however, she relies

heavily on word of mouth to drive business to the practice. This strategy has been a huge success: "I had planned in my proposal to the bank to produce between \$1,000 and \$2,000 in the first month and we did over \$7,000 for the first month," she said.

Dr. Barker is grateful for the flexibility and family time that her new practice affords her. And her son appreciates being able to spend time with his mom at the new practice after school. "One of my main motivating factors was creating an office where I knew that my son would feel safe," said Dr. Barker. "This is his second home."

She says she couldn't have created her new practice without her Patterson team's help. She continues to count on them for her day-to-day practice needs. "I love the customer service of Patterson," she said. "I'm able to call and have any issue addressed immediately. Regardless of how small it is or big it is, I'm treated with respect and it just gets fixed." »





On a Mission

Though she was in the midst of construction on her new Granger, Ind., dental practice, Avis Barker, DMD, didn't let that stop her from going on a dental mission trip to San Quintin, Mexico this past June.

Dr. Barker heard about the mission trip opportunity from Patterson Equipment Specialist John Link, who had planned the trip to provide the underserved residents of San Quintin with much-needed restorative dental services. Link mentioned to Dr. Barker that one of the doctors had cancelled at the last minute, putting the trip in jeopardy. Dr. Barker had always wanted to go on a mission trip. "I thought, 'If I wasn't building an office, I would consider doing it,'" she said.

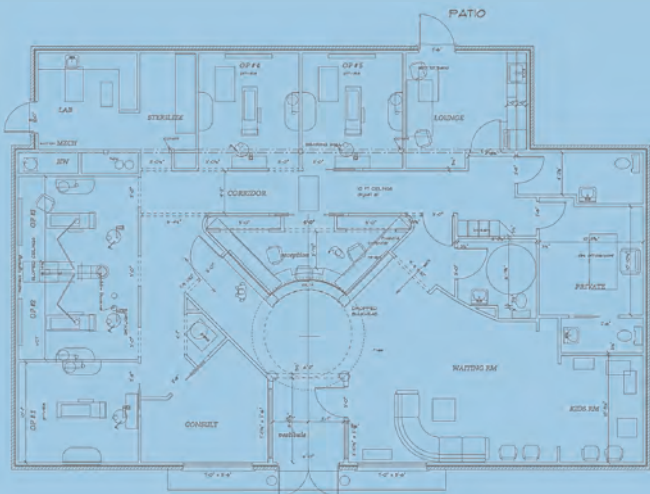
The trip continued to weigh on Dr. Barker's mind. And construction on her practice was stalled due to a hold-up in state approvals. "I prayed on it a lot," said Dr. Barker. "I thought, 'My office isn't doing anything right now, so I should go.' John was shocked when I told him that I was going."

Just a couple of weeks later, Dr. Barker, fellow Indiana dentist Mark Stoner, DDS, and Link, his wife and daughter arrived in Mexico in three vans filled with dental supplies donated by Patterson and equipment from various manufacturers.

Sitting on exercise balls and using electricity from willing neighbors to power the Airvac machine, pump, compressor and Schick sensors, the mission trip team was able to help many grateful San Quintin residents. "It was amazing," said Dr. Barker. "We ended up helping a lot of people." **PT**



For more information on 32 Pearls Family Dentistry, visit www.32pearlsfamilydentistry.com.



From left to right:
Tom VanAntwerp, Luke Matz, Dr. Avis Barker, John Link and Gordon Mitchell

PATTERSON TEAM

- Tom VanAntwerp, *Branch Manager*
- Luke Matz, *Territory Representative*
- John Link, *Equipment Specialist*
- Gordon Mitchell, *Service Technician*

