



## PRACTICE PROFILE

### DENTAL PRACTICE

Smiles by Design  
Kernersville, North Carolina

Amy-Jo Fischer, DDS, PA

### OFFICE

Square feet: 3,700  
8 operatories

### EQUIPMENT AND TECHNOLOGY

- Air Techniques VacStar 80 System
- CEREC System
- Eaglesoft Practice Management Software
- Midmark Assistant's Stools
- Midmark Dental Lights & Monitor Mounts
- Midmark Doctor's Stools
- Midmark Elevance Dental Chairs
- Midmark Integra Lab Cabinets

- Midmark Integra Operatory Cabinets
- Midmark Integra Sterilization Center
- Midmark PowerVac G Dry-Vacuum
- Midmark Preva DC Intraoral X-rays
- Midmark Procenter Instrument Delivery Systems
- Midmark Progeny Preva DC Intraoral X-rays
- Midmark Rear Assistant's Instrumentation
- Planmeca ProOne Digital Pan
- Porter Digital MXR-D Flowmeter Package
- Schick CDR Elite Sensors
- Schick USBCam2 Intraoral Cameras
- SciCan Hydrim L Instrument Washer

*This practice is a Patterson Advantage® Gold member.*

# A Dream Come True

Walking into Smiles by Design in Kernersville, North Carolina feels a bit like coming home. Through the front door, guests enter a small foyer with plush chairs – a quiet seating area where patients can make phone calls in private. Decorated in shabby chic décor, the walls of the office are filled with nature inspired artwork, featuring birds and countryside cottages while messages including, “Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath away,” are scattered throughout.

It's not the décor alone that makes the practice feel like home. Amy-Jo Fischer, DDS, PA, and her staff treat





patients like family. Fischer said that one of the best things about practicing in Kernersville is seeing the same patients for so many years. "Every day is like a reunion," she said. "We catch up with our patients every six months and now that we have this beautiful facility it's even more comfortable to be able to do that."

The beautiful facility is Fischer's dream practice, which she rewarded herself with after a one-year battle with cancer. She now believes that life is too short to hold back on your dreams – which is why she didn't want to wait to build an amazing practice that she could one day pass down to her youngest daughter, Meredith, who at age 23 aspires to be a dentist.

#### **A dream practice becomes reality**

When Fischer purchased the original building in 1995 to start her practice, she knew she wanted to obtain the twin building next door as soon as the orthodontist practicing there retired. That opportunity presented >>







itself in 2012, and she was able to purchase the second building, allowing her to double the size of her space, and build an eight-operator practice.

The construction process began in fall 2012 and was complete in August 2013. During that time, Fischer and her staff worked in the original space while the newly purchased office was gutted, remodeled, and a connector was built between the two offices with a new sterilization area, an entrance and waiting room. The team then moved into the new space while the original office was gutted and remodeled. "It was awesome," said Fischer of the process. "It took some major engineering to make the offices come together seamlessly and to be able to work during construction. It was a pretty smooth process and everything went as planned," she added.

Fischer credits her Patterson team for helping make the remodel

process so easy and for introducing her to the contractor who helped make the construction process go smoothly. Patterson Representative Chip Flinchum and his team were heavily involved in the project and Flinchum commented that "With any renovation, there are so many details that encompass the entire scope of the project. It can be overwhelming, so I tried to help simplify the process for Dr. Fischer to make this as wonderful and calm an experience as it could be. We were also fortunate to be able to construct her office in two phases so that she could minimize downtime and keep her office running full speed from beginning to end through the entire project."

#### **Creating a comfortable, family-friendly environment**

Comfort was key when creating her new space, and a Midmark Versailles Experience Trip to the Midmark facility in Ohio made it possible for Fischer to share this office makeover experience with her team. They were able to see firsthand the quality of construction, evaluate each clinical layout to determine which option suited the doctor and staff clinically and ergonomically, and work with the custom design team to design cabinets and workflow in 3D. The entire office renovation was finalized on the trip and was presented in 3D with





chairs, cabinetry, lights, colors and materials. Flinchum accompanied Fischer and her team on the trip and said that it was important because “The trip and project allowed us to demonstrate our core focus on improving the practice lifestyle and patient experience, as the entire staff is happier and more comfortable, the practice is more productive, and patients love visiting the new office.”

The trip to Midmark resulted in Elevance heated massage chairs that make a visit to Smiles by Design feel more like a trip to the spa. “We can turn on the massage setting and patients are so comfortable that they don’t want to leave,” said Fischer, laughing. “Our goal is to provide comfortable, quality dental care in a family-friendly environment, and I think we’ve really achieved that,” she added. Large windows in the operatories overlooking a spacious backyard with gardens and fountains add to the comfortable environment. If that’s not enough,

each operatory is equipped with a television monitor with cable access. Patients love that they can watch television and Fischer can show intraoral photos and X-rays on the screen for educational purposes.

### Technology that makes the difference

Fischer has embraced technology over the past few years by setting her practice up with Eaglesoft, Schick digital sensors, Schick intraoral cameras, a Planmeca digital pan and CEREC. Because her sterilization area was lacking up-to-date technology and innovation, she addressed this during the remodel by switching to IMS sterilization cassettes and a HydriM instrument washer, which increased efficiency by greatly reducing the time it took for staff members to sterilize instruments. With the IMS cassette system, a metal box containing all the instruments is run through the whole sterilization process, keeping the instruments together for the entire procedure. The system >>





demonstrates to patients the fact that their health and safety is the number one priority. "This is the coolest system," said Fischer. "It goes down the line and ends up for the patient ready to go – it's state-of-the-art sterilization."

Fischer said that she's thrilled with the renovation and has received nothing but positive feedback from patients. "I get a lot of exercise and I enjoy being in a bright, clean, open setting, which makes it a lot more fun to practice. Plus, having technology at my fingertips all the time is really nice," she said.

### Giving back to the community

Fischer credits her staff with contributing to the comfortable atmosphere at the practice, and for helping her through some difficult times. Her stage two breast cancer diagnosis in March of 2009 resulted in two surgeries that year followed by chemotherapy and radiation treatments. "My staff was incredible," said Fischer. "It took a lot of effort on their part to help me through a difficult time," she added.

Following her recovery, Fischer started the Evan-Hopkins Breast Cancer Fund, named after two of the oncologists who provided her treatment. More than \$90,000 has been raised from the annual fundraiser and funds go to women with breast cancer to help cover the cost of non-medical expenses including childcare, gas, groceries and utilities. "Part of being a dentist is giving of yourself and this fund is one of the ways in which I've been able to give back," said Fischer. "I just feel very blessed," she added. "To have this beautiful space and to be able to connect with my patients and give back to the community. This really is a dream come true." **PT**



To watch a video of Smiles by Design,  
scan this QR code with your smartphone.

If you don't have a QR code reader on your phone, there are free apps available for download. Once you've got your free app, point your phone's camera at the QR Code and you'll be taken to the video!

For more information  
about this practice,  
visit [www.kernersvillesmiles.net](http://www.kernersvillesmiles.net).





## PATTERSON TEAM

Tom McGuire, *Branch Manager*

John Jones, *Territory Representative*

Chip Flinchum, *Equipment Specialist*

Patrick McGuire, *Equipment Specialist*

Scott Suits, *Service Technician*

Keith Minter, *Service Technician*

Susan Pressley, *Office Designer*

From left to right:  
Keith Minter, Scott Suits, Chip Flinchum, John Jones, Dr. Fischer and Tom McGuire



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