CLOSING THE *gap*: Strategies for Effective Medical-Dental Integration

If undiagnosed and untreated, dental diseases can result in critical health issues such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes, Alzheimer's disease, cancer, and more.

Medical-dental integration, once a healthcare visionary's dream, is now a tangible reality. COVID-19 accelerated change and made Americans more aware of the oral-systemic link. In this engaging presentation, we will explore various medical procedures that dental professionals can utilize to improve the overall health of their patients. These include: taking thorough health histories, administering vaccines, testing HbA1c levels/reading CBG monitors, measuring blood pressure, performing oral cancer screenings, and helping patients with nutritional choices.

Dental solutions for medical providers will also be explored. These include: the use of intraoral cameras, referrals via teledentistry, providing oral health recommendations, applying fluoride treatments, and performing oral cancer screenings. The overall result is the closing of long-standing gaps in American healthcare, giving dental professionals an unprecedented opportunity to enhance patient care holistically.

If desired, special emphasis can be given to diabetes.
Elevated blood glucose levels can increase plaque, cavities, periodontitis, and oral infections. The importance of nutrition and diabetes education in the practice will be emphasized and explored. Illuminate a strategy for monitoring patients' diabetes. Illuminate steps for ensuring good communication between the dental and medical professional in contributing to the care of the patient.

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LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- Understand the strategies being implemented to address access-to-care and oral health disparities
- Acknowledge the significance of dental professionals as essential members of the healthcare team
- Develop strategies for integrating medical instruments into a dental practice
- Explore methods to utilize teledentistry to improve patient health outcomes
- Identify the signs of diabetes and other diseases through their oral manifestations
- Recognize the importance of providing nutrition and health education in the practice
- Discover methods for creating a referral system between medical and dental practitioners
- Examine solutions for linking your patient's oral health to their overall health
- Pinpoint communication skills which help patients link their oral health to overall health

Suggested Audience:
Dental and Medical Professionals and Students

Suggested Format:
Partial Day;
Lecture, Workshop, Keynote