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**Dr. Peter Flaherty**  
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# Close to Perfect

**Dr. Peter Flaherty of Main Line Smile** has spent the past 30 years refining his skills in perfecting the smiles and protecting the health of his patients.

by **PHIL GIANFICARO** | photography by **JODY ROBINSON**

**W**hen Peter Flaherty, D.M.D., applies his clinical skills, caring nature, and creativity to restoring a patient's dental health, the outcome understandably gives that individual good reason to smile. It also creates a strong bond that tends to transcend the barriers of time and distance.

"I got a phone call from a patient who was in Australia," says Dr. Flaherty, whose state-of-the-art practice is in Devon. "They were telling me the dentist there

was telling them they needed X, Y, and Z, and asked me what they should do. I heard from another patient who lives in Belgium about the same thing. That's the kind of trust and relationship I have with my patients. When that happens, it can only make you smile."

For more than 30 years, Dr. Flaherty has been delivering healthy, functional, and aesthetically appealing smiles to satisfied patients. Whether a patient needs primary care, such as a routine cleaning or cavity

filling, cosmetic services such as teeth whitening, or more advanced dentistry such as bridges, crowns and veneers, dental implants, and orthodontics, he and his experienced staff strive to deliver unparalleled care that goes beyond the dental chair.

"I think that's one of the things that distinguishes our practice from some others," he adds. "Among a host of things, we're very welcoming. We have long-standing employees, so there's continuity for patients. They don't come into the office and see a different dentist or assistant or hygienist. Patients tend to like that. We also put a great emphasis on competency. We pick only the best people to work with our patients—people who love what they do."

Dr. Flaherty has a genuine love for the career he chose, but he admits that a career in dentistry wasn't always a given. He comes from a family of engineers, after all.

"When I was in undergrad at St. Joseph's University, I had every intention of going into medicine without really knowing what being a physician was all about," he says. "Then, over the course of



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my education, I realized I didn’t want to go into medicine. So, I’m thinking: *What do I do with this pre-med/biology degree?* And then, in a lightbulb moment, I thought about dentistry. I could still be a clinician and also run my own practice. I feel so lucky to have had that moment that set me on a course in life that I’ll never regret. I can’t imagine having chosen anything better for me than a career in dentistry.”

### Caring for Every Need

Dr. Flaherty earned his doctorate at Maurice H. Kornberg School of Dentistry at Temple University, which is ranked among the top 20 dentistry schools in the United States. He remains in continuous contact with the educational community to provide patients with the latest therapeutic and cosmetic techniques. As a member of The Academy of General Dentistry and The American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry, he has had examples of his cosmetic work published in some of the country’s leading journals devoted to his profession.

Dr. Flaherty and his dedicated staff aim to provide the highest-quality dentistry and patient care. Treatment options are personalized to meet the unique needs and expectations of every patient.

“If a patient calls about a toothache or they got their front tooth knocked out, we get them in right away,” Dr. Flaherty says. “If they’re calling in with a new or overdue checkup, we make the appointment at their convenience for a free consultation. When a patient comes in, we talk to them about what they want done. They receive a comprehensive exam, with

a full set of X-rays taken. We take care of their every need.”

Patients will also benefit from the latest technology, from micro-cameras to 3D scans. A micro-camera, or intraoral camera, is a pen-like device that takes high-resolution images of a patient’s mouth and shows the visuals on a monitor in real time. The device gives Dr. Flaherty a clear idea of potential problems before beginning treatment and helps him devise the most appropriate solution.

With 3D imaging, an X-ray arm rotates around a patient’s head and captures multiple images. The images are sent to a computer that provides a comprehensive, 3D view of the patient’s mouth and surrounding anatomical structures.

“The technology today is basically a game-changer,” Dr. Flaherty adds. “It’s like taking your blinders off when examining the patient. You see so much more than with a 2D image. The 3D image increases accuracy to the millimeter. There’s no more educated guessing or estimating like in past years. The technology allows me to do things routinely for a patient today that I never dreamed possible when I first started 30 years ago.”

### Educate to Protect

When a patient visits Dr. Flaherty’s office,

he takes it as an opportunity to provide instruction on how to maintain proper dental health at home, such as brushing two to three times a day, flossing regularly, and using plaque-fighting oral rinses. He also uses each visit to educate patients about the incontrovertible link between dental health and overall health.

“There are folks who only view their dental issues as cosmetic or isolated to the mouth,” he adds. “Research suggests poor dental health has farther-reaching implications, including cardiovascular disease, respiratory infections, diabetes, cancers, and even dementia. I tell patients that, No. 1, the mouth is not separate from the body. There’s no difference between oral health and overall health. I view this as an educational opportunity because some people just don’t know about these things.”

Perhaps the only thing Dr. Flaherty’s Philadelphia-area patients may not entirely love about him is his devotion to the sports teams of Boston, his hometown.

“Helping patients is so satisfying,” he says. “When you can do that, you feel like you’re giving somebody their life back or getting their life back on track. That feeling is absolutely wonderful.”

Of course, that feeling causes a contented smile to light up his face. ■



**Peter Flaherty, D.M.D.**

**12 Arlington Road, Suite 102 | Devon, PA 19333  
(610) 687-5360 | MainLineSmile.com**