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At Pearl Dental Monroe, Dr. Murtaza Pagri leads a trusted, compassionate, community-driven practice focused on enhancing patients' overall health, not just their teeth.

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A Rare Find

At Pearl Dental Monroe, Dr. Murtaza Pagri leads a trusted, compassionate, community-driven practice focused on enhancing patients' overall health, not just their teeth.

by **BILL DONAHUE**

Murtaza Pagri, D.M.D., has seen a lot of changes in his field since he first started practicing dentistry. As one example, groundbreaking advances in treatment planning and diagnostic technology have greatly enhanced patient outcomes.

But not all the changes he has seen have been positive.

"So many practices are now being run by big corporations," says Dr. Murtaza, who earned his dental degree from the Temple University Kornberg School of Dentistry in Philadelphia. "Because of that, a lot of the personal touch has been lost."

Dr. Murtaza has an intimate understanding of the value provided by a family-run dentistry practice. He spent several years working alongside his father, Abid F. Paghdwala, D.M.D., at Pearl Dental Arts, which has been serving residents of Bucks County and surrounding areas since 1981. He branched out on his own three years ago with Pearl Dental Monroe in Monroe Township, New Jersey, east of Princeton. The practice offers the full gamut of general and cosmetic dentistry, including dental implants, and Invisalign, among other services, in an atmosphere of care and comfort.

Suburban Life spoke with Dr. Murtaza about the experience patients can expect when they step through Pearl Dental Monroe's front door, how technology and education have enhanced patient care, and what the future holds for his growing practice.

Q&A

Please tell me the story about how Pearl Dental Arts Monroe come to be.

There's a lot of history here. This practice has been serving the residents of Monroe and the surrounding area for 40 years. I bought it from dentists who had been practicing here for 20 years. At the time I had been working in my father's practice and looking for practices in New Jersey with a similar feel as his. When my dad started practicing, he knew he wanted a small private practice that took the time to treat patients well, answer their questions, and provide the treatment they deserved. Those aspects are much harder to find now. This practice is very much the kind of old-style family practice that patients really crave now. When someone comes here, they know it's me they're going to see.

What do you think makes the practice unique in the area?

It's a real community-driven practice, and those are increasingly rare. When someone comes to us, we're treating the person behind the tooth, not just the tooth. By that I mean we want to not only fix the problem, but also understand why someone is having the problem in the first place. That may





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PEARL DENTAL MONROE

sound simple, but it's surprising how many people have had less than positive experiences with other dentists. If someone has anxiety or a genuine phobia about coming to the dentist, we want to understand why so we can take away those fears. We're never in a rush, and we want to make sure our patients are as comfortable as possible. We've come to occupy a niche here in Monroe, and people are seeking us out because of it.

What role does technology play in your practice?

We have invested a lot in technology to be able to provide the highest level of dentistry possible. We have 3D digital X-rays, which are incredibly helpful for implant placement, root canals, and other procedures. We also have a completely digital impression system that takes a digital scan of someone's teeth instead of having them use those goopy impressions that no one liked. Patients like it a lot better, and it has also increased the accuracy of our work.

Education is an important part of technology. We have invested in ourselves and our staff to get everyone trained on the latest technology and treatment methods. Our main bread-and-butter is fixing teeth that have been through a lot—repairing broken-down dentistry and replacing it with modern materials that provide a better, safer, longer-lasting result. All the fillings we do are tooth colored, rather than the old silver fillings. All

the crowns we use are zirconia. Whether it's an implant placement, a root canal, Invisalign, or cosmetic dentistry to reshape, repair, or correct a patient's teeth, we have limited the need for patients to go all over town for different services.

Why did you want to become a dentist in the first place?

Dentistry does run in my family, but my father never pressured me to do this. I came to this as a career simply by chance. I thought I would be a marine biologist or a scientific researcher, but I found that the results I was looking for wouldn't come fast enough in those fields. In dentistry, people come in crying and in fear, and within one visit we can have them leaving with tears of joy in their eyes because we relieved their problems. The realization came to me while I was working with my dad as a dental assistant for a summer job. By the end of that summer, I knew this was the path I wanted to follow.

You've been leading Pearl Dental Monroe for three years and counting. Where do you see the practice going from here?

We'll continue to provide trusted, compassionate, and community-driven service, and that can be hard to find these days. We have been thrilled to be part of the Monroe community for the past three years. All through the pandemic, people trusted us with their health. The community has come to see us as a go-to dentistry practice in Monroe, and I hope that trend continues.

We're also excited about our growth and the fact that we will be bringing on another dentist to help us serve more patients. Aimee P. Hu, D.M.D., is a highly trained dentist who has training in the treatment of children and patients with sleep apnea. She moved here from the Atlanta area with her husband, who's a neurosurgeon. We're excited about what she will bring to the practice, and I think our patients will be, too. ■



Pearl Dental Monroe

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