



Known as a compassionate clinician and gifted educator, **Dr. Scott Smith** builds on his King of Prussia practice to satisfy demand for his specialized expertise in periodontics and implantology.



Appetite for Expansion

BY **BILL DONAHUE** | PHOTOS BY **ALISON DUNLAP**

Although he's just finished two intense back-to-back surgeries, Scott K. Smith, D.M.D., still manages to squeeze in a phone interview at the end of a long day. Dr. Smith keeps a full schedule, to put it lightly, but the interview runs longer than expected.

It then becomes clear: Even though he's considered one of the region's most respected specialists in the areas of periodontics, dental implantology, and facial aesthetics, Dr. Smith is generous in sharing his time and talents with just about anyone who needs them.

He ensures that each patient of his King of Prussia-based practice feels seen, heard, and well cared for; he's even liable to carve out office hours to repair the smile of a deserving candidate who cannot afford high-quality care. On weekends he teaches advanced surgical techniques to the next generation of clinicians, and he's always available to help any of his hundreds of colleagues in general dentistry add to their knowledge and better serve their patients.

Dr. Smith's humble nature prevents him from talking too much about himself or his accomplishments, but when the conversation turns to how his practice has grown over the past year—and his sunny forecast for the months and years ahead—he struggles to contain his excitement.

"As of last year, our practice just exploded," he says. "We've always been known for our patient care, but we made some necessary changes on the administrative side to better serve the needs of our referring dentists. From that point forward, our patient load was like a dam that burst."

Much like the life-changing work he performs on patients' smiles, Dr. Smith has his practice on the cusp of a transformation. He intends to add more staff—two more periodontists and two additional hygienists, as well as more administrative team members—to accommodate an ever-expanding patient base. He's also begun looking into the possibility of procuring additional office space. He credits his team, led by Office Manager Rebecca Smith (also his wife), for the practice's success.

"It's been wonderful to see how much we've grown," he says, "but we're really just getting started."



On weekends, Dr. Smith donates his time to molding the next generation of clinicians by welcoming dental students into his operatories.

'Where We Go From Here'

Dr. Smith cherishes the opportunity to help patients from all walks of life overcome challenges associated with the health, aesthetics, and function of the smile. Doing so often requires advanced surgical techniques, including complex forms of bone augmentation and soft-tissue grafting. Regardless of the need, each case is handled on an individual basis.

"We never want to risk failure, which is why we customize care to each individual," he says. "With some patients who need dental implants, we can do 'teeth in a day,' but only if the case is appropriate for that approach. Some cases might take more time and planning, so we're going to build the necessary architecture for a beautiful result that will last a long time.

"It's also about maintenance, and we're here for the long term," he continues. "Periodontal disease is a lifelong disease, like arthritis. When you're our patient, you become part of the family, and we walk that road along with you and your primary dentist."

Advanced technology plays a significant role, too. The state-of-the-art office boasts 3D diagnostic imaging, intraoral scanning as a substitute for the impressions of yesteryear, and LANAP (laser-assisted new attachment procedure), which uses laser technology as an alternative to invasive surgery as a way to treat periodontal disease. He also utilizes a guided surgical system to facilitate the placement of dental implants with utmost precision.

Besides addressing myriad aspects of a patient's dentition, Dr. Smith offers select rejuvenation and revitalization services to further uplift a patient's self-esteem.

"Laser treatments can improve the skin quality and tone," he says. "Dermal fillers

can correct fine lines and wrinkles. Thread lifts can tighten loose and sagging skin. It's a separate component from my surgical practice, but it's an additional service we can offer to uplift someone's perception of themselves even more."

Compassion represents another foundational element of Dr. Smith's practice. His devotion to philanthropic causes is a fine example. The practice regularly offers no-cost treatment to individuals who cannot otherwise afford it. Dr. Smith cites a woman in her early 30s who "basically had no teeth, which were snapped off at the gumline."

"She's someone we wanted to help purely because she needed it," he says. "She's a wonderful person, but she constantly covered her mouth because she was embarrassed about her smile."

Dr. Smith and his team began the process of restoring the woman's smile with dental implants. When her treatment is completed later this year, her smile will match her shining personality.

"So many people come to us because they're self-conscious about their smile," he adds. "Maybe they have a gummy smile and have been told there's no way to amend the issue. In cases like that, maybe we use aesthetic neuromodulators to relax the muscles that pull the lip upward. People are so jubilant after something like that. I'm 59 years old, and the opportunity to bless people's lives is what drives me to continue."

Dr. Smith also "gives back" through education. An in-demand lecturer for more than 25 years, he serves as a clinical instructor for an international dental implant education group known as the AIC Education Center. Dentists who are early into their career and want to add dental implants to their armamentaria take a six-week course capped off by surgical training under Dr. Smith's guidance. He also donates his weekends to molding the next generation of clinicians. Currently he welcomes dental students into his operatories, though he has begun to explore the possibility of creating a formal training facility apart from his practice.

For Dr. Smith, education goes both ways, as he continues to expand his own knowledge base. Perhaps the most recent example involves being trained on advanced surgical bone augmentation conducted by an overseas enterprise, including in-person instruction in Germany. He's also collaborating with some of the world's leading oral surgeons to develop a procedure designed to rebuild the jaw following atrophy or trauma.

Dr. Smith anticipates a banner year, both personally and professionally. He looks forward to being able to satisfy a growing appetite for the kind of treatment his practice provides. He expects to spend more time sharing his knowledge as a teacher and lecturer. And he hopes to spend a little more free time at a second home in Colorado.

"My goal is to continue to provide excellent care for patients, in my own practice and elsewhere," he says. "I also want to expand my general-dentist colleagues' awareness of what we can do for their patients, and to help train them on some of these techniques they can use in their own practices. I'm really excited about where we go from here." ■



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