



Bell Family Dentistry at a glance

- Established in 1997 in Riverbank, California
- Owned and operated by Brent and Amanda Bell
- Built and opened a new facility with six operatories in 2002
- Solo dentist
- Three full-time hygienists
- Five additional staff members

BUILDING A STRONG, SUCCESSFUL PERIO PROGRAM WITH DENTRIX ASCEND VOICE PERIO, POWERED BY BOLA AI

Bell Family Dentistry is a small but thriving solo dental practice in Riverbank, California that has built a reputation for providing careful, thorough care and building warm, open, and supportive relationships with patients. As part of that approach, Dr. Brent Bell and business manager Amanda Bell set a goal to perform regular annual perio exams for every patient. “Perio exams tend to slip through the cracks in a lot of practices,” Amanda said. “We wanted to make sure all of our patients—and especially our older patients—received exams on a regular basis as part of their standard re-care plans.”

TOO FEW PEOPLE, TOO MANY INTERRUPTIONS

As the staff at Bell Family Dentistry worked to meet this ambitious goal, they discovered that more frequent perio exams put an unexpected strain on their limited resources. “Perio exams used to require two people—a hygienist to conduct the exams and call out measurements and another staff member to enter the results into the perio chart,” Amanda explained. “In our small practice, that usually meant one of our assistants or treatment coordinators had to stop what they were doing, walk back to the operatory, and take a turn at the keyboard entering numbers. At times, it was a frustrating process for everyone involved. Hygienists had to interrupt exams, find someone to help, and wait until they were available. Everyone on our small staff is busy all the time, so asking them to drop what they were doing to assist with a perio exam was often problematic. It definitely impacted our productivity and limited our efforts to grow our program.”

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— AMANDA BELL, BUSINESS MANAGER

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Building a strong perio program with Dentrix Ascend Voice Perio

Since 2019, Dentrix Ascend Voice Perio has helped Bell Family Dentistry:

- Increase perio exams between 2018 – 2020 by 112% without adding additional staff
- Make perio exams part of patients’ standard annual re-care program
- Free dental assistants from having to sit in on exams and enter perio measurements manually
- Complete perio exams more quickly and efficiently
- Spend more time answering patients’ perio exam questions
- Drive higher treatment plan acceptance and more restorative work
- Meet COVID-19 infection control requirements

FINDING AND ROLLING OUT A MORE EFFICIENT ALTERNATIVE

Bell Family Dentistry adopted Dentrix Ascend in 2018, and a year later Amanda started looking seriously at the software’s Voice Perio add-on capabilities as a way to address their perio exam challenges. “From the very beginning, we were determined to learn Dentrix Ascend inside and out and take full advantage of everything it has to offer,” Amanda recalled. “We reconfigured a lot of our systems and routines to work with Dentrix Ascend, and we’ve consistently found that our new way of doing things is much more efficient than the old way. That’s really what first led us to consider Dentrix Ascend Voice Perio.”

The hygienist team started using a pilot version of Dentrix Ascend Voice Perio early in 2019 and adopting such a significant new piece of technology obviously required some initial adjustments. “Dictating perio measurements to a digital assistant is different than interacting with a live person, so our hygienists had to make a few adjustments in the way they phrased and pronounced things,” Amanda explained. “It also took a bit of trial and error to find headsets that worked well in our busy office environment. And of course, getting comfortable with new technology—and adapting to different workflows and routines—always takes time. But overall, the learning curve was small, and it didn’t take long for our staff to start seeing results.”

ENJOYING THE BENEFITS OF A STRONG, CONSISTENT PERIO PROGRAM

Today—with the help of Dentrix Ascend Voice Perio—every Bell Family Dentistry patient receives a perio exam once a year as part of their standard re-care program. “We’ve seen a big jump in our perio exam numbers, and we’ve been able to support that jump without putting an additional strain on our staff,” Amanda explained.

“Our hygienists can let Dentrrix Ascend Voice Perio do more of the work, so they can focus on our patients’ needs and questions.”

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“With Dentrrix Ascend Voice Perio, our hygienists can conduct perio exams completely on their own and finish them more quickly. In 2020, these capabilities have also helped us adapt to new COVID-19 protocols and infection control requirements—by reducing contact with computer equipment and minimizing the number of people in our operatories during perio exams.”

Dentrrix Ascend Voice Perio has been great for Bell Family Dentistry’s staff, but it also provides important benefits for patients. “We used to spend a lot of time waiting for assistants to become available, entering measurements, and doing other manual work on the computer,” Amanda explained. “For patients, that meant we had less time to talk about their results. Now, our hygienists can let Dentrrix Ascend Voice Perio do more of the work, so they can focus on our patients’ needs and questions.”

One full-time Bell Family Dentist hygienist who performs regular perio exams quickly went from skeptical to enthusiastic. “There were a few bugs at first, but now that we’ve worked those out, I would never go back to the old way,” she said. “With Dentrrix Ascend Voice Perio, I don’t have to interrupt my exams or pull an assistant away from their other work, and that leaves me a lot more time to discuss results and potential treatments with my patients. Those discussions have led to higher treatment plan acceptance and more restorative work, which is great for our patients and our practice. A few weeks ago, I had to go without Dentrrix Ascend Voice Perio for a few hours. It made for a very long day, and it made us all realize how much we’ve come to depend on it.”



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