Blooming marvellous

Penny Palmer talks to Dr David Bloom, co-owner of the luxury Senova Dental Studios in Watford about his vision for the business and how a team effort is essential to achieving his goal.

Picture this - the best high-end ‘luxury’ dental practice with nine practitioner studios to boot, and a spa ‘experience’ to die for. Then imagine where - Watford is probably the last place you thought of - but for David Bloom, the former British Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry (BACD) President, there’s no place like home to build a booming business.

Born and bred in Watford, Bloom, together with business partner, Jay Padayachy created their dream, and Senova Dental Studios was born.

Impressive is an understatement, and clients will agree. Have you ever had a check-up while watching Batman Returns? Or what about a new set of veneers to the beat of Jack Johnson? No? Then you haven’t lived yet.

In a nutshell the practice features a relaxation area, four massage chairs, music on demand, as well as DVDs to entertain patients during treatments. Spa treatments range from paraffin hand waxes to facials and massages, while the list of dental treatments is comprehensive.

As well as the nine dental studios, there is the dental operating theatre, a spotlessly clean sterilisation section, a very inviting reception counter, a theatre, a spotlessly clean sterilisation section, and an internet bar including free Wi-Fi.

The vision behind the business is pretty clear cut. Bloom explains: ‘We had no overflow area and wanted to provide an overall service with other facilities.’ With no spa in Watford, it seemed natural to expand beyond dentistry. ‘Clients can now come in and log on to emails while in the relaxation area, or they can book up other services – we simply wanted to take it to the next level,’ adds Bloom.

So what do the clients think of it all? ‘Clients are amazed, they love the space, they love the chairs, and they love the cleanliness of the whole place,’ says Bloom. Indeed, patients could ‘happily sit in the chair for up to four or even eight hours for a big treatment.’

Expansion is all well and good when it comes to vision, but to be recognised ‘as a centre of excellence’ is a much harder nut to crack. ‘We want to be seen as inclusive, and we want to help other dental professionals to perform any aspect of dentistry they desire.’ This is why the duo mentor dentists for simple restorative work upwards, and run corporo-secure five minutes of his time. But having worked in the NHS for 10 years, he is used to tight schedules. He joined his father in the business in 1990, with Jay turning up to take over from Bloom senior eight years later. Initially a ‘mixed’ practice, the duo converted to private practice in the late 90s, because ‘we could not perform the kind of dentistry we wanted to at health service rates.’

They continued to see children under the health service, but when the goal posts were ‘revised’, with the new contract, they said goodbye to the health service ‘but still provide free examinations for children less than five years-old, ‘as long as a family member is seen at the practice’.

Explains Bloom: ‘I just didn’t agree with negotiating for UDA dentistry. It’s not fair if one dentist has one UDA at £15, while the other next door has one at £30.’

To prevent dental disease and ‘ex-ceed patients’ expectations on every visit’, though he is quick to point out that a team effort is essen- tial to achieve this goal. ‘We have a concierge, a front desk team, pa-tient and treatment co-ordinators, hygienists, and a practice man-ager – we could never achieve what we do without them.’

People he admires in the profes-sion include his father, Mr Pa-dayachy and his consultant ‘who is now a patient of mine’, as well as Roy Fidgson ‘who helped in my occlusion training’. Asked to choose one aspect of dentistry that he has carried with him from his junior days he says: ‘It’s qual-ity, everything has to be done cor-rectly and that has always stuck with me.’

Bloom sees anything from one to 10 patients a day, but the main goal remains the same, and that is to prevent dental disease and ‘ex-

On the future of dentistry Bloom sees limitless potential. ‘With new materials, with implant dentistry and guided surgery, treat-ments can be a thing of the past, but it upsets me that people think that British people do not have nice teeth’, he explains. ‘The press gave us a bashing five years ago but now they can see what we can do – the Hollywood smile it’s all on its way out and the European smile could be round the corner.’

Competition, is not some-thing to focus on according to Bloom. ‘There is more than enough dentistry for everyone, and our view is that we work to-gether to educate the profession as well as our patients.’

Time though is the essence though, and running a practice like Senova is no easy task. How does he do it? ‘I have a fantastic team, a very supportive wife and a brilliant business partner. Asked what he couldn’t live with-out when it comes to the business he says: ‘I couldn’t live without my ceramist, Luke Barnett, – he is part of my team and it is very im-portant for any restorative den-tist to have a close relationship with their ceramist.’

‘I also couldn’t live without Collardam – a must for patient comfort, and I would also be lost without my digital SLR camera – it’s an absolute must-have.’

Mini CV

Dr. David Bloom is a Newcastle-upon-Tyne Dental School graduate. He also took an appointment as Senior Dental Studios since 1990 focusing on comprehensive restorative and cosmetic dentistry. A past president of the British Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry (2002 – 2004), he is one of the founders of the International Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry (IACD) and has been a member of the editorial board of the Journal of Cosmetic Dentistry – the official journal of the American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry. He is also a clinical director of the Academy and a fellow of the International Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry (IACD). Dr. Bloom has been a principal at Senova Dental Studios since 1990 focusing on comprehensive restorative and cosmetic dentistry. He is also a member of the British Society of Occlusal Studies, the British Society of Reconstructive Dentistry, The British Dental Association and is a sustaining member of The American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry (2007 – 2008). David is also a member of the British Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry (2007 – 2008). David is also a member of The Journal of Cosmetic Dentistry – the official journal of the American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry. He is also the clinical director of CO-OPRA seminars, and instructs and lectures on all aspects of cosmetic dentistry in the UK and the US.

Standing outside the Watford practice on the day of the launch

David Bloom

Personality: Astute, innovative, focused

Favourite destination: South of France

Hobbies: My family, snowboarding and swimming

Born: Watford

Family: Two boys (eight and four years-old)

Favourite meal: Thai food

Drink: Wine

Car: Second-hand Porsche 911 convertible

Pets: Planning to get a dog

Best film: The Big Chill

Favourite book: Desperate Housewives

Star sign: Scorpio

Music: Pink Floyd

Sport programme: Rugby