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Contact us to schedule a complimentary consultation.

Sara Marterella

Transition Sales Consultant—Eastern MI
RE License #6501399823
Sara.Marterella@henryschein.com
734-765-0770

Denise Bouwhuis

Transition Sales Consultant—Western MI
RE License #6501396288
Denise.Bouwhuis@henryschein.com
734-765-7080



Sara

Denise



HENRY SCHEIN®
DENTAL PRACTICE TRANSITIONS

Health care open enrollment going on now



2026 Health Care Open enrollment	
MDA Health Plan	New groups can be started at any time! Changes/additions to existing plans can be made Oct. 1 to Nov. 15 for benefits effective Jan. 1, 2026.
Individual Health Plans	New plans such as MyBlue or subsidized health plans purchased through MDA Insurance via the online Marketplace, can be started Nov. 1 through Dec. 15 for a Jan. 1 effective date. It is the only time you can start a new individual plan unless you experience a qualifying event.
Group Health Plans	Groups can be started by employers at any time. The window for adding participants is during the month of your anniversary.
Medicare Supplement plans, Medicare Advantage and Medigap plans	Oct. 15 to Dec. 7 for benefits effective Jan. 1, 2026.

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Evaluating a Practice Purchase: Guidance for the First-Time Buyer



By Amrita Patel, DDS

For many new dentists, buying a practice is a chance to shape their own career, set the tone for how they care for patients, and build financial stability on their own

terms. But stepping into ownership for the first time can also feel overwhelming. How do you know if an office is really the right fit? How do you avoid mistakes that could follow you for years? The truth is, evaluating a practice is more than just the price tag. Yes, the numbers matter, but so do the people, the culture, and the opportunities that come with it.

Start with the financials, because they're the backbone of any purchase. Ask for at least three years of tax returns and profit-and-loss statements, and take the time to understand what they mean. Collections, overhead, and net income give you a snapshot of health, but it's the patterns over time that really matter. If production has dropped, was it because the seller cut back hours or because patients stopped coming? A dip caused by reduced schedules may not be a red flag, but a shrinking patient base should make you cautious. Also, don't overlook accounts receivable. Any business can look profitable on paper yet struggle to collect what's owed. And, take note of the insurance mix, because if the practice leans too heavily on one plan, a change in reimbursement rates could shake the bottom line.

Still, numbers only tell part of the story. Patients are the heart of a dental business, and understanding them is critical. Look closely at how many are "active," which is typically defined as being seen in the past 18 to 24 months, and how many new patients come in each month. Just as important is the community the practice serves. Are you stepping into a neighborhood of young families, retirees, or a more transient population? Each will shape the kind of dentistry you'll be doing and the long-term potential for growth. And remember, patients often stay loyal to the doctor, not just the practice. If the seller is beloved for personal relationships, you may see some attrition after the transition. But if loyalty is tied to strong

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systems and great staff, the base will be far more secure.

Speaking of staff, don't underestimate their role in your success. An experienced, welcoming team can make all the difference. They know the patients, the systems, and the flow of the office. On the other hand, high turnover or an unhappy team can create stress right when you need steadiness the most. When evaluating a practice, pay attention to the culture: how the team interacts with each other, how they greet patients, and whether the atmosphere feels warm or rushed. You'll be inheriting that culture, so make sure it's one you want to lead.

Facilities and equipment are another area to weigh carefully. The number of operatories, the condition of the equipment, and the technology in use will affect both how you work today and what you may need to invest in tomorrow. Location matters too. Accessibility, parking, and visibility all influence new patient flow and can't be fixed as easily as old chairs or computers.

Don't forget to ask about systems. Scheduling, billing, recall, and marketing may not sound glamorous, but they're what keep the practice running smoothly. Strong systems reduce stress and free you to focus on dentistry.

Finally, think about the future. A practice isn't just about what it is today, it's about what it can become in your hands. Are there procedures currently being referred out that you'd like to keep in-house? Is there room to add an operatory or expand services? Is the community underserved in areas like implants, orthodontics, or cosmetic dentistry? Spotting growth opportunities can turn a good purchase into the cornerstone of a thriving career.

For new dentists, the first practice purchase is more than a financial transaction. It's a leap into leadership and independence. Approach it with curiosity, caution, and optimism! ●