

EDITORIAL BOARD FORUM: IS INNOVATION IMPORTANT IN PRACTICE?

Leaders in the field of aesthetics tell how they revolutionize their practices through medical innovation and practice management upgrades.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO BE AN INNOVATOR IN AESTHETICS PRACTICE?

Gregory Buford, MD: Aesthetic medicine is changing rapidly as our understanding of the aging process and how to best address it continues to improve. By innovating, a practitioner not only stays ahead of the curve and grows market share, but he or she also gains a better understanding of the specific benefits of rejuvenation technologies in the process.

Dina Anderson, MD: It is important to be an innovator in aesthetics practice because that is what drives the specialty forward as a whole and what keeps you at the cutting edge as an individual.

Jason Pozner, MD: I enjoy searching out and using new technology. Not only is innovation great for the specialty and the patients, but it also keeps my brain alive.

WHEN/WHY DID YOU DECIDE THAT INNOVATION IS IMPORTANT?

Dr. Pozner: I decided early on in my career, during my residency, that innovation is important.

Dr. Buford: I have always believed in innovation. Without innovation, any person in any field will simply be left behind. In aesthetic medicine, patients are focused on receiving the latest and greatest products and procedures, and so it is up to leaders such as us to assure that these “new” technologies are safe and effective.

Dr. Anderson: I found that innovation was perhaps the most exciting aspect of my career in aesthetic medicine. One can take a simple principle and adapt it to his or her

own style and understanding of the science behind it and develop something new. Discussing your new technique at a meeting, teaching it to your peers at a symposium, or writing a paper about it are the simple ways to share our personal enlightenments to educate others.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU TO BE AN INNOVATOR IN AESTHETIC PRACTICE?

Dr. Anderson: Being an innovator allows you to not only have the honor to share your intellectual concepts with your peers but to also be on the receiving end from others, understanding someone else’s thoughts and ideas on the same topic. It allows you to stimulate your mind long after formal schooling and training in your field have come to an end.

Dr. Pozner: To be an innovator is to be Number One. Search out and use new things that offer patients new and better ways to treat problems; Most of the time these advances have less downtime and are less invasive.

Dr. Buford: Without continually innovating, I would be completely bored. I personally am always striving to advance my abilities and offerings so that my patients receive the best products and procedures that are available to them.

WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT MEDICAL INNOVATION YOU HAVE MADE IN AESTHETIC PRACTICE?

Dr. Buford: The most important medical innovation I have made is in my education of other physicians and medical professions in the power of effective marketing and social media. Medicine is changing, and how we practice today is far different than how we practiced in the past. Those who are cognizant of this change stand to benefit from these changes; those who do not will simply be left behind.

Dr. Pozner: All the new lasers! They do things we could not have thought about years ago: eliminating wrinkles, veins, and tattoos; non-surgical body contouring; and more!

JOIN THE CONVERSATION

How has innovation changed you and your practice? Have you identified novel ways to deal with emerging challenges?

Tell us what you think: ma@bmctoday.com

THE EXPERTS SAY



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—Gregory Buford, MD

Dr. Anderson: The most important medical innovation I feel I have made is sharing my injection techniques I have developed with others at a very early stage of development with both Botox Cosmetic in 2001 and

Sculptra in 2004. Having been part of the first national educational faculty group in 2000, I traveled to India on behalf of Allergan to launch the basic technique and then to Singapore/Thailand/Australia/New Zealand to teach advanced techniques a year later. I was fortunate enough to have a similar opportunity with the introduction of Sculptra in this country in 2004. After learning the basic skills in Switzerland with Danny Vlegghar, I developed my own patterns as one of the first trainers in the US for Sculptra, training over 200 offices over the following eight years, becoming a master trainer in the US.

WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT PRACTICE MANAGEMENT INNOVATION YOU HAVE MADE IN AESTHETIC PRACTICE?

Dr. Pozner: My practice management innovation stems from working with others and building a multispecialty practice.

Dr. Buford: The most important practice management innovation that I have made is in the growth and development of an online educational campaign for my existing as well as potential clients. How we communicate with our patients is completely different now and we need to understand that a two-way dialogue is the foundation for establishing rapport within our specialty. We must educate, and not sell; we must offer solutions, and not simply discounts.

Dr. Anderson: My practice management path has always been to offer a highly personalized boutique-type office where my patients are seeing me exclusively. They come to my practice for my advice and expertise and that is what they receive. My growth is 100 percent based on word of mouth, so my innovation lies in my simplicity. ■