

# More than just greater magnification

By Joseph Allbeury

Operating microscopes, once viewed as tools exclusively for specialists, are slowly permeating their way into general practice. While endodontists need a scope for high magnification, general dentists often see that as secondary to a greater need.

“The major reason I bought a microscope was to address the chronic neck and back pain I’d been having for years,” explained Dr Gus Jones, a solo general practitioner in the Sydney suburb of Narrabeen. “The scope forces you to adopt an upright posture-correct position that alleviates a lot of the problems that leaning over a patient for hours on end causes.

“I used loupes already and I’d tried various types of stools to sit on and other things to relieve the pain I was having, but nothing helped. Since buying the microscope 18 months ago however, my shoulder pain has gone and my lower back pain is continuing to improve. It’s made a world of difference.

“So the number one reason I bought a scope was to alleviate the pain I was experiencing daily; now that I have it however, there are a dozen more reasons why I would never want to be without it.”

Dr Jones looked at several microscopes and eventually purchased a Global G6 operating microscope from Inline Systems. “The service and support offered by the team at Inline Systems was really the clincher. They could tie together the whole package with the scope and the audiovisual aspects that I wanted. Their backup support has also been excellent.”

The package includes a beam splitter with a digital camera that allows images of procedures to be taken and also permits patients to watch their treatment in progress.

“I always offer to let patients watch the images from the microscope while I work and the reaction from that is pretty amazing. When you say do you want to watch what’s happening, half look at you like you’re the strangest guy on earth and the other half are very enthusiastic. Of the latter group, most of them tell you how much they have enjoyed it after you’re finished.

“In that regard, the microscope has really helped increase the patients’ perception of the value of the treatment and of you as a dentist. In effect, they seem happier to pay!”

Dr Jones said that adapting to microscope dentistry involved a quick learning curve. “The transition was very easy and it’s now as if I’ve always worked this way. One of the major reasons I like the Global scope is because it has a very low [2.6x] magnification setting, similar to my loupes, which helped in the beginning. The more that I use it, the more comfortable I am with the higher power settings [up to 24x is available].

“The benefits of extra magnification are enormous because you can see so much more. As a result, I can do more work - there were things I used to send off that I now do myself. Finding the primary or secondary canal during an RCT is the most obvious one.

“My overall confidence has also increased and stress levels



decreased because I am no longer struggling to see things. I also seem to be able to work faster without compromising quality. In fact, the quality of my work has undoubtedly increased.

“I no longer wonder whether a tooth may have a crack in it for example. Now if there is a fracture, I can very confidently see it. In fact, you spot cracks even when you’re not looking for them.

“I use it for the majority of procedures that we do. It adds value everywhere. When you’re cutting a prep close to another tooth, you can confidently avoid damaging the other tooth because you can see everything. It takes all the guess work out of it.

“Dentists often think that when you buy a scope, you’re being overly pedantic and are going beyond clinical relevance in what you’re trying to achieve. But I’m not like that. I think everyone will have one of these in 20 years time, just like we all have a highspeed now. I just got in earlier than most.”

For more information, call Inline Systems on (02) 9999-2696.