

Internship at Smithfield Dental Care

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Figure 1 – Different Sterilization Techniques (Antibacterial Wipes and Autoclave)



Introduction

I worked as an unpaid intern for Smithfield Dental Care. Rather than just shadowing a dentist, I found ways to help out around the office by..

- Assisting in Radiographs
- Sterilizing the instruments and rooms
- Prophylaxis Polishing for Hygiene appts.
- Assisting Dr. Harris or Other Staff

Through this internship I have learned more about the field of dentistry, and how to be more prepared for dental school.

Methods

To assist the office I make sure that each room is sterilized after being used so that the assistants can bring back their next patient to avoid getting behind. To sterilize the room, I make sure to wipe every instrument and surface that has been used. Then I replace all bibs and water tips and suction tubes. Then I clean the instruments, bag them, and then put them in the autoclave for sterilization.

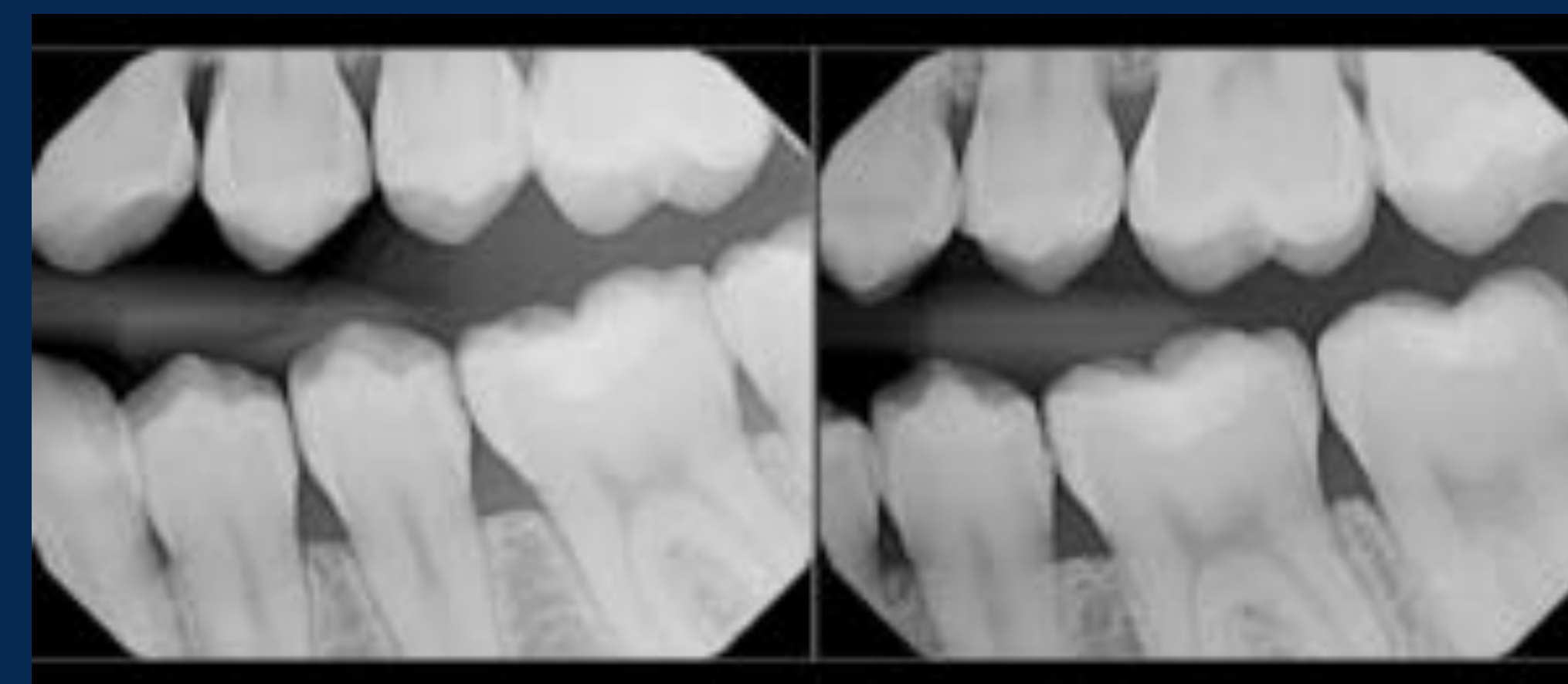
I help the hygienists with taking x-rays, doing their prophylaxis polishing, and applying fluoride. While I am doing this they work on the patient notes, and schedule them back for their next check up, because sometimes it is easy to fall behind schedule when having problems with bad x-rays, difficult patients, etc. This internship has helped me enhance my radiograph capturing skills.

Figure 2 – Use great photos and charts



*On top is a prophylaxis polish treatment
Bottom is application of fluoride*

Figure 2 – Different Radiographs



On the left are a set of Bitewing radiographs and on the right is a periapical x-ray of a tooth that has recently done a root canal.

Conclusions

I have been able to learn so much more about the field of dentistry throughout this semester with Smithfield Dental care and thanks to Dr. Harris. Having been able to participate in functions in a dental office has helped solidify my desire to continue a career in dentistry. I came into the internship not knowing much about Radiographs or even root canals, but through practice and observation I feel much more comfortable explaining to friends and family the importance of these methods.

