



Empower Your Patients –
A European **Perspective**
for the **21st Century**

The #ColgateTalks 10 Point Charter of Patient Empowerment

Oral Care prevention is a cornerstone of overall health! The dental team plays a very important role to motivate and empower patients for better prevention. Making patient empowerment central to the values of your dental practice could be the key to success.

The patients who achieve and maintain a healthy mouth - thanks to your coaching - are likely to become your most satisfied customers. The following 10 points summarise the 2016 #ColgateTalks online conference discussions and can help you rise to the challenge!

1. **Act before it's too late.** Acting early with the right preventative measures can mean significantly less restorative treatments. Carefully check for early signs of disease and propose additional preventive measures – be open with your patients that those require extra responsibility from them.
2. **Actively recommend prevention.** Constantly remind your patients that caries and periodontitis are preventable diseases. Patients are looking for your expert recommendation of products, services and oral hygiene techniques that can help them stay healthy. Make it easy for them.
3. **Acknowledge each patient is different.** Adjust your communication to talk authentically and effectively to patients, depending on their age, approach, experience and attitude. Ensure the patient understands your advice.
4. **Consider your patient's quality of life.** One way to enhance your patients' quality of life is to help relieve them from the pain of Dentine Hypersensitivity. Appearance and social confidence are also critically important for patients.
5. **Include patients' own opinion of their oral health and general wellbeing in your patient records and plans.** Involve patients at the beginning of the diagnostic process in order for them to understand their situation. Listen openly to their viewpoint and feedback.
6. **A healthy mouth is not just the absence of disease or pain,** but a mouth that adapts quickly, easily and resiliently to changes in diet, stress or aging. Disease-free patients need your support too.
7. **Aim to be a coach rather than a disease manager.** Guide your patients on how to maintain a balanced biofilm – for a healthy mouth in a healthy body. Encourage a patient centric approach throughout the whole dental team.
8. **Look for new ways to build understanding, empathy and dialogue with your patients,** especially your younger patients. Ask them how they are – and try to understand their wants and needs. This will build further trust and confidence in the relationship.
9. **Try new techniques for motivating patients.** Motivational interviewing can offer effective and realistic disease prevention, by facilitating and engaging the patients' intrinsic motivation to change behavior. Aim for patient adherence rather than "compliance".
10. **Prepare for the informed (and misinformed) patient.** Research online resources to enhance your conversations and relationships with patients. Younger patients love digital technology - but their own online search can lead to misunderstandings about oral health.