

# Relaxing at the dentist's



**A visit to the dentist is not everyone's idea of fun. So how do you make sure that the atmosphere in a busy dental practice is as relaxed and easy as it can be for both the patients and the staff, thereby helping to ensure the success of treatments? Dutch dental practice Heeldemond knows what to do to get these results....**

"Coffee house is our music today," says receptionist Margriet at around 8 am when the practice opens. "It's important that we have a good vibe in the waiting room, and a relaxed genre of music helps achieve that." Throughout the day, there's an unhurried feel to the waiting room, with people leafing through periodicals or savouring a cup of tea.

*Text by: Denise Leusink*



Fieke Maliepaard is the dentist on duty, assisted today by Ilse. "I interlace independent working with working with the dentist or at reception," she says. "By doing something different each day, you retain your focus and can give of your best. No two days are alike, and that gives me energy." Almost all of the assistants have supplementary diplomas and can assist in four-handed procedures. This allows the dentist to concentrate better and ensures an efficient workflow.



This dental practice provides what are known as VIP treatments, the Dutch acronym standing for care, instruction and prevention. Patients are given generous time slots so that the team can take their time properly with the patient beforehand and give the patient their full attention. One of the reasons this is so important is that by having a chat with someone, you can put them at their ease, creating a calm atmosphere.



Roger, owner of this modern dental practice, says that he doesn't just look for loose teeth or places needing filling but also scrutinises the teeth and mouth as a whole. In fact, this is a practice where they believe in treating the whole person. "It might sound rather philosophical," he says, "but what you are, you are in your entirety.... This is how it is that I got acquainted with the effect of oxygen, years ago: it's a vital element for your whole body, and its effects are hugely powerful, including in the mouth!"



Receptionist Agnes explains how the daily diary is split up into time blocks, so that more intensive procedures are interspersed with shorter appointments. This allows optimum concentration to be kept up, and is the best way of avoiding overrunning appointments. And that, too, helps keep the place calm.



The working day is over when the last patient leaves at 5 pm. "It's been a great afternoon!", Roger says. During the debriefing at the end of the day, there is an opportunity to discuss anything that went less well during the day and to think up improvements together. "You see, experience teaches us that it's never long until people start doing things out of habit, and that is something we have to avoid. By holding these debriefings, we keep everyone on their toes and help create the best possible working relationships and treatments, with the patient at the centre!"