

***The Nova Scotia Dental Association supports the belief that dentists are best able to make self-determined, informed practice decisions when they are equipped with all the necessary information regardless of practice model. Patient-centered care is best delivered when the dentist/patient relationship is based on the dentist having full autonomy for treatment decisions.***

Important questions every dentist should ask before making a practice model decision (from the 2013 Investigative Report on the Corporate Practice of Dentistry from the Academy of General Dentistry):

- a. Who is my employer?
- b. Who can create or edit a treatment plan? Who is responsible for the treatment plan? Do I have the authority to disagree or change a treatment plan?
- c. Who owns the dental professional entity? Who owns the business entity?
- d. What is the governance structure of the dental profession entity? Of the business entity?
- e. Does the business entity have a relationship with any outside investors, such as an equity firm or public company?
- f. Is there a management service agreement? If so, does that agreement comply with provincial laws and regulations?
- g. What are my employer's expectations regarding my productivity, patient volume, and revenue? For example, may I take two hours to complete a crown prep?
- h. What formula is used for dentist compensation? That is, to what degree is my compensation based on my productivity?
- i. What is the relation between my compensation and that of the business entity?
- j. Who owns the lease agreement for the building? For the equipment? If I buy a practice, will I have the opportunity to own the equipment in full, or will I rent the equipment perpetually? If I can own the equipment, what is the lease term, and is there a separate agreement for a lease-to-own opportunity?
- k. May I use any vendor for supplies? Is there a cap on the volume or type of supplies available?
- l. May I use a dental laboratory of my choosing? How are lab costs ascertained and apportioned?
- m. Who has control over the revenue stream distribution, and how is the revenue stream distributed?
- n. Who owns patient records? Upon termination, would I have access to patient records? If so, to what extent? Is there a procedure for accessing these records?
- o. How are after-hours emergencies addressed?
- p. Who makes hiring and firing decisions? Are there any protocols or guidelines for these decisions?
- q. May I have access to all contracts and other documentation upon which the above answers are based, so that I may share them with an independent attorney, accountant or professional adviser?