



Minimizing Turnover Disruptions in a Dental Practice with **easyclinic**

A Proposal for [REDACTED]

30 November 2023
Ottawa, ON

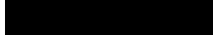


Igor Coelho A. S. Marques
Founder, Mudpuppy



Table of Contents

Executive Summary	ii
Glossary	iii
Introduction	1
The Problem with Turnover	1
Difficulties	1
Mitigation.....	1
What is easyclinic?	2
Implementation at [REDACTED]	3
Timeline.....	3
Cost Analysis.....	3
Evaluation of easyclinic	4
Features and Benefits	4
Alternatives	4
Limitations.....	5
Closing Remarks	5
Recommendation.....	5
Conclusion	5
References.....	6
Appendix	7



Executive Summary

The purpose of this proposal is to suggest that Dr. [REDACTED] adopt the [easyclinic](#) app in her practice, [REDACTED], to streamline training and inventory management and thus achieve better staff retention.

Dental practices in Ottawa are suffering from a staffing crisis; employees like dental assistants and hygienists are hard to find and retain. This problem often incurs heavy costs for the practice and creates a lot of stress for team members.

A well-designed app can help mitigate the negative effects of turnover. This app must be:

- **User-friendly:** Intuitive to learn and start using effectively in half a month.
- **Reliable:** Able to show data about procedure setup and inventory status at any time.
- **Secure:** Able to keep the logs of the practice's activity safe from ill-intentioned people.
- **Cost-effective:** Affordable to roll out and lead to better staff retention and inventory management in four to six months, which will save hundreds of dollars every month [1].

The [easyclinic](#) web app meets these criteria. It makes training new hires and managing and restocking the inventory simple and quick. Because of these features, it can help reverse the vicious cycle of turnover. This will reduce mistakes and delays, improve the mood in the practice, and make patients feel more satisfied.

And [easyclinic](#) does all of this *for free*.



Glossary

Burnout: State of physical and emotional exhaustion that results from prolonged stress. In the workplace, burnout can lead employees to become psychologically detached from their work and quit.

Gantt chart: Visual representation of a project schedule that shows how the tasks necessary to accomplish the project's goals will take place over a set period of time.

Opportunity cost: In economics, the value of the benefit of a foregone alternative. In this proposal, an employee's tasks are the "foregone alternative" because the time they set aside to learn how to use [easyclinic](#) is time they do not spend doing their usual work. Here, the opportunity cost is the employees' hourly rates multiplied by the hours it takes them to master the app.

Turnover: Rate at which employees leave a company and are replaced by new hires.

UI/UX: UI (User Interface) is the visual design of an app; UX (User Experience) refers to how users interact with the UI and use an app's features to do what they want.

Web app: Software application that runs directly on a web browser without requiring installation. Well-known examples include Canva for graphic design and Smallpdf for PDF editing.

Introduction

This proposal suggests to Dr. [REDACTED] that the staff at her practice in Ottawa, [REDACTED], use the [easyclinic](#) app in their daily operations. The integration of [easyclinic](#) in their routine will streamline the training of new hires and enhance inventory management, minimizing turnover-related disruptions.

Staff retention currently ranks as the “number one concern for most dental practices in North America” [2]. This includes Ottawa, where the COVID-19 pandemic kickstarted a “loyalty crisis” that has caused turnover to reach a critical level today [3].

The issue of turnover affects everyone in a dental office, but it tends to have a greater impact on team members in entry-level and support positions like assistants and technicians. This instability translates to extra costs and stress as workflows slow down and dentists have to carve out more and more time in their packed schedules for dealing with Human Resources.

The following sections will:

- Discuss the effects of high turnover in dental practices
- Show how to implement [easyclinic](#) at [REDACTED]
- Explain how [easyclinic](#)’s features and benefits simplify training and restocking

The Problem with Turnover

High employee turnover in dental offices leads to a feedback loop that creates negative effects. Because of this, dentists need to find ways to revert this cycle.

Difficulties

Everyone in a dental practice feels the extra weight turnover creates, but dental assistants and technicians bear the brunt of the problem. Because these team members are torn between training new hires, overseeing inventory, setting up rooms, and assisting back-to-back procedures, they can burn out.

If they choose to quit, they take their knowledge and experience with them, and the staff members who remain have to fill in the gaps created by their departure. Since the people who stay face similar pressures, they can also burn out and leave at some point.

This negative cycle increases the likelihood of delays and mistakes, which can harm reputation and add otherwise unnecessary expenses. For instance, a dental assistant in Ottawa recently said that in the six months it took her to take over dealing with suppliers and placing orders, her practice had hemorrhaged some \$2,500 in ill-advised supply purchases [1].

Mitigation

Some factors behind high turnover in dental practices reflect large-scale economic developments, such as high inflation, talent shortage, and remote-work alternatives. Individual dentists, like most other people, can do little to alter the course of the economy.

What they can do, however, is provide their teams with the means to prevent burnout and limit the effects of economic downturns by facilitating the training of new employees and the management of the practice's instruments and materials.

A web app can do this. Such an app must be:

- **User-friendly:** So intuitive to learn and use that it is easy for any team member to pick it up and start using it effectively in half a month.
- **Reliable:** Able to store and display important information regarding procedure setup and inventory status whenever staff members need to access it.
- **Secure:** Able to keep detailed logs of inventory status, supply purchases, and personalized procedure instructions safe from ill-intentioned people.
- **Cost-effective:** Affordable to roll out so that staff transitions are smoother and lead to better staff retention and inventory management in four to six months of use; this will save a small dental practice an estimated \$300 per month [1].

What is [easyclinic](#)?

[easyclinic](#) is a web app that allows dental practitioners to manage their practice's procedures, materials, instruments, and supply orders.

Because [easyclinic](#) is web-based, it can be accessed with any electronic device equipped with an Internet connection and a modern browser, like Chrome or Firefox, and does not need to be downloaded or installed.

Figure 1 to the right shows the welcome screen registered users see, and gives a taste of [easyclinic](#)'s aesthetic. The app uses plain language, simple icons, easy-to-read fonts, large buttons, a subdued palette of colours, and plenty of white space. As a result, navigation is intuitive and fast.

From the welcome screen, users can choose to access one of three main sections in the app:

- **Materials:** view, add, remove, and edit items in the practice's inventory; each item can also be marked as running low here;
- **Procedures:** view, add, remove, and edit procedures, according to each dentist's preferences; each procedure has a list of materials and locations that can be exported as a PDF (see Figure 2);
- **Restocking:** track materials that are running low, see the order history, and add comments to specify details about orders to be placed.

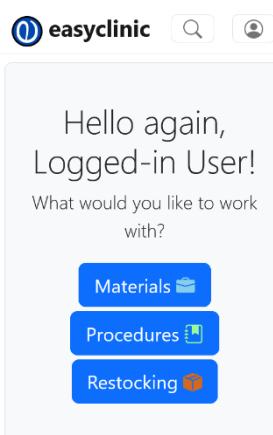


Figure 1: Welcome screen

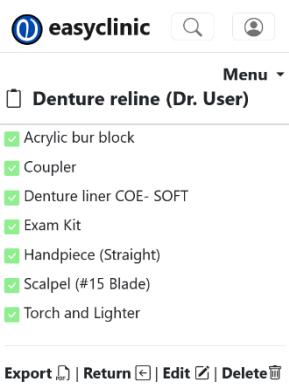


Figure 2: Procedure details screen

Any team member can be authorized to access their practice's account on [easyclinic](#).

Implementation at [REDACTED]

The following paragraphs explain how to implement [easyclinic](#) at [REDACTED] and how much it will cost.

Timeline

In order to get every one in the practice up to speed with the app, a team member must first be formally assigned to lead the effort to implement [easyclinic](#). This is ideally done by an assistant, technician, receptionist, or manager because their responsibilities make them well equipped to become custodians of the practice's account. At [REDACTED], team members [REDACTED], [REDACTED], and [REDACTED] are all suitable candidates for this task.

During the implementation process, the chosen team member will allot one hour each day in their schedule to set up the app and learn how to use it. As shown in the Gantt chart in Table 1 below, this process will consist of four phases that span 11 business days:

Table 1: Implementation Gantt chart

Week Day	1					2					3				
	M	T	W	Th	F	M	T	W	Th	F	M				
App setup															
Make an account for the practice		■													
Set up a tablet in the supply room		■													
Inventory input															
Add materials		■■■■■													
Flag materials that are running low		■■■■■													
Add locations				■											
Assign locations to materials					■■■										
Procedures input															
Add procedures							■■■■■								
Add practitioners										■■■					
Assign practitioners to procedures										■■■					
Staff training											■■■■■				

After implementing [easyclinic](#), this team member will incorporate using the app into their routine, updating it as needed, producing regular reports, and ensuring that the staff uses it responsibly.

Cost Analysis

All [easyclinic](#) features are available for free to any user. Because of this, the main cost associated with this implementation is the “opportunity cost,” i.e., the cost of allocating time during business hours to set up the app and learn how to use it.

Additionally, the practice will also have to buy a tablet from which to access [easyclinic](#), and a stand to secure the tablet in place in the supply room. All team members can access [easyclinic](#) directly on their smart phones, but a tablet in a fixed place helps keep things centralized and organized.

Table 2 below breaks down the estimated cost of implementing [easyclinic](#) at [REDACTED]:

Table 2: Implementation budget

Description	Cost
Amazon Fire HD (10")	\$150
Tablet Stand	\$25
easyclinic Account	\$0
Combined Work Hours	20
Opportunity Cost	\$825
TOTAL COST	\$1,000

As mentioned before, [easyclinic](#) will help [REDACTED] manage its inventory and supply order history so it will eventually save about \$300 per month. This means that the app's implementation will pay for itself in four to six months. Additionally, there will be significant but indirect savings as [easyclinic](#) leads to better staff retention.

Evaluation of [easyclinic](#)

Despite its limitations and alternatives, [easyclinic](#)'s versatility and affordability make it the ideal tool to fight the effects of turnover by optimizing training, inventory management, and restocking.

Features and Benefits

Table 3 below links some of [easyclinic](#)'s key features to their benefits to highlight how the app is user-friendly, reliable, secure, and cost-effective, and thus worth the trouble of its implementation.

Table 3: Features and benefits

Feature	Benefit
Minimalist and intuitive UI/UX	Lightweight and easy to learn
Detailed log of supplies, procedures, orders	Reliable records to help training, management
Cross site request forgery (CSRF) protection	Complete safety for authorized users
Free account with full, unlimited access	Cost-effective and risk-free

Alternatives

There are alternatives to [easyclinic](#). Here are three of them:

- **Manual methods:** Using notebooks, folders, a dry-erase board, and printed receipts is very simple, but it is also prone to data loss.
- **Ad-hoc apps:** Excel spreadsheets, note-taking apps, and digital copies of receipts make record-keeping safer than doing it by hand, but it requires discipline to centralize and input data consistently.
- **Sowingo:** Inventory-tracking app that is easy to use, reliable, safe, and feature-rich, but also costly; its most basic subscription requires an annual payment of \$2,100.

[REDACTED] currently relies on a mix of manual methods and ad-hoc apps. It works well, but it can be better. Table 4 below compares the advantages of doing things by hand and with ad-hoc apps, Sowingo, and [easyclinic](#):

Table 4: Evaluation of three different systems

Criteria	Manual	Ad-Hoc	Sowingo	easyclinic
User-friendly	●		●	●
Reliable		●	●	●
Secure	●	●	●	●
Cost-effective	●	●		●

[easyclinic](#) combines the best of each of its alternatives—the simplicity of recording things by hand, the expediency of ad-hoc apps, the convenience of a backend database with a sleek interface like Sowingo—and offers this solution with no cost to the user.

Limitations

Despite its benefits, there are some things [easyclinic](#) does not do: appointment scheduling, insurance handling, invoicing and billing, and direct messaging. For these purposes, [REDACTED] will keep using the industry-standard Tracker app.

Closing Remarks

This proposal has suggested that Dr. [REDACTED] adopt the [easyclinic](#) app in her practice, [REDACTED], to optimize work and mitigate the effects employee turnover.

Recommendation

Implementing [easyclinic](#) is straightforward, but it will be hard to do during the upcoming holiday season. The staff will be preoccupied with too many things at work and at home to be able give the app a fair try. Thus, it will be wiser for [REDACTED] to roll out [easyclinic](#) after New Year's.

Conclusion

[easyclinic](#) makes it simple and quick to add, remove, find, and connect materials, inventory locations, procedures, practitioners, supplies that are running low, and past orders. This creates a virtual infrastructure for the dental practice that can be relied upon to train new hires and manage inventory more efficiently and thus minimize mistakes, delays, and stress.

As a result, adopting [easyclinic](#) will enable [REDACTED] to prevent burnout among its employees and better retain its staff. This stability will improve the mood in the workplace, support staff will feel better supported, and practitioners will be glad to deal less with HR problems and more with their patients' needs.

Most importantly, patients will notice this improvement, too, and will become more satisfied with their experience at the practice.



References

- [1] ██████████, dental assistant at ██████████, in personal interview with the author, November 17, 2023.
- [2] H. Moore, "The importance of staff retention in dental offices: Why it matters," *Oral Health* (blog), August 28, 2023. Available: <https://www.oralhealthgroup.com/blogs/the-importance-of-staff-retention-in-dental-offices-why-it-matters>. Accessed: November 16, 2023.
- [3] ██████████, dentist and owner of ██████████, in personal interview with the author, October 18, 2023.



Appendix

Excerpt of an interview with Dr. [REDACTED], owner of [REDACTED] in Ottawa, recorded October 18, 2023.

I think the whole HR aspect is becoming more and more difficult, especially after COVID, and that part I don't really enjoy anymore. When I talk with my colleagues, they all have the same complaints, so it's definitely generalized across the board. It's become difficult to find the right people, hold on to them, keep them motivated.

I've been doing this for over 22 years, and in my experience, people used to be more loyal in the past. Maybe there is way more demand than there is supply now, so it's challenging. Every time you're hiring someone new, it's a big investment, and it's taxing on the rest of the team because then they're pulling more weight to help train that new person.

I have one really good friend who hasn't had a hygienist for close to a year. She's been putting out ads but she barely gets any bites, and if she does get a bite, that person is like, "Oh, those hours don't work for me," or, "I don't want the pay that you're offering, I want a lot more." And that's just one example. I've been talking to colleagues and everyone's been struggling to find people for all positions, not just hygienists.