To: Amanda Wilkins, Office Manager
From: Zahra Surani, Dental Hygienist
Date: June 3, 2015
Subject: Proposal for Hiring a Second Hygienist

**Introduction**
Over the past couple of months the hygiene appointments in the schedule have been overlapped and double booked. This is causing inefficient standard of care for dental hygiene services. The dental hygiene process of care includes building rapport with the patient, periodontal charting (measuring tooth’s supporting bone levels), scaling (thorough removal of plaque and tartar in mouth), and educating patients on their oral health. With a scattered schedule and only one hygienist, multiple patients are seen in less than an hour, which is adequate only for scaling and no other services. Moreover, the dentist also cleans patient’s teeth while they should be focusing on restorative treatment (ex. fillings, crowns, bridges), which is their main focus of practice.

If the hygienist is not able to spend time they need to reach optimal oral health, patients will not receive the proper standard of care and results in negligence of treatment. Insufficient time causes services that should be discussed and provided, such as fluoride treatments and Velscope (oral cancer screening), to often be neglected. This sub-optimal patient care not only lowers our profits, but also adversely impacts our integrity.

**Statement of Problem**
Inadequate amounts of time scheduled for hygiene appointments lowers the standard of care and profits of our office. Consequences involve two things: first, loss of profit due to the hygienist and dentist scaling rather than the hygienist focusing on cleanings and dentists on treatment; and second, the hygienist is not providing services that are part of the standard process of care because the schedule is inconsistent.

**Proposed Solution**
A possible solution is to hire another hygienist and reconsider the way we schedule our patients. With five rooms in our office and two hygienists, two rooms can be dedicated to 50-minute hygiene appointments. With the remaining three rooms available for dental treatments, the dentists can focus solely on treatment while the hygienists can focus on hygiene appointments in a timely manner. Greater capacity for hygiene appointments will result in greater revenue, as hygiene patients are seen routinely every 6 months. Furthermore, this increased patient traffic will also bring in more possible treatment revenue due to their regular visits.

**Scope**
To assess the feasibility of hiring a second hygienist in order to create consistency in the schedule and allow dentists to focus on treatment only, I will:

1. Explore the cost of an additional hygienist
2. Compare current profit to future profit with the new schedule
3. Research if our patient market allows for more treatment to be booked in the dental chair
4. Find out if the change in schedule would affect other staff in the office (ie. Administrative assistant would have to book more patients, dental assistants would have to balance their time more efficiently, etc.)

**Methods**
My main sources of data will consist of collaboration with the office manager who is also the administrative assistant and a questionnaire for all the staff members about their opinion on the flow of the current schedule. I will also include graphs to show what the production is now and what it could potentially be with the new schedule. To do this, I will calculate the number of hygiene patients seen in a day currently versus how many will be seen with a second hygiene column in the schedule. Furthermore, I will call to collaborate with other dental offices to see how scheduling works with their office.

Secondary sources will include publications and studies on roles of a dental hygienist and scheduling in a dental office.

**My Qualifications**
I have been a dental hygienist for 5 years and have worked in different office environments. I have been working at BLVD dental for one and a half months where I have seen improvements that can be made. I am currently doing my dental hygiene degree online, which consists of theory-based courses that improve my knowledge about the dental office environment. Thus, I have had continual learning about patient-hygiene interaction and how to provide the best care.

**Conclusion**
It is clear that a second hygienist will create an efficient schedule while bringing in more revenue for the office. With the above inquiries to direct a plan for change, I can implement in a strategic way to benefit the office as a whole. With your acceptance I can start the process as soon as possible.