

Practice Profile **The Eye & Cosmetic Surgery Center**

A Personalized Touch

Since residency, Dr. Rowen has wanted to tackle presbyopia.

BY SHERI ROWEN, MD

A medical practice can come into existence by happenstance or by design, and my vision was to create and design a boutique-style practice. Early on, I recognized that my personality should be made apparent to my patients—through me and through those who represent me. I wanted the practice to be warm, welcoming, and personalized for each patient. In this competitive economic environment, where patient volume drives growth and income, I have focused on clinical quality and customer service. This strategy has been successful, and my practice has flourished, which has led to my happiness, personal growth, and ability to sleep at night.

How did my colleagues and I create a boutique-style practice? I envisioned my staff would treat patients the way I like to be treated, with care and compassion, while developing fun, open, and meaningful long-term relationships. Most of all, I wanted to pursue my dream of offering state-of-the-art, high-technology treatments that would rival those provided at any large center—but with a personal touch.

As a former fellow at the Wilmer Eye Institute, I developed a love of science and research, and I have participated in many FDA clinical trials. This brings another gratifying dimension to my practice. I am a naturally curious individual who loves the challenge of new ideas and new technology. The result is a wonderful diversity of services in the practice, because I have an avid love of learning.

EARNING REFERRALS

My practice, the Eye & Cosmetic Surgery Center, is a hospital-based version of a private practice with managerial services from the affiliated hospital, Mercy Medical Center in Baltimore. The practice started as one office in the hospital and grew to another in the suburbs. In March 2011, the hospital and we will open a third location, and a fourth is planned in a few years. These satellite locations are associated and co-located with a large primary care and specialty group that is part of the hospital's services. The concept, therefore, is that the primary care physicians refer their patients to the specialists within the group and vice versa such that all practices grow simultaneously. So far, it is



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working beautifully, because patients appreciate coming to one location for their medical services. Another reason this arrangement works is that I do not take referrals for granted; they are earned by good follow-up and service.

I specialize in cataract and premium lens surgery, refractive surgery, and cosmetic treatments. We also offer general ophthalmic care, and the practice includes retina and glaucoma specialists. I am finally pursuing my dream, which, from the time of my residency, has included tackling presbyopia, since I knew it would happen to me one day!

CUSTOMIZED CARE

The word *customization* best describes my focus for patients who want to go the extra mile to achieve their

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best possible outcome. To reach this goal, I use all available technologies. I have been fortunate to have access to virtually all lens technologies. I truly can call myself an IOL specialist, and I research and evaluate almost every new lens on the market to remain on the cutting edge.

Refractive surgery is a necessary adjunct to all lens-based surgeries, and I constantly strive to master this specialty as well. Laser vision correction, lens implantation, and cataract surgery have come of age and are now all inclusive of refractive procedures.

COSMETIC PRACTICE

My love of oculoplastic surgery spurred the development of my cosmetic practice. I committed to excelling in eyelid procedures using the CO₂ laser for all skin incisions and fat removal, which remarkably decreases recovery time and hastens healing for my patients. I have added fillers, Botox Cosmetic (onabotulinumtoxinA; Allergan, Inc.), and other skin and body treatments to round out my aesthetics portfolio.

MEDIA AND LECTURING OPPORTUNITIES

I have been invited and appeared on local Baltimore news programs to discuss new technologies, which has enhanced my credibility and name recognition. I was lucky to be one of the first 20 ophthalmologists in the world to embrace clear corneal incisions and topical anesthesia. As a result, I have been asked to travel nationally and internationally to teach and mentor fellow colleagues about new techniques, modalities, and pharmacology. I continue to do this, and I love the interaction with my fellow physicians.

CONCLUSION

Rather than be limited to 5 minutes of their doctor's time, my patients know they will have time to discuss their concerns. If the office visit is not enough, I communicate with them by phone, e-mail, or during a second visit to finish the conversation. This patient-centered approach has been satisfying to the patients and very rewarding to my staff and me.

I feel humble, grateful, and blessed to have had the opportunity to take care of such lovely people throughout my career and for the wonderful, enlightening interactions with my colleagues. ■

Sheri Rowen, MD, is an assistant clinical professor of ophthalmology at the University of Maryland, and she is founder and medical director of the Eye & Cosmetic Surgery Center at Mercy Medical Center and the Rowen Laser Vision & Cosmetic Center in Baltimore. She acknowledged no financial interest in the product or company mentioned herein. Dr. Rowen may be reached at (410) 332-9500 or (410) 821-5333; srowen10@gmail.com.

