



By Payam C. Ataii, DMD  
MidWinter Speaker

## THURSDAY

10:00am–12:00pm • 2 CEU, Core  
**Comprehensive Care Utilizing Advanced  
Digital and Direct Restoration Material**  
Sponsored by Shofu Dental

1:45pm–4:15pm • 2.5 CEU, Core  
**New Era in Patient Care  
with Clear Aligners**  
Sponsored by SmileDirectClub

# New Era in Comprehensive Patient Care Utilizing Hybrid Aligner Model and Biocompatible Direct Restoration

Advances in dental technology and the growing consumer demand of esthetics has given way for simplified chair side and hybrid at home dental treatments monitored remotely by clinicians. More people are opting for cosmetic dental treatments specifically for straighter whiter teeth giving way for direct to consumer marketing of clear aligner options, along with increased consumer knowledge of in-office direct restorative system i.e. chair side “brush on veneer” therapy.

Consumer awareness for SmileDirectClub™’s clear aligners generates over 500,000 monthly searches by consumers looking for clear aligner therapy.

Additionally dental composites are now being used for direct restoration in over 95% of all anterior and 50% of all posterior teeth. This increase in anterior esthetics as well as utilizing white composite resin(s) in dentistry has an approximate value of 46 billion dollars in the United States. There is a growing demand for dental esthetics—both dentists and patients prefer cosmetically pleasing and bioactive materials that help remineralize dental structures over traditional dental materials. This article will address both sectors of patient demands and introduce the hybrid aligner model in gaining a new sector of patient(s) as a Partner Network office with SmileDirectClub™.

To help address the consumer demand for clear aligner treatments, SmileDirectClub has introduced the Partner Network program which aids consumers looking for aligner treatments to get started from a Partner Network ortho/dental office for their oral evaluation and records prior to starting their clear aligner treatment. When a consumer searches for SmileDirectClub as an aligner treatment service they are given the option to visit an SmileDirectClub’s Partner Network office as a new patient. The Partner Network office acts as the consumer’s general dentist while SmileDirectClub provides the teledentistry platform and support service for the provisions of the aligner therapy. The patient will undergo a clinical exam at the Partner Network office

to evaluate soft and hard tissue; following similar intake procedures as any new patient exam. Impressions or digital scans are sent to SmileDirectClub’s state licensed treating doctors. The treating doctor will diagnose, prescribe and manage clear aligner treatment if it’s determined to be effective therapy for the patient. The term “hybrid” aligner model refers to the SmileDirectClub’s model wherein the patient is undergoing aligner treatment through teledentistry, while keeping their hygiene and restorative treatments with the Partner Network office. Teledentistry aids in the ability to render consultations, care and education, to dental patients utilizing information technology and telecommunications which shows equivalent results when inspecting patients for tooth decay using photographs compared to visual inspection.

This hybrid model of rendering clear aligner treatment is ideal for patients who have mild to moderate malocclusions with esthetic concerns. Joining the Partner Network also provides an affordable convenient option for current patients within the Partner office who may have mild to moderate malocclusions. Both patients and dentist see value in this hybrid approach. For patients—The convenience of the hybrid model includes reduced office visits as patients will have teledentistry appointments scheduled by SmileDirectClub’s dental team. Now patients can easily incorporate aligner treatment into their lives without disrupting their finances or their lifestyle. The participating office also sees benefits within the hybrid model as there are no lab fees within the Partner Network. With most traditional aligner therapy models, lab bills for mild to moderate cases, office auxiliary fees and treatment planning support add up to be higher than the few thousand dollars the patient would likely pay in such cases. Additionally, the time saved from reduced office visits can be spent on more restorative and hygiene procedures which typically generate higher revenue. As part of the Partner Network, the participating office also receives payment for services rendered as part of the initial records taking.

### Hybrid Patient Clinical Case Report:

A 36-year-old female patient who had previous aligner treatment and lost her retainers noticed her teeth shifting back and her smile line becoming “more crooked.” Looking for an affordable clear aligner solution during hygiene exam, patient was recommended SmileDirectClub™ as a solution to address the minor tooth crowding and relapse of her teeth. Patient preferred the reduced office visits as she travels for her work and could not commit to frequent office visits for aligner followups, and was happy to have this option.

Patient anterior arch showed upper and lower mild crowding less than 3mm with slight rotation of upper lateral incisors of tooth #7 & #10. Patient’s lower posterior arch shows slight lingual tipping in of less than 20 degrees. Lower anterior arch presented with overlapping of teeth #23 thru 25 with passive eruption less than 3mm. Oral hygiene presented within normal limits, with Stage 1 gingivitis and generalized abfraction, loss of enamel on both upper and lower posterior arch. Patient also presented with Class V restorations on some of the abfractioned areas filled over 3 years ago with a Bioactive Giomer bonding and composite material (BeautiBond® and Beautiful Flow Plus® by Shofu™), and patient stated she no longer feels the thermal hypersensitive as she did in the past. This restorative option was one of the treatment options given to the patient in the past, along with soft tissue and splint option. However, patient wanted a quick solution and had a limited budget and has been very pleased that the painful thermal sensitivity has been eliminated, as well as the chosen restorative material has withstood the typical plaque and biofilm buildup with other restorative materials in her mouth. Final periodontal health evaluation was performed and submitted along with photos as well as the patient’s intra-arch digital impression scan to the SmileDirectClub’s team of treating doctors for clear aligner evaluation for the patient to start aligner treatment.

### Conclusion:

With the current consumer demand for straighter whiter teeth, and the exorbitant cost to the dental practitioner in gaining new patients, many dental practices are joining the SmileDirectClub’s Partner Network bringing a new era in clear aligner treatments. The participating practices also gain new patients as SmileDirectClub directs the interested



consumer to the dental practice. Additionally, Partner offices now have a convenient option for mild to moderate cases for their existing patients as well. Through the hybrid model – the Partner office can stay revenue positive from the very start while providing their patient’s with additional options to straighten their teeth. ■

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