An Inspirational Patient Encounter

Stephanie Fernandez-Guckes, DDS, Robert W. Frare DMD, FACD
University of Pennsylvania School of Dental Medicine,
Philadelphia, PA, United States

Clinical Aim

An estimated 1.3 billion people worldwide have a disability. In 2019, the National Council on Disability stated that oral health care is often the most difficult type of service to locate for individuals with disabilities.

The primary objective is to highlight that oral healthcare providers should never make assumptions about an individual's dental aspirations, or what can and cannot be accomplished. This patient encounter emphasizes the importance of developing dental treatment modifications to negotiate the specific challenges presented by each patient.

Patient

A 55-year-old male presented to Penn Dental Medicine at Woods, The Mikey Faulkner Dental Center part of The Advanced Education in General Dentistry Program at the University of Pennsylvania School of Dental Medicine. He has a history of Traumatic Brain Injury, is nonverbal and wheelchair mobile. The patient had been edentulous for 11 years and communicated that he would like teeth to eat with. The patient's trunk posture significantly leans to the left, and subsequently, his head is parallel to the floor while at rest.

Intervention

Despite the intrinsic challenges associated with the patient's mobility limitations, maxillary and mandibular traditional complete dentures were fabricated for the patient.
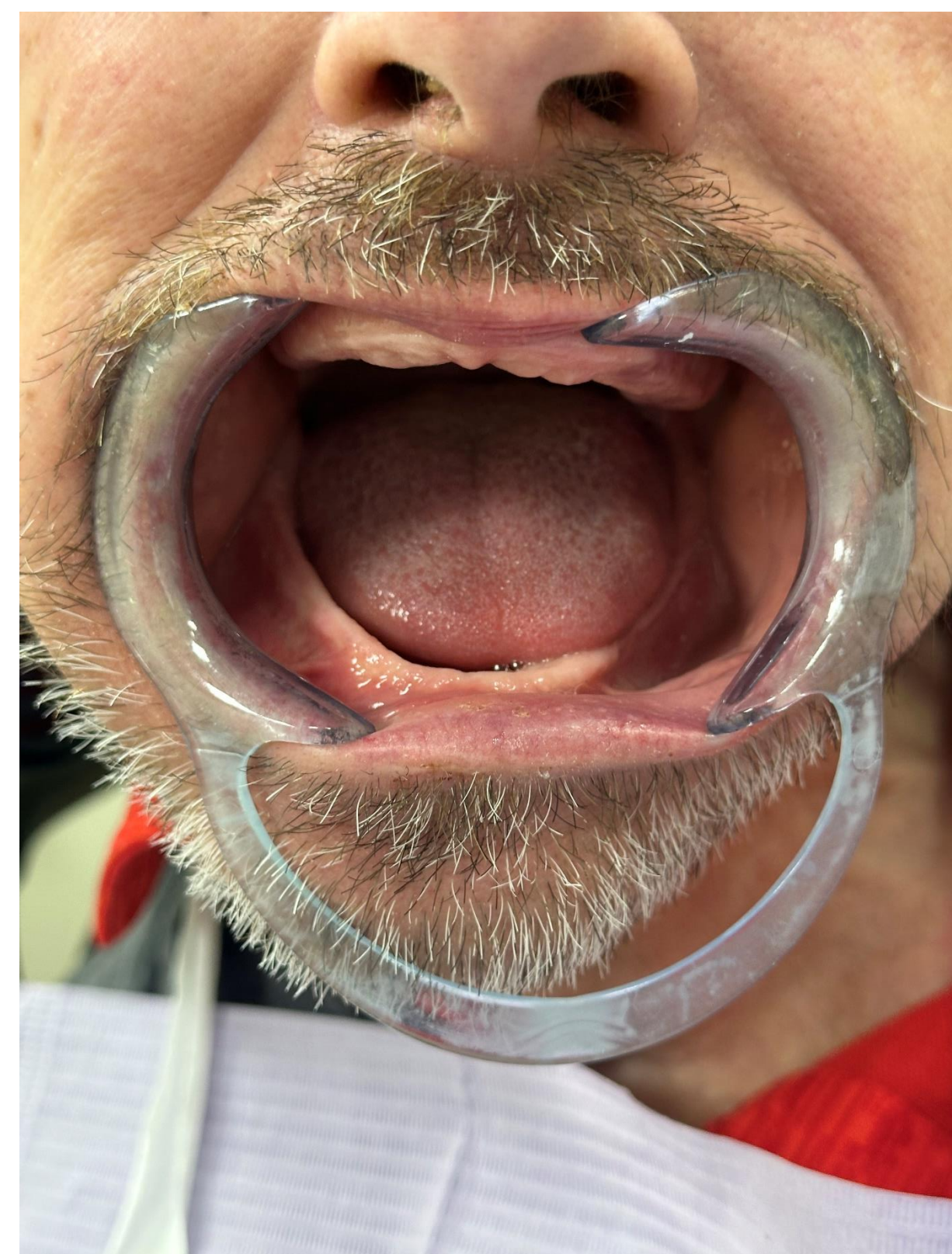
Outcome

The patient communicated incredible enthusiasm and satisfaction with the results.
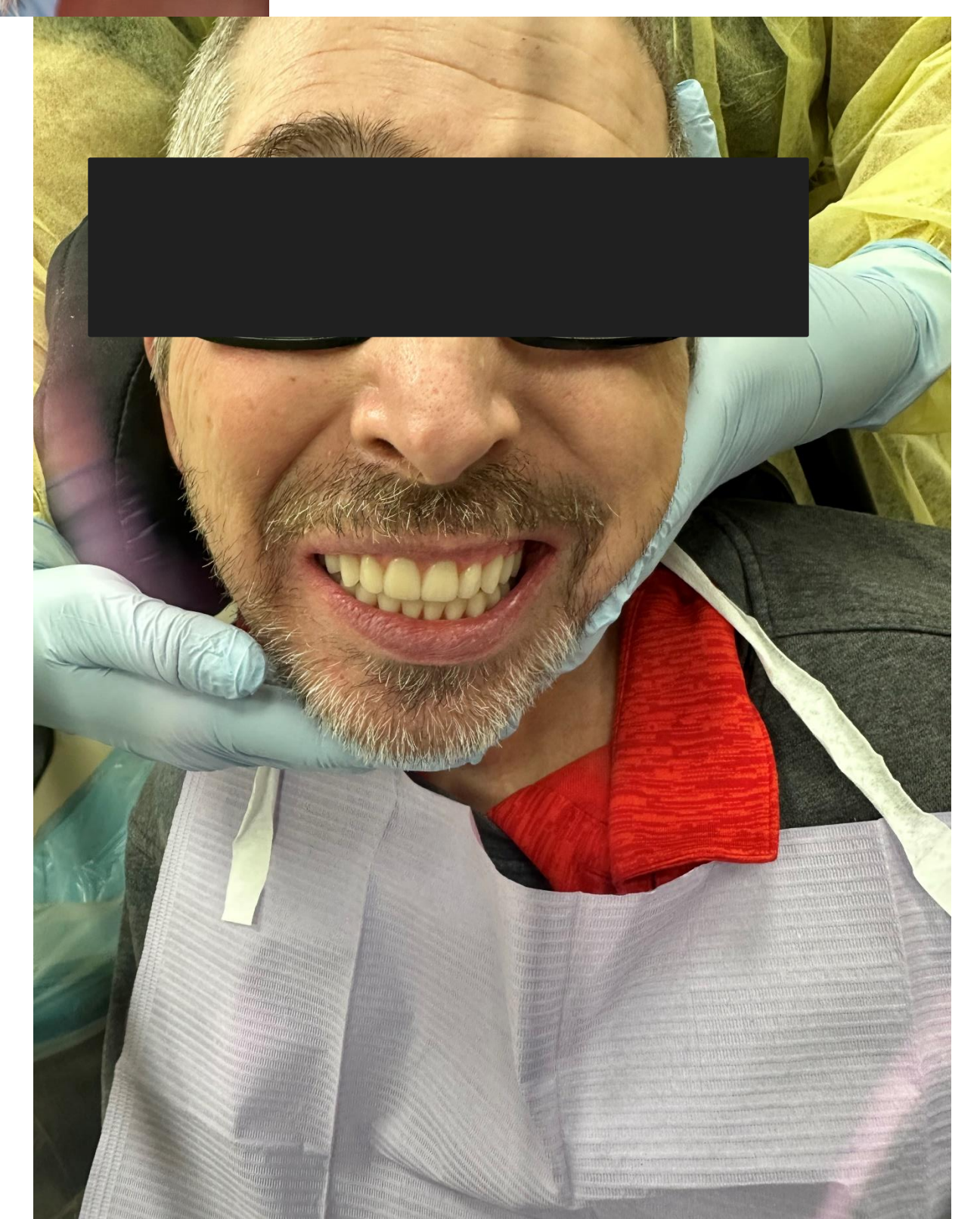
This patient encounter demonstrated that with innovative treatment modifications and an emphasis on an individual's needs and desires, oral healthcare providers can have a positive impact on our patient's health and overall quality of life.

The outcome expanded the Dental Resident's perspective on the scope of dental practice possibilities and underscored the necessity for dental professionals to always treat the patient, not the condition.

References

http://ncd.gov/newsroom/2019/dental-schools-IDDD

https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/disability-and-health

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