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# THE EDITOR'S CORNER

## The 1999 JCO Orthodontic Practice Study

A three-part series of articles beginning in this issue of JCO reveals the main results of the 1999 JCO Orthodontic Practice Study. Each of the biennial studies, since 1981, has been a CAT scan of U.S. orthodontic economics and administration. Together, they are a history of these aspects of practice.

The published tables are not only a record of how the specialty as a whole is doing, but also an opportunity for individual practitioners to evaluate how they are doing. That makes the results of more than casual interest to the individual orthodontist. Every practice, as part of its standard management procedures, should conduct an annual in-house audit of the same factors considered in the JCO surveys, and should compare its current practice performance to its own past performance. By using the JCO biennial report, the individual data can be compared to the median data for the specialty.

A practice that is average or below average can glean from the JCO Study the management and practice-building methods that seem to contribute to practice success in terms of numbers of case starts and amount of income. In this way, the published results of the JCO Study can be a road map for improved practice performance.

As ever, JCO appreciates the willingness of so many orthodontists to take the time to respond to the Study questionnaire.

ELG