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For more information, please contact:

Maggie Rutherford
215-677-8686

Dental Hygienists Learn and Earn Credits in Historic Setting

***Greater Philadelphia Dental Hygiene Study Club attributes first year's success
to quality lectures, a pleasant venue and dynamic e-presence***

September 16, 2010 – When registered dental hygienist Maggie Rutherford helped form a study club for fellow area hygienists a little over a year ago, she didn't realize just how popular the group would become. In less than one year, the Greater Philadelphia Dental Hygiene Study Club (GPDHS) for Advanced Learning has grown to 80 members. Nearly perfect attendance is achieved at dinner buffet lectures where networking, learning and dining on great food make for a perfect evening.

"We're really proud of our club," says Rutherford. "We think it provides a model for other communities to emulate thanks to an exceptional roster of lecturers, a beautiful setting and an informative, interactive website."

Rutherford says the establishment of the GPDH study club couldn't have been timelier. The U.S. Department of Labor shows dental hygiene as one of today's fastest growing occupations, with employment expected to grow 36% through 2018. This fact, coupled with research that shows a link between periodontal disease and systemic disease, proves the need for continued quality education for hygienists.

"Our specialized training in preventive care means we're often the first ones to spot changes in oral health," she says. "Learning new technology and communicating regularly with colleagues greatly enhances our detection skills, while advancing the future of dental hygiene."

A \$195 membership fee includes the cost of the lectures with a buffet and wine dinner held at the Buck Hotel in Feasterville, PA, a half-hour drive from center city Philadelphia. The historic location once served as a relay point for travelers in the early 18th century.

Lecturers from across the country offer enlightening topics. Members receive three continuing education (CE) credits for each attended meeting which satisfies state licensure requirements. Members can also log onto the club's interactive website for downloadable patient education materials, blog commentary and links to other online continuing education course offerings.

The idea for the study club originated with Dr. Robert A. Levine, DDS, and Director of the Pennsylvania Center for Dental Implants and Periodontics. Dr. Levine is also founder of the Northeast Philadelphia Dental Implant and Perio-Prosthesis Study Club (now in its 26th year).

When Dr. Levine hired Maggie Rutherford as a dental hygienist for his busy practice, he saw the chance to turn his idea into something tangible. "Maggie had the drive, determination and dedication to professional development that was needed to make the study club come to fruition," said Dr. Levine. "She, along with our other advisory board members, has worked very hard and has done a remarkable job creating this new dynamic study group."

"Hygienists are key links between patients and doctors – we need to support them as much as possible so they can expand their knowledge base," he says.

Dr. Levine and GPDH Study Club

For more information about the Greater Philadelphia Dental Hygiene Study Club for Advanced Learning, contact Maggie Rutherford at mrutherford@padentalimplants.com or call her at 215-677-8686. Visit the club's interactive website at www.gpdhstudyclub.com for a downloadable brochure and application.