

EP. 58 5 Ways to Keep Your New Patients Coming Back for More!

You are wasting your marketing efforts if you do not have a plan to convert your new patients into lifelong patients. In this episode we discuss 5 strategies to keep your new (and existing) patients coming back for more!

- 1. Communicate on their level** – Dentists and dental hygienists did not learn communication skills in school. The main focus was developing your clinical skills. The problem with this is that you are in the people business. Are you communicating in the way they want to be communicated with or are you verbal vomiting a bunch of fancy dental lingo that's over their head? A good way to tell if your communication is effective is to take a look at your new patient retention rate and your treatment acceptance rate. If your patients are returning as often as you need them to for treatment and hygiene visits, then that's a good sign you have great communication skills!
- 2. Offer the best products and services** - Surveys have proven time and time again that people will pay for better customer service. If you offer the best products and services in town, they will want to continue to come back (and tell all of their friends and family about your practice)! What type of high-level services do you provide? Are you recommending products such as desensitizers, whitening, night-guards, and fluoride or are you only providing "what insurance covers"? Part of offering the best services also means staying on time. Do your patients have to wait to get in for an appointment or wait for you to do their hygiene check? We consistently find an extra 2 hours of open time in doctor's schedules after the Live Scheduling Day On-Site Solutions training. If they had just scheduled appropriately, it would have allowed for a much better patient flow and less waiting on the patient's part.
- 3. Ask for feedback!** – Did you know that 91% of patients who have a bad experience will never actually say anything, they just never return? Take a vested interest in getting to know what your patients like, and dislike, about your practice. Surveys are an awesome strategy to get to know your patients. You can do this through on-line surveys, social media profiles, and in-office feedback forms. This is a great way to know what you and your team are doing right so you can keep focusing on those things. Negative feedback will allow you to continuously improve and take every step to make your dissatisfied patient happy. After all, handling a disgruntled patient properly can turn that patient into your best (and most referring) patient! Do you have a system for continuously getting feedback from your patients?

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4. **Track your retention rate** – All the new patients in the world would not matter if you did not track this number. How many of your new patients are returning for a second visit? Truly returning, not just a rough guess. Our Retention, Recare and Reactivation On-Site Solutions has tracking for this and goes into detail why this is so important. Let's just play out a scenario. Let's say the average value of a new patient in your practice is \$1,500 and your marketing acquisition cost (or the amount you invest to get a new patient) is \$100. And let's say their first visit is worth \$250, but after adjustments it comes down to \$150. This doesn't even include the cost of equipment, overhead, instruments, etc.! You could actually end up losing money on their first visit if you do not convert them into a lifelong patient. Have you become complacent in your new patient retention rate or are you continuously working to improve that number?

5. **Invest in training your clinical team** – This is the most important thing you need to do to make the most of your marketing investment. Think about it for a minute...most of your new patients (and existing!) will spend the majority of their visit with a member of your clinical team. If they are not well-equipped with the tools to maximize the average value of a new patient visit and ultimately keep them coming back for more, then you are missing out on a huge opportunity to grow your practice. All of our Clinical On-Site Solutions are designed to give your team the tools to offer the best services to keep your new patients (and existing!) coming back for more and increase the dollar amount of every single visit.

Evaluate your new patient retention rate and develop a plan to continuously improve this number. Remember, you are wasting your marketing efforts if you do not turn your new patients into loyal, lifelong patients!