

# IMPLANT PRACTICE SUCCESS REPORT

from Thommen Medical and Levin Group



Welcome to Issue #15 of ***The Implant Practice Success Report***, a monthly newsletter on implant practice success. Levin Group and Thommen Medical are very pleased to provide business education to you and your team. Each month, ***The Implant Practice Success Report*** will feature leading edge education for managing, marketing, and maintaining a robust and successful implant practice.

In this issue we focus on building confidence in the implant practice making referring practices more comfortable.

# Building Confidence in the Implant Practice

By Roger P. Levin, DDS

How confident are your patients that your practice is the right one for them and implants are the right treatment? Confidence is a powerful word and there are several ways to achieve it. It starts with the very first phone call and goes all the way through the presentation of financial options. Here are six recommendations that will help any surgical practice to increase case acceptance for implant dentistry:

- 1. Create a new culture.** Create a culture where the entire team believes that dental implants are one of the finest ways to improve the quality of patient lives. We often see practices where implants are logistical treatment and not based on a philosophical desire to help every patient have the best possible life.
- 2. Prepare benefits statements.** Have at least three benefits statements scripted and used for each new implant patient caller to help them understand the value of implants and develop confidence in the practice. One of these statements should discuss the skill level, experience, and compassion of the surgeon.
- 3. Train your Implant Treatment Coordinator.** The Implant Treatment Coordinator must be highly trained. The Implant Treatment Coordinator position is a sales position and the Coordinator's belief in dental implants, and willingness to share that with patients, goes along way. It's also essential for the implant treatment coordinator to build the image, reputation, and brand of the doctor before the patient meets the surgeon.
- 4. Know the top five questions patients are likely to ask.** Most patients will ask the following: what are dental implants, what are the benefits of dental implants, how much will it hurt, how long will I be out of work, and how much will it cost? These are the five basic questions that every patient wants answered whether they ask them or not. Be sure to have scripted answers that contain benefits and power words (e.g., great, wonderful, and terrific) that create energy and give a clear picture of why dental implants are the right choice for the patient.
- 5. Create an image of five-star customer service.** Customer service conveys that the practice is caring, will support the patient throughout the entire implant process, and will produce excellent results. Furthermore, customer service makes people feel good, creates a positive environment, and cultivates the right mindset for patients.
- 6. Be very comfortable talking about money.** In some cases, even really good Implant Treatment Coordinators fall short when it comes to talking about money. They may be uncomfortable with the amount, or simply money in general. Help them understand that every patient knows that at some point, they must know the fee regarding treatment. The coordinator should focus on clearly communicating financial options and letting the patient know that there's always a way to afford treatment.

These recommendations will help the Implant Treatment Coordinator create the highest level of results.

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## ROGER P. LEVIN, DDS

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# Are Your Referring Doctors Comfortable?

By Roger P. Levin, DDS

The modern implant era began in the mid 1980s. Here we are 35+ years later and the reality is that many referring doctors are still uncomfortable restoring implant cases. Some are comfortable with single tooth implants, others with multiple tooth implants and very few with what we will call extremely large cases. When general dentists aren't comfortable, they tend not to do things, which means they don't refer some cases simply because they aren't comfortable with the restorative process. Although it would be ideal if they were willing to refer those cases out to a prosthodontist (and your practice), in most cases they still want to keep the treatment in house.

There have been many comments made over the years that referring doctors will keep a case to do a bridge rather than send it out for an implant. We have never found this to be generally true. However, we do find that if a general dentist is uncomfortable with a certain type of procedure, they will opt for a procedure that makes them more comfortable. This may not be fair, but it is a reality that surgical practices must consider when they think about their marketing program.

Marketing comes in many forms but in the end it's mostly about the power of relationship building and you must use numerous strategies. One strategy that should be used by every surgical practice is helping referring doctors become comfortable with the cases they are restoring and the cases that they aren't restoring. The better you are at this, the more referrals you'll have. If referring practices feel that you are supporting, servicing, and educating them, you will become the practice of choice.

We have recommended numerous ways for surgical practices to educate referring practices. A few of these are:

- Host seminars. Facilitate a regular series of educational programs to raise the skill level of referring doctors. Include topics such as case presentation, practice management, and explaining implant dentistry to patients.
- Start an implant-based study club. Be careful in that your referring doctors don't all want to be high-level clinicians doing big cases. Also, some will join and become bored very quickly. The best approach is to focus on the essentials of being a good restorative dentist.

- Don't just work with a few high-level doctors. Collaborating with high-level doctors can be a fantastic situation until you lose one or more of those referring doctors and the commensurate revenue that goes along with it. Always be building and adding new referring doctors into your core group.
- Provide support for implant cases. Implant representatives today are outstanding in their knowledge base, skill set, and ability to support your referring doctors. Think of your implant representative as an expert professional that can help your practice by supporting your referring doctors and let referring doctors know that they never have to operate alone, and support is available. This allows referring doctors to take on cases where they aren't completely confident.
- Figure out which components of implant dentistry aren't being referred at the right level. Bring in experts, speakers, and educators to fill in the knowledge gap. Sometimes it's a specific type of case that some doctors are afraid to take on. By providing the education and support through your practice, implant representative referrals will rise.

Referral marketing is a complex science. Helping referring doctors become confident in their ability to complete cases without failure, fear of malpractice, or embarrassment in front of a patient will increase referrals almost immediately.

To contact Dr. Levin or to join the  
40,000 dental professionals who receive  
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