

IMPLANT PRACTICE SUCCESS REPORT

from Thommen Medical and Levin Group



Welcome to Issue #8 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 how to hand-off patients from team member to team member, and the best way to conduct meetings with your Professional Relations Coordinator (PRC).

Think Of Your Patient As An Egg

By Roger P. Levin, DDS

Many years ago, I heard a fantastic concept that I have enjoyed teaching ever since. The concept was to think of the patient as an egg. That's right, an egg. Consider this: If you hand an egg from one person to another to another, everybody is very careful because if you drop the egg, you'll have a mess. This analogy works for how the dental team should handle patients and the patient experience in the specialty practice.

Since 1985, Levin Group has been recommending that practices have step-by-step systems to allow their teams to become effectively trained in exactly what they need to do each day. Unfortunately, many practices have robust systems for everything **BUT** how to hand-off patients from one team member to another. Let's look at an example.

A patient calls the office and schedules an appointment with a front desk coordinator. When they come to the office they meet someone at the front desk who may be a different person, then they meet a clinical assistant, and then they'll possibly meet a treatment coordinator and a doctor. Each of these steps requires a hand-off and therefore you want to think about the patient as an egg. The front desk person hands off the patient to the clinical assistant or treatment coordinator, then

the clinical assistant or treatment coordinator hands off the patient to the doctor, and finally the doctor or clinical assistant hands the patient back to a front desk coordinator who may once again be a different person. Each of these handoffs should be carefully examined, scripted, and well-thought-out.

For example, when the front desk person introduces the patient to the clinical assistant or treatment coordinator, should the front desk person follow a short script introducing that person to the patient so they can create value and confidence? Furthermore, should this take place every time a patient is transitioned from one person to another?

The answer is a resounding yes! Patients must have great experiences and feel comfortable with the people they are meeting. When they do, they are more likely to accept treatment, report back to referring doctors that they were well cared for, write positive reviews, and even refer other patients if appropriate.

Teach your team to think of each patient as an egg. And remember, you never want to break the egg.

Meeting With Your PRC

By Roger P. Levin, DDS

One of the fundamental principles of success for a specialist referral marketing program is the Professional Relations Coordinator (PRC). This individual can be a part-time or a full-time employee, but they are one of the essential elements of making referral marketing work. However, like any employee in any business, the PRC needs training, mentorship,

someone to brainstorm with for creative strategies and knowledge, and the ability to measure results and make modifications. Too many specialty practices bring a PRC on board without giving them the proper support they need. This is a flawed approach that often results in a flattening or decrease in referrals.

Meeting with the PRC

If you have or are going to engage a PRC, the doctor(s) need to make a commitment to meet with this individual at least once a week. The meeting can be as short as 15 minutes, but it should not exceed 30. Typically, Levin Group recommends 15 minutes because the purpose of the meeting is for the PRC to give a quick report on what they have been doing to further the practice's referral marketing. Items such as:

- How many doctors were included in a strategic effort
- Whether the effort was targeted at A, B, C or D doctors
- Whether it was focused on doctors or staff
- What was on the marketing calendar for the last 30 days
- What will be on the calendar for next 30 days

This meeting will allow the specialist to ask important questions that will help clarify what the PRC is doing and determine if he or she is making progress.

Next it is important to discuss measurements.

- How are referrals trending? Are they up or down?
- Are there any fluctuations in the A, B, C or D categories?
- How do referrals year-to-date compare to the same time last year?

Each practice should create a set of key performance indicators (KPIs) to determine how the referral marketing program is performing and the status of referrals. Keep in mind that referrals are the single most critical factor in the success of any specialty practice and should receive weekly attention.

Lastly, in the meeting you should focus on new strategies. These can be recommended by doctors or the PRC and evaluated for implementation in the current referral marketing program.

The overall purpose of this meeting is to have a quick overview of the progress of the referral marketing program, evaluate performance to measurements, and identify any new creative strategic opportunities. The PRC should be the person that runs the meeting, provides all relevant information, answers questions, and suggests new strategies and modifications. As the PRC gains experience, he or she will gradually improve and become the driving force for the referral marketing program.

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Roger P. Levin, DDS is the CEO and Founder of Levin Group, a leading practice management consulting firm that has worked with over 30,000 practices to increase production. A recognized expert on dental practice management and marketing, he has written 67 books and over 4,000 articles and regularly presents seminars in the U.S. and around the world.

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