



Back to Hygiene Business-Refocus for the Remainder of 2020

Right now, it's so easy to get distracted from your business model and core beliefs. Many dental practice owners are in "survival mode" and are not considering the effects of their decision making. If the business owner is hyper focused on the individual day and does not consider their 2020 year as a whole along with each quarter moving forward, then there will be a second wave of disaster this year for the business. This wave will hit around October! It's important to take time to think through a few key items and create a plan that supports your business model.

Here are a few key facts:

- September 16-November 16 is your shut down period (6 months post COVID.)
- A dental practice will not be able to see enough new patients on those days to fill the hygiene schedule
- Doctors freak out when hygiene is not full
- Putting your head in the sand or waiting on the month to happen will not fill your schedule.
- A single doctor with two dental hygienist working four days a week has an average of 60 operative appointments and 350 dental hygiene appointments to rebook after being shut down for six weeks.
- Two doctors and four dental hygienists working four days a week have an average of 120 operative appointments and 700 dental hygiene appointments to rebook.

Hygiene Recall

Get a plan now! As you know, your hygiene schedule books out six months usually. Well you missed 6-8 weeks of work. This means your schedule is wide open late September 16- November 16 (THAT'S A PROBLEM RIGHT?)

a. Time Blocking for Hygiene Recall

- i. Set aside 1-2 hours **per day** in the remaining month of August and all of September to hyper focus on calling past due patients and future due patients for hygiene. Place a block on the schedule and place a team member in a quiet room and track results. Accountability is important here.

b. Make Schedule Adjustments Now

- i. If you have hated how your schedule work now or feel that you have always wanted to make a change in your hygiene department, NOW is the time. (new patient process, treatment plan presentations, integration of digital photos, digital scans etc)
- ii. Integrate new processes to increase the value of your hygiene department.
- iii. Move patients that were pushed to January and haven't received their 2 free cleaning into October's schedule. (insurance plans will determine this, six months or two per year)

c. Co-Diagnosing

- i. Dentistry has to be diagnosed and your hygienist is your support team.
- ii. Do not forgo exams, will kill the operative schedule 4-6 weeks from now.
- iii. Don't skip steps by using PPE as an excuse. (I don't have time... is not the right answer for a business, the right question is "Lets figure out how...")
- iv. Consider Exams before Cleaning in hygiene to better your case acceptance.! Slowing down to speed up will make you more money... not less!
- v. Stay focused on the care and the communication with patients. Ensure you are still connecting.

d. Lay Offs will not Save you Money!

- i. Laying off your Hygienist during this 6-week period will only hurt your bank account even more and will kick this problem down the road even further (March of 2021 will now suck too!)
- ii. Rebuilding your team is costly. Training, engaging, educating them cost you money and loss of opportunity each day!

e. Automation isn't the Answer

- i. Automation supports your systems however it's not going to fix this problem. We have to pick up the phone and connect with our patients and let them know it's safe to come in and their care is important.
- ii. Messages left for a patient are recommended to sound something like this: ***"Ms. Jones this is (name) from (business) when you have a few minutes this morning will you return my call at XXX-XXXX. I look forward to hearing from you!"*** No need to give away the surprise of why your calling. We do not want patients prioritizing us in their day based on a voice mail.

f. Follow Up

- i. *Get a follow up system!*
- ii. Focus on dental care follow up.2-2-2 call process. (2-days, 2-weeks, 2-months) You can place blocks on the schedule for follow up on specific patients.
- iii. You can make a N code in your procedures for Treatment Follow Up and Recall Calls. This can be walked out each time a call is made out and you can track your process through your day sheets. (do not attach to a provider because it will skew their walk out for procedures. Attach to the Office)

g. Marketing

- i. Increase your marketing budget for August and September to assist with your openings.
- ii. If you don't have the budget to add then change your current focus and play with the money you have.