Planning a referral event

Holding a well-planned referral evening is a perfect way to introduce your team and your services to other dentists in your local area, says Dr Dattani who offers some advice.

Demonstrating your skills

Of course, no amount of refreshments and well-presented slideshows will be able to convince attendees of your practical skills as a clinician. A great way to showcase your abilities is to enlist the help of a real patient (with their permission of course!) and to perform a live demonstration. This certainly requires some nerve, but it will prove to delegates that you are confident in your abilities and will do wonders for your credibility as a professional. Even in a worst-case scenario if something does go wrong during the demonstration, by keeping a clear head and following the event procedure, delegates will leave with the knowledge that you know how to overcome tricky situations – further cementing your reliability.

Involving the whole team

Another aspect to consider during a referral evening is that of any outside help you may require when treating referred patients. If, for example, you specialise in aesthetic dentistry and enlist the services of a laboratory for your prosthetics, invite a technician along to the evening to guide delegates through the range of products and materials that they offer. This not only serves to better inform practitioners, but also demonstrates, yet again, your dedication to close teamwork and communication throughout the entire patient journey.

Holding a well-planned referral evening is a perfect way to introduce your team and your services to other dentists in your local area, and to show them how you can work closely together to achieve the very best outcome for the patient.

Giving something back

No dentist will want to waste an evening of their free time without feeling that they (and by extension, their patients) will gain something from it. Although some practitioners consider the area may be actively seeking a dentist for patient referrals, chances are most clinicians will already have systems in place to deal with cases that lie outside of their own abilities. So, referral practices looking to cast their net a little wider will need to provide an incentive for clinicians to attend their event.

One possibility is to offer practitioners an educational evening that counts towards their verifiable CPD hours. And why limit the evening to dentists alone? Consider inviting dental nurses along to the event and offer them training too. After all, dental nurses play an important role in the team, so keeping them up to date with new techniques and procedures will make communication during procedures much clearer.

Building relationships

All referral practitioners should aim to work as an extension of their referral patients’ practice. In order for this to happen, excellent communication between practitioners and patient and referral dentist is key. If the referring dentist has an understanding of the kind of treatments you provide, they will be armed with the necessary information to inform their patients of their options and to describe the outcomes they should expect. For example, an implantologist holding a referral evening could organise a session outlining their work with implants, and then go on to talk about impression taking and fitting the completed restoration. Many referring dentists will want to take control of one or perhaps more of these stages, but by involving the GDP in various stages of treatment, all parties involved will be reading from the same page and will benefit from mutual understanding.

About the author

Dr Shushil Dattani qualified from the Royal London Hospital in 2000, completed a two-year programme and membership to the Faculty of General Dental Practice at the Royal College of Surgeons, then became accredited with a Diploma in Implant Dentistry at the Royal College of Surgeons of England. He is a member of the American Academy of Dental Implantologists, the American Academy of Cosmetic Dentists, regularly trains and attends courses around the world and is principal dentist and owner of the Kent Implant Studio. For more information or to obtain a referral pack please call 01622 671 265, or visit www.kentimplantstudio.com.

Giving something back

No dentist will want to waste an evening of their free time without feeling that they (and by extension, their patients) will gain something from it. Although some practitioners consider the area may be actively seeking a dentist for patient referrals, chances are most clinicians will already have systems in place to deal with cases that lie outside of their own abilities. So, referral practices looking to cast their net a little wider will need to provide an incentive for clinicians to attend their event.

One possibility is to offer practitioners an educational evening that counts towards their verifiable CPD hours. And why limit the evening to dentists alone? Consider inviting dental nurses along to the event and offer them training too. After all, dental nurses play an important role in the team, so keeping them up to date with new techniques and procedures will make communication during procedures much clearer.

Building relationships

All referral practitioners should aim to work as an extension of their referral patients’ practice. In order for this to happen, excellent communication between practitioners and patient and referral dentist is key. If the referring dentist has an understanding of the kind of treatments you provide, they will be armed with the necessary information to inform their patients of their options and to describe the outcomes they should expect. For example, an implantologist holding a referral evening could organise a session outlining their work with implants, and then go on to talk about impression taking and fitting the completed restoration. Many referring dentists will want to take control of one or perhaps more of these stages, but by involving the GDP in various stages of treatment, all parties involved will be reading from the same page and will benefit from mutual understanding.

Planning a referral event

Holding a well-planned referral evening is a perfect way to introduce your team and your services to other dentists in your local area, says Dr Dattani who offers some advice.

Demonstrating your skills

Of course, no amount of refreshments and well-presented slideshows will be able to convince attendees of your practical skills as a clinician. A great way to showcase your abilities is to enlist the help of a real patient (with their permission of course!) and to perform a live demonstration. This certainly requires some nerve, but it will prove to delegates that you are confident in your abilities and will do wonders for your credibility as a professional. Even in a worst-case scenario if something does go wrong during the demonstration, by keeping a clear head and following the event procedure, delegates will leave with the knowledge that you know how to overcome tricky situations – further cementing your reliability.

Involving the whole team

Another aspect to consider during a referral evening is that of any outside help you may require when treating referred patients. If, for example, you specialise in aesthetic dentistry and enlist the services of a laboratory for your prosthetics, invite a technician along to the evening to guide delegates through the range of products and materials that they offer. This not only serves to better inform practitioners, but also demonstrates, yet again, your dedication to close teamwork and communication throughout the entire patient journey.

Holding a well-planned referral evening is a perfect way to introduce your team and your services to other dentists in your local area, and to show them how you can work closely together to achieve the very best outcome for the patient.