The value of a treatment coordinator

Glenys Bridges looks at the role of a treatment coordinator in practice

Imagine how beneficial it would be to have a treatment coordinator in your practice? Particularly now when practices are fine tuning quality aspects for their application for Care Quality Commission registration, and really need to generate a strong income stream despite the current economic environment.

Many practices have already realised the potential benefits of developing the treatment coordinator role. They recognise the win-win outcome of this new team role that can sustainably increase profitably, whilst enhancing the job satisfaction of senior DCPs, in whom over a number of years the business has made a substantial investment.

In many cases the main reason practices have not yet taken this idea forward is because they are not in a position to invest £1,000 in a training course for their chosen DCP to gain a recognised qualification.

This being the case, there is excellent news for practices in this position; until December 2010 there is a £1,000 training grant available to reimburse practices willing to pay out for practice management or care coordination training.

Over the past 10 years the treatment coordinator role has been introduced to numerous practices, allowing them to hold on to valued staff who feel they have reached a dead-end in their dental nursing career. In some cases this is because after many years they need more challenging work, or because occupational health issues, such as back pain, make it difficult from them to continue to work chair side.

In the treatment coordinator role these staff can continue to offer excellent benefits for the business, the patients and the dental team.

Observing practices across the UK, there is notable divide opening-up between proactive practices, with a customer care philosophy; and those who are at full stretch on reactive treadmill and are not able to devote time to the development of coordinated care procedures to enable patients to make fully informed treatment choices, based on their understanding of the potential health gains, rather than purely on the financial concerns.

To optimise the full benefits of treatment coordination, it is advisable to train your treatment coordinator in aspects of project management, the GDC Standards, health promotion, psychology and sociology.

Working toward a level 5 Diploma in dental care ordination enables dental professionals to build skills and confidence to research, develop and review procedures designed especially for your practice, patients and team.

To find out how you can get your training costs fully reimbursed for care coordination training please see the Dental Resource Company website www.dental-resource.com

About the author

Glenys Bridges is managing director of the Dental Resource Company, and has provided training for dental teams since 1992. For more information, visit www.dental-resource.com or call 0121 241 6693