The power of attraction

Attracting new patients can often feel like an uphill struggle, especially for the dentist setting up their own practice. If this is something you are currently facing then perhaps it’s time to take a step back and consider a new approach.

Denplan Trainer Lil Niddrie explains: ‘Dental practitioners can’t afford to sit back and be complacent. ‘They need to recognise that they are business owners and managers as well as professional health practitioners. Like any commercial business, their practice needs to make sure that it hangs on to its existing customers and attracts new ones too.’

Studies carried out over the last 15 years repeatedly confirm that one of the key things dental patients want from their practice is to be treated like people, not just a row of teeth.

With the new NHS contract making it increasingly difficult for dentists to meet their UDA targets, increasingly more dentists are converting to private practice. With competition for private patients rising, recognising the importance of offering your patients great customer care can make a big difference to the success of your practice.

Competition for patients does not only come from other practices, but also from new NHS facilities and now some of the best-practices, but also from new NHS facilities and now some of the best-practitioners. Like any commercial business, their practice needs to make sure that it hangs on to its existing customers and attracts new ones too.’

First and foremost, you have to keep your existing patients feeling happy and valued. The secret to retaining your current patients lies in getting to know them. What they like about your practice, what they don’t like, and what’s important to them are important questions to ask.

One of the easiest ways to find out what your patients really want is to fill out a simple questionnaire. Have a prize draw as a bottle of champagne to encourage patients to complete the questionnaire. Ask questions such as: ‘What’s the longest time you are happy to wait in reception? Do you get the appointment times you want when you call? When choosing a dentist, what’s most important to you – price, service or location?’

If delivering fantastic customer service is a key target for the New Year, why not take a training and development course to help you and your team. Some companies offer a range of training courses, which are specific to your practice’s needs and can even incorporate a module focused on customer care. Some of these courses can also count towards verifiable Continuing Professional Development (CPD) when undertaken in accordance with GDC requirements.

Next steps

Knowing what matters to your clients means you can focus on shaping a practice that addresses their priorities and communicates what you offer effectively. Understanding

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**OSSEOINTEGRATED IMPLANTOLOGY COURSE**

**Osseointegrated Implantology Courses**

Sunday 15th March - 20th March 2009 Inclusive

This intensive format is ideal for delegates who wish to participate in a course over 6 consecutive days – Fee £2200

**Topics covered include:**

- examination and treatment planning
- dealing with the patient within the practice
- anatomy, physiology
- biomaterials
- sterility
- surgical templates
- surgical techniques (to include bone augmentation and advanced surgical techniques)
- implant impression techniques
- jaw registration
- articulation
- periodontal consideration (to include maintenance protocol and guided tissue regeneration)
- Connecting teeth to implants
- Detailed literature review.

There will be guest speakers on the following subjects;

- **Dr Joe Omar** on ‘Medical Emergencies’
- **Dr Alan Cohen** on ‘Medico – Legal Aspects’
- **Mr Sean Goldner** on ‘CT Scanning’
- **Mr Keith Rowe** on ‘Laboratory Techniques’

There will be hands-on session on the surgical, prosthetic and laboratory phases, and the delegates will attend a CT scan appointment with one of the patients on the course.

This course is suitable for the application of all different osseointegrated implant systems. Delegates who complete the course are eligible for the ICOI Fellowship, without further examination. This course carries 36 hours of CPD accreditation.

**Course accredited for MFDS, MDGS, and FFQDP. Colleagues are welcome to arrange to come and view our practice. For more details please contact our Practice Manageress.**