Making referral relationships work

By Roger P. Levin, DDS

When the relationship between an implant doctor and a restorative doctor works well, everyone benefits.

Patients enjoy truly excellent care and experience superior customer service while both offices are able to successfully increase production.

To keep the relationship between the implant and restorative practice productive, implant doctors should consider the following:

• Absence does not make the heart grow fonder
• Don’t be the lone ranger
• Be seen as a valuable resource
• Referral marketing is your future

Absence does not make the heart grow fonder

Having face-to-face meetings with referring doctors at least several times a year will strengthen relationships with restorative doctors. The number of patient referrals has a direct correlation to the frequency of direct communication with the restorative dentist.

However, even for those dentists who only refer a few patients each year, implant doctors should make an effort to meet them periodically throughout the year.

Don’t be the lone ranger

Implant doctors can’t do everything themselves. That’s where the implant treatment coordinator (ITC) comes in.

The ITC handles most aspects of patient communication, allowing you to spend more time chair-side and less time on administrative and marketing duties.

A well-trained ITC can help your office build stronger relationships with all of your referring practices. This matters a great deal. The degree of communication between the two practices often determines a successful treatment outcome and the ultimate satisfaction of the implant patient.

Be seen as a valuable resource

Educational seminars, held at a local hotel or other venue, can provide valuable information to referring doctors while giving the implant doctor an opportunity to meet with them socially.

Implant companies are an excellent resource for speakers on the latest implant advances and restorative techniques.

This type of educational outreach is particularly beneficial for restorative doctors interested in significantly advancing their implant knowledge and expanding implant services.

In addition, these events create a tremendous amount of goodwill for your practice.

Referral marketing is your future

A successful referral marketing program is based on consistent and ongoing contact with restorative doctors.

The right marketing strategies over the long-term can:

• Strengthen relationships with current referring doctors.
• Turn occasional referrers into frequent referrers.
• Lead to increased production and profitability.

Conclusion

Referral relationships will change over time. They can become stronger or they can weaken.

Following these four strategies to build quality relationships with referring doctors will lead to better patient care and increased production for implant and restorative practices alike.

Implant Tribune readers are entitled to receive a 50 percent courtesy on a Levin Group Practice Potential Analysis™ — an in-office evaluation designed to identify the true potential of your practice. Call (888) 973-0000 and mention “Implant Tribune” or e-mail customerservice@levingroup.com with “Implant Tribune” in the subject line. For more information on Levin Group seminars and programs, go to www.levingroupimplant.com.

About the author

Dr. Roger P. Levin is chairman and chief executive officer of Levin Group, a leading implant practice management firm. Levin Group provides Total Implant Success™, the premier comprehensive consulting solution for lifetime success to implant clinicians in the United States and around the world.

Levin Group
10 New Plant Court
Owings Mills, Md. 21117
(888) 973-0000 or (410) 654-1234
customerservice@levingroup.com
www.levingroupimplant.com

Send us your case study!

Have an interesting implant case you would like to share with 15,000 of your peers? To have your case study considered for publication in Implant Tribune, send your 800- to 1,200-word case study and up to 12 high-resolution photos to Managing Editor Sierra Rendon at s.rendon@dental-tribune.com. Authors will be notified of publication and have an opportunity to review the designed case study prior to final publication. Cases will be published pending editor approval and space availability.