What defines a successful relationship between an implant practice and a referring office? That’s simple — interdisciplinary teamwork! A strong systemized relationship with referring offices is essential to your continued success. In an uncertain economy, you must do everything necessary to grow your implant practice, and interdisciplinary teamwork will be key to that growth. Adding value and support is critical to your future.

Getting in sync
At a recent Total Practice Success™ seminar where I was speaking to several hundred restorative doctors, I pointed out that motivation — any sort of motivation — lasts about one week. For that reason, all new patients and big cases should be scheduled within seven to 10 days. Doing so greatly increases the likelihood of case acceptance.

At this seminar, a restorative doctor shared with me a problem he was having with his referring oral surgeon. This general dentist liked restoring implant cases, but the oral surgeon couldn’t see implant consults for about six weeks. The dentist found the waiting period was simply too long. By the time his patients were seen by the oral surgeon, motivation had waned and case follow-through was quite low.

Shortly after the seminar, I spoke with several oral surgeons about this subject. These doctors all acknowledged that the implant consults should occur as quickly as possible. For a team approach to work, both restorative and surgical practices must be on the same page.

A better implant team
To strengthen relationships with referring dentists, clear communication is essential. Remember, just because a surgical practice has been managing the implant process the same way for years, doesn’t mean it’s the most effective method. There’s always room for improvement. Levin Group recommends that restorative doctors and specialists reach agreement on these seven questions regarding interdisciplinary care:

- Who will provide patient care during each step of the implant process?
- How soon can the surgical practice see a referred patient for an implant consultation?
- Who will provide case planning input?
- How will communication occur between the restorative practice and the implant surgical practice?
- Who will present fees to the patient?
- When the situation is appropriate, who will arrange financing for patients?
- How soon can the patient expect to start implant treatment when a case is presented and accepted?

While there are many other issues to consider as well, finding answers to these seven questions will give you an excellent starting point for establishing a solid, productive and hopefully long-term relationship with referring offices. Bridge the communication gap and cross over into more success!

Want to learn more about building superior relationships with referring offices? Make plans to attend Dr. Levin’s latest Total Implant Success™ seminar Sept. 24–25 in Baltimore. Implant Tribune readers are entitled to receive a 20 percent courtesy on this seminar. Call (888) 973-0000 and mention “Implant Tribune” or e-mail customerservice@levingroup.com with “Implant Tribune” in the subject line. For more information, visit www.levingroupimplant.com.

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