

Make Same-Day Care Work for Your Practice and Your Patients

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To meet patient expectations and remain competitive in today's rapid-paced environment, more and more dentists are adopting same-day care models. Dentists who can provide diagnostics and care on the same day are seeing better patient retention. According to Jacques Mulder, U.S. health leader at Ernst & Young LLP, "the patient is becoming much more of a consumer. One driver of this trend is cost. Patients are shouldering more of it, and that's compelling them to get more involved".¹

Typically, the patient is coupling cost, time and quality with a desire for immediate care and fewer return visits. If you are practicing same-day care or considering shifting your business model, there are three things to be mindful of:

- *Consumer Choice*
- *Consumer Engagement*
- *Consumer Experience*

Let's begin with Consumer Choice. There are plenty of competitive options in your community from which patients can choose. **Acknowledge the changing consumer environment as an exciting opportunity, not a practice-threatening obstacle.**

Patients desire a practice whose care is seamless, secure and convenient. They want their records to be accurate and quickly accessed by your staff. If their Protected Health Information (PHI) needs to be sent to them or to other providers, today's "consumer patient" expects it to be sent with the click of a keystroke to an inbox. Quality patient care is continually influenced by advancing science and technology. You must stay current.

Next, let's look at the power of Customer Engagement. A practice must adopt a culture of *smarter, faster, more affordable WITH a bigger smile* if it is to remain competitive. **Make consumer-centric same-day care a driving force in your practice culture.** A recent study published by [Strategy&](#) reports that "far from being the traditionally-passive recipients of care that was prescribed and financed by others, consumers are being called upon to take a greater hand in managing and paying for their own health. In response, they are quickly becoming better informed, more discriminating on price and quality, and increasingly willing to walk away from poor service."

Practices committing to same-day care will often see a productivity increase of 15% or more. This comes with only a minor increase in supply and material cost. To remain profitable, customer engagement must match your cutting edge technology.

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To do this, be sure to set your team up to win. If these questions aren't affirmatively answered, then it is likely your staff is stressed, scurrying and less-engaged with your patients.

- Are your team's clinical skills current?
- Do you have an efficient system for stocking and scheduling operatories?
- Is your team up to date on the application of varnish and sealants?
- Are the operatories set up for same-day care? If an operatory is not equipped and ready with needed supplies, it's unlikely treatment can happen same day
- Is your practice management system easy to use and able to seamlessly coordinate care from the moment the appointment is booked to the office visit to billing to insurance, and finally, to scheduling the follow-up?
- Can you send patient records (ePHI) with full HIPAA-compliance from one inbox to the next?

Create a win/win. Provide your team with the tools, teaching and technology needed to provide engaged care. Then recognize when they are clearly offering these services in the best interest of patients rather than purely "selling". You can implement a simple, results-based incentive program that is easy to administer. This system could be monetarily based, additional continuing education or even sponsoring a social event like going to a baseball game. In essence, reward them when they get results.

Finally, create a Customer Experience that the patients will rave about. When the patient arrives, be prepared to offer them a chance to move forward that day with care. Then show them the cost and time involved for everything. **Give the consumer the access and transparency they demand.** Full transparency begins with authentic care and concern for the patient's well-being, which includes their wallet and schedule.

Have someone on your team walk the patient to the chair and back to the front desk for checkout when the services are completed. This 60-second interaction goes a long way in developing trust, loyalty and referrals.

Then make sure you have the systems within the practice to make care affordable like consumer credit cards or healthcare credit cards. You are building a seamless chain of positive events within the practice. The experience begins with full transparency, carries into clinical care and wraps with the final conversation at checkout. Without these authentic experiences, the "consumer patient" will postpone care today and very possibly not return.

The bottom-line is to align all the pieces-- Consumer Choice (clinical care), Consumer Engagement (productivity) and Consumer Experience (enthusiasm) to meet the new patient/consumer demands.

iCoreConnect provides an integrated suite of tools, from fully-HIPAA-compliant email (iCoreExchange) to intuitive, cloud-based practice management (iCoreDental). With no installs, costly upgrades or hidden fees, iCoreConnect's solutions are designed to make your practice run more efficiently and profitably. To learn more about how iCoreConnect can improve the quality of care for your patients and the efficiency of your practice, visit iCoreConnect.com or call 888.810.7706.