

# 5 TIPS TO VIRTUALLY ELIMINATE HYGIENE APPOINTMENT CANCELLATIONS

## SET EXPECTATIONS WITH NEW PATIENTS

Communicate to your patients that you expect them to keep their appointments or at the very least, inform the practice 48 hours prior to the appointment if there is a need to cancel. You may choose to follow a script such as...

- "I'd like you to know what you can expect from us as a patient at this practice. Can I share with you four specific things you can expect from us?"
- "Number one, you can expect us to provide the highest quality dental care available. Number two, you can expect us to treat you like we would treat our own family members. Number three, you can expect us to stand behind our work. If anything isn't right, up to our standards we redo it until it is right. Number four, you can expect to be able to reach the doctors after hours if there ever is a dental emergency that requires immediate attention."
- "May I take a minute and share what we expect from you?"
- "We ask that if you schedule an appointment in our office you actually show up. We understand that sometimes life happens and if you can't make it, give us at least 48 hours advance notice if you need to change an appointment."

## CONSIDER OFFERING A WARRANTY FOR RESTORATIVE DENTISTRY

Provide your patients with a written warranty that states that you stand behind your work and if anything is amiss, you will redo it. The warranty should have fine print that specifies that this warranty will only be upheld if the patient fulfills all their hygiene appointments.

Note that you will have to check with your state if this is allowed.

## CONSIDER INCENTIVIZING

Consider offering your patients an incentive to keep their appointments - one such example is a whitening for life program. A program like this will work such that as long as patients are coming to their appointments, they will receive free whitening as a reward.

This incentive can also be used when patients call to cancel an appointment - remind them that they risk losing their free reward if they cancel and direct them to reschedule.

## SET UP AN AT-RISK CONFIRMATION SYSTEM

This system applies to patients who are at risk of not showing up to appointments. It is likely that your team members will know who these patients are. Set up a system to contact them and confirm their appointment two weeks out, that way you are shaping them and ensuring they don't cancel.

## DEVELOP AN ASAP TEXTING SYSTEM

Set up an ASAP protocol that you can use to fill last minute rescheduling appointments. Set up a list of ten to twelve patients that you will send a text if this occurs. Half of the list is composed of people who you would like to see sooner and the other half are chronic cancellations and no-shows patients. You can use this list to fill in the cancelled appointment by sending a text out.