Dealing with Difficult Patients or How to Turn Lemons into Lemonade

Sponsored by: Kentucky Dental Meeting

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Dealing with Difficult Patients or How to Turn Lemons into Lemonade

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Key Topics:

- Identifying the difficult patient
- Written protocols and systems
- Re-training the difficult patient
- Knowing when and how to release a patient
- Team involvement
- Hidden traits of a difficult patient...fear, anxiety, etc.

1. Body language

2. What they say...what they are really saying

3. What they know and...don't know

4. The whiner and complainer

5. The blameful patient...passive/aggressive

6. The angry patient

Establishing written protocols and systems:

1. The new patient experience

2. The pre treatment interview – permission to treat

3. The exit interview

4. Financial systems and collections

5. Statement phone calls

6. Post treatment phone calls

<u>Re-training the difficult patient:</u>

1. On the phone

2. When you receive a letter

3. Successful environments

4. When establishing change

5. Old dogs...new tricks

6. Proactive vs. reactive

Knowing how and when to release a patient:

1. Tolerance level

2. Behaviors and attitudes

3. Breaking the rules

4. Is it the patient or the office?

5. Firing a patient...what's legal...what's not

6. Documentation

Team involvement:

1. Training

2. Cross Training

3. Clear guidelines

4. Roles in the practice

5. Accepting responsibility

6. Hidden opportunities

Hidden traits of the difficult patient:

1. The fearful patient

2. The assertive patient

3. The anxious patient

4. Parents and children

5. The double edged sword

6. The sneak attack

Dear _____ Date_____

Our practice was built on the philosophy that the patient is our most important concern. You have missed several appointments in our office in the last 6 months. Therefore, we feel that we can no longer meet your treatment needs. We are requesting that you seek your dental treatment at another office. We will treat your emergency needs for the next 30 days. Effective _____ at

_____ AM/PM ______ dental office will cease to be your dentist. Please let us know where we may send your dental records. For your convenience, listed below is the phone number to the local dental society to direct you to a new dentist of your choosing: _____

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to serve you.

Sincerely,

Dr. John Doe