We meet with medical providers and their teams from all over the country on a regular basis, and are lucky to have incredibly interesting conversations all the time. We listen to success stories and commiserate over woes, helping practices find solutions. But one of the top commonalities we see is this: practices utilizing technology have an easier time functioning on a daily basis than those who don’t. This new year, make it a resolution to make your staff’s life easier.

Automate appointment reminders. In today’s busy society, we all need a reminder of our existing commitments, even those elective procedures we look forward to. As consultants, we’ve heard it time and time again: Practices tell us that they believe patients like hearing from a “real person” instead of an automated voice. But consider this: When you pay your receptionist to call patients to remind them of upcoming appointments, are you actually getting a “real person” on the phone? Or are they sending you straight to voicemail?

Use reminder software that lets patients know they have an appointment scheduled on the calendar by sending them an email, a voicemail or a text message. If your EMR/EHR software doesn’t already have this capability built into it, seek out external software, like Solutionreach, for instance.

Drip campaigns. A drip campaign is what you use when you gently remind prospects that haven’t booked that...well, they haven’t booked yet. We recommend connecting with patients electronically the day after their consult, three days after their consult, one week after that, another week after that, and then again a month after that. Although we recommend that the first contact post-consult is a staff member picking up the phone to check in with the soon-to-be patient in person, electronic communication afterward should be automated, as this particular item is one that tends to fall to the wayside if it’s not. Face it: Staff gets busy, and the potential patient gets forgotten about.

Recall patients who haven’t been in to see you in three months. Again, utilize your existing software to bring back patients who have forgotten it’s time for a retreatment. Whether their neurotoxin is about to wear off, they’re overdue for a laser treatment or it’s time for the next phase in livening up their skin post-surgery, keeping patients in your practice is far easier than having to seek new ones. This function should be included in your EMR/EHR software so that it syncs directly to your system. If it’s not, seek out additional software that does this.

Call tracking. Your marketing staff member is about to thank you. We always stress to practices that they look at the ROI of the dollars that they’re spending. Are your hired practitioners bringing in far, far more than you’re paying them (including benefits, days off, and more), for example? In this particular case, are your marketing efforts bringing in more than three times as much as you’re paying for them? Do you know which marketing efforts are effective? Set up a tracking number for each of your marketing efforts, from each separate print ad to your website, your social media channels, each radio and TV channel and station, pay per click campaigns and more. Have your team run reports to see which of those tracking numbers patients are actually calling, and base future marketing spend decisions based on that. Stop investing in channels that don’t work, and be sure to keep those that do.

E-newsletters. Utilizing technology to correspond twice a month with your patients should be a given. Make sure that your e-newsletter software is connected to your EMR/EHR database and target accordingly; in the language they prefer, to the age group that would use the treatment you’re promoting, etc. It doesn’t make sense to market to...
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20-year-olds for a neurotoxin, for instance, but they would be strong candidates for acne scarring or laser hair removal. Use the data that you have to promote your services.

**Scan your checks in-house.** Remote capture is one of the top ways to reduce bounced checks in your practice, as well as saving time on daily bank trips. Ask your bank for the technology to scan your checks in your practice instead of having your staff waste time running to the bank before funds leave your patients’ accounts. Trust us; This is a win-win for everybody.

Apply for patient financing online. Patient after patient gives lack of funds as an excuse for not following through with their procedures. Utilize an easy financing program that allows you to assist your patient with an online application, or for your patients to do so in the comfort of their own home. There are a number of options available, and we even have one of our own. Look for a solution that is free, over additional pricier options available.

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