Dynamic Chiropractic – September 1, 2004, Vol. 22, Issue 18

Taking the Time to Create Lifetime Patients

By Lisa Bilodeau, CA

Scheduling the Report of Findings

- The chiropractic assistant (CA) should schedule both the patient and his or her partner. Remember that, like the first visit, this visit will require extra time and should not be scheduled at your busiest times.
- It is important that both the patient and his or her partner understand why the patient will be seeing you: They should understand what chiropractic is and how you will help them.
- In addition to supporting the patient in getting well physically, the partner will support the financial aspects as well.
- And, of course, you hope that both the patient and his or her partner will become chiropractic patients, too, if they are not already.

Preparing for the Report of Findings

- If they will be watching an informational video, be sure that you have the correct video in the VCR, it is rewound, and the volume is at a comfortable level before the patient is escorted to the room. Turn on the video and show them how to adjust the volume if necessary. If the video is 10 minutes in length, set a timer at the front desk to remind you to return when it is over.
- If you have taken X-rays, have them in the room and up on the view box (with the light off) if the doctor instructs you to do so.
- Have the written report prepared with the patient's personal findings and recommendations for care.

The Report of Findings

- It is important to review all of the orthopedic, neurological and chiropractic test findings with the patient and explain how they are affecting his or her health.
- Show the patient their X-rays. It is said that a picture is worth a thousand words. Take the time to

explain the X-rays in terms the patient will understand.

- Give your recommendations for care. If the patient is not able to commit to the program of care that you recommend, it is important that this be addressed before his or she leaves the room to receive the first adjustment.

Communication/Completing Cycles

After completing the Report of Findings with the doctor, the CA will come into the room to complete any unfinished business:

- The insurance benefits must be verified before the patient arrives and reviewed with the patient. Any questions he or she has should be answered to the best of your ability. It may be necessary for you to call the insurance carrier with the patient present, to handle any confusing matters.
- Be sure that your financial policy is clearly understood. If not, handle it now.
- If the patient requires a payment plan, this is the time to do it. Be specific about the exact dollar amount and the specific day payment is due - just like a rent/mortgage or car payment.
- Any forms that are required and/or incomplete should be completed at this time.
- If the doctor has recommended a program of care, the appointments should be scheduled in advance at this time. Scheduling a patient’s program of care in advance is his or her commitment to you and their health. Patients should be scheduling their lives around their appointments, not their appointments around their lives.
- If your office requires that all new patients attend a "Health Care Talk," this must also be scheduled at this time. For the patient’s convenience, arrange for him or her to receive their adjustment just prior to or after the talk. The purpose of the Health Care Talk is not only to educate patients and their families as to what chiropractic is, but also to explain what their role is in getting the desired results. They need to know that chiropractic is only one aspect of health care and they must also understand the importance of exercise, good nutrition, plenty of rest, and a positive mental attitude.

New Patient Orientation

The CA should explain and show patients any procedures that will become a routine part of future visits:

- How to determine which adjusting room to go to when they are given their treatment cards.
- Where to put the treatment cards when they get to the room and what to do when they get into the

room.

- If they are going to be gowned, explain where they will find the gowns, how to determine and find the correct size, and what to do with the gown after their adjustments and/or therapy.

When you have taken the time to thoroughly explain all of the policies, procedures, and what chiropractic can do to improve quality of life, you will have a patient who stays, pays and refers others. You can build a healthy wellness practice without ever having to spend a dollar on outside advertising, if it is done right and with the right intentions.

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Click here for more information about Lisa Bilodeau, CA.

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