

Four Things Your Practice Isn't Currently Doing That You Should Be...



GREAT
LAKES
A D V I S O R Y

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Patient Surveys

As your career progresses and you become more proficient at diagnoses and surgeries within your specialty, it's easy to become complacent and assume your patients are pleased with the level of care you provide them.

Chances are your patients ARE happy with your level of care, and that's why they continue to return to your practice.

However, there are other parts of your practice your patients encounter that you may not constantly monitor due to your patient care obligations, such as:

- Front desk staff
- Patient portal
- Billing
- Registration
- Patient scheduling
- Waiting times

Just to name a few.

These areas of your practice can have a significant influence on your patient's perception of the service your practice provides them.

So why not utilize the resources within your EMR or a third-party vendor to assess your practice's performance?

Our advice is to collect surveys randomly at different hours of the day. Keep the surveys short and sweet (I.E less than five questions / two minutes to complete). As you continue to aggregate this data, use your findings as an opportunity to empower your staff to improve upon these areas during your huddle meetings (see below).

Huddle Meetings

As a physician and owner of a practice, you are likely pretty busy throughout the day. And rightfully so.

Without your practice's physicians visiting with patients, it's difficult for the practice to stay afloat financially. However, your employees still look at you as the leader within the practice and thus will seek your guidance. Without guidance or constant communication, problems tend to grow as they are not addressed in a timely manner.

Communication and leadership are key pillars in any sound business, and a medical practice is no exception. Our recommendation is to implement both daily and monthly huddle meetings.

Carve out 30 - 40 minutes once a month to address your staff. Use this as an opportunity to discuss the recent survey findings, current issues within the practice, recognize the hard work of employees, speak on progress towards the practice's operational goals, and open the floor to give your employees time to voice their opinions.

Your employees will feel more empowered, and your office culture will improve.

The daily huddle meetings are primarily intended for communication among front desk staff. It is not mandatory for the physicians to attend, but it is an added plus if you can find the time to attend a few each month.

Each daily huddle meeting is less than five minutes and mandatory for all front desk staff scheduled to work on that day. We recommend discussing the schedule for the day, schedule gaps (and how you plan to fill them), front desk collections, and giving front desk staff a minute or two to speak their mind.

Trust us, it works.



Online Reputation Management

Technology has shifted consumer trends and the way they interact with businesses, so it's critical that your business takes its online presence seriously. According to research, 90% of consumers read online reviews before visiting a business, and 84% of people trust online reviews as much as a personal recommendation.

You may operate an excellent practice, but if a prospective patient Googles your name or your practice's name only to find inaccurate information, negative reviews, or zero results, chances are you will never see that individual walk through your doors.

If you are not making an effort to constantly manage this information, what your patients see online could undermine your marketing strategy's effectiveness and therefore the growth of your practice.

Our advice is to go through the claiming process for all your online profiles (I.E. Google My Business, Bing, Yahoo!, Facebook, Zocdoc, Healthgrades, etc.). The claiming process allows you to take control of the listing information, but it also shifts the responsibility to you.

Once you are in control of all of your profiles, confirm that the listed information for your practice is accurate and up-to-date. Check practice hours, addresses, phone numbers, etc. Update this information for holidays and when the office is closed outside of normal business hours.

Patients also like to feel valued by the practice, and patient reviews are a great opportunity to engage with them.



Online Reputation Management – cont.

Create five different templated responses for positive reviews. Vary your response from positive review to positive review to avoid making your practice look robotic.

All negative reviews will receive the following response: “We are sorry that you did not have a positive experience at our practice. A practice representative will contact you shortly in an effort to better understand your concern.” The negative review is then provided to the office manager or lead physician for their direction on how to handle the situation.

Visa gift cards and a call from the physician is a great solution to negative reviews.

It may seem unnecessary to give someone \$20 and spend a few minutes on the phone with them, but this quick solution is a lot cheaper than trying to repair the damage caused by a disgruntled patient’s word-of-mouth. The patient will also appreciate this gesture that shows you care.

Delegate each of the online profiles to your front desk staff and require your staff to monitor their assigned profile three times per day (morning, after lunch, and before the practice closes). This protocol ensures that reviews do not fall through the cracks.

One last note: It is imperative that none of your responses reveal any patient identifying information and create a HIPAA breach in the process. This may seem obvious, but make sure this is explicitly stated within the processes that you provide to your staff maintaining the online profiles.

You can never be too careful.

Patient Education

It is essential that you consistently educate your patients in order to provide a high level of service.

Education provided to patients varies by specialty and the office's technology, but at a minimum, we recommend educating your patients on:

- Online Applications
 - Prescription Refills
 - The check-in / check-out process
 - Billing
 - Scheduling
 - Appointment confirmation protocol
- (See below)

This isn't an exhaustive list, though.

We advocate educating patients with any information that will better inform them of your practice's procedures. In addition, we advocate providing info to answer frequently asked questions that may result from patient visits or procedures.

This might seem like a time-consuming task to ask of your staff, but you can break it up into manageable tasks to be shared by all employees. Make sure that the educational guides are spelled out in layman's terms as well.

This initiative will result in happier patients (fewer questions and less wasted time trying to figure out your practice's protocol) and happier staff (fewer calls and time spent explaining to patients your protocol). This solution will also free up your staff's time and allow them to perform other important tasks.



Connect with Us

Schedule an appointment today to learn more about how Great Lakes Advisory can better position your practice for future growth and sustainability while allowing your physicians to regain focus on patient care.

Schedule an Appointment

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