



Dr. Nate Booth

PROFESSIONAL RESOURCE

Patient Care Coordinator

I believe a patient care coordinator is the best person to help new patients move through the Six Stages of Creative Case Conversation. In some offices, the Patient Care Coordinator (PCC) is one designated person. In other offices, the doctor's clinical assistants do the job. In a few offices, hygienists fill the role.

The PCC is the lead person in all interactions occurring before care begins. She:

- greets the new patients at the door.
- offers them something to eat and drink.
- sits down with them in a private room and gets to know them on a personal level.
- has a conversation with them to discover their concerns, fears and desires.
- goes over their medical and dental history forms.
- takes them on a tour of the office, pointing out key features reinforcing the office as the one that can serve them best.
- introduces them to other members of the team.
- charts existing restorations during the doctor's exam
- records the notes of the hygienist's and doctor's exams.
- assists or takes the patients' photos, radiographs and impressions.

For simple cases in the \$3000 or less range, she:

- receives the doctor's treatment plans.
- prepares for the treatment conferences while the patients are with the hygienist or are watching educational DVD's.
- presents the treatment options to the patients at the first visit.
- makes the financial arrangements.
- appoints the patients for their clinical visits.
- follows up with patients who don't make decisions to proceed that day.

For more comprehensive cases, she:

- makes appointments for people to return for treatment conferences.
- prepares for the treatment conference after receiving the doctor's treatment plans.

Patient Care Coordinator (CONTINUED)

- presents different treatment options to the patients at the treatment conference visit. The doctor may or may not be present. It's nice if the doctor sticks her head in the room and "blesses" the treatment plans.
- makes the financial arrangements.
- appoints the patients for their clinical visits.
- follows up with patients who don't make decisions to proceed that day.

As you can see, the PCC is the lead person in the entire new patient experience. PCC's have time to spend with patients and can say things about the doctor they could never say about themselves.

If the patients don't accept comprehensive care, she makes sure they come back to have something done. She keeps the completion of care moving along. Sometimes this takes weeks. Sometimes this takes months. Sometime this takes years. It's vital that one or two people in your office are responsible for making sure patient care gets completed. If you don't have these people in place, a lot of patient care will fall through the cracks.

So who should you select to be your Patient Care Coordinator? The PCC should be someone who:

1. has natural communication talent. Some team members are just naturally good at communication. The PCC wants people to have the best dentistry possible and aren't afraid to talk about those kinds of care.
2. has a great personality. She doesn't have to be a raving extrovert, but she should be empathetic and warm.
3. is enthusiastic about the care you provide. It's best if she's been with you for at least six months and has seen numerous examples of your high quality care.
4. knows a fair amount about dentistry. The best PCC's I know have been in dentistry for at least two years.
5. has the time to spend with patients and makes case acceptance her #1 priority. This one is vital. In most offices, new patients get handed from person to person and important information falls through the cracks. In addition, the patients don't have time to bond with any one team member.
6. is willing to learn a few, simple communication skills.

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