

Marketing Advice for Surgeons and Medical Specialists

by Marc Aronson

How to Increase Your PPO and Managed Care Patient Volume in a Large Metropolitan Area

In today's difficult environment, where IPAs, HMOs and PPOs reign and the economy is still sluggish, you increasing the volume of patients with "good" insurance is one way to offset shrinking reimbursement and fewer patient visits. Increasing patient visits, especially from better payors, however, is not so easy. If you are like many specialists in a large metropolitan area, you may be dashing from hospital to hospital, in and out of surgery or patient rooms. You may not have time to maintain relationships with referring physicians, let alone to establish new ones. You might occasionally grab a hasty lunch at a hospital, or pop into a doctor's lounge. In all likelihood, however, you are stumbling onto the same faces every time and not enough of the physicians you really need to see. Quarterly staff meetings may aid a little, but the contacts made there with other physicians usually are not adequate to accomplish much.

Marketing to Referring Physicians

The solution to this dilemma demands a comprehensive marketing program. Regular visits to potential referring physicians' offices is required by you, and/or by a competent individual who possesses professional communications skill. Your practice must be represented well by this person so your image is enhanced. This can be achieved by an employee, but only if you are fortunate enough to have one who qualifies. Regularly visiting their offices and providing business cards for their patients, directions to your office, practice

brochures, a list of insurances you accept and your bio are essential. Delivering promotion that separates you from your competition is certainly imperative.

Your practice should also consistently send mailings and emailers to these physicians. Print material can be produced in a newsletter format as long it is succinct, not more than one page front and back. Emails need also be concise. After all, how much time would you spend going through solicited emails even if they were fellow members of the medical community?

Among the topics that should be addressed include:

- Promoting the quality of care through the display of patient satisfaction survey results.
- A well articulated communications that makes you stand out from other physicians in your specialty.
- Your academic and clinical background and experience.
- A list of insurances your practice accepts.
- Office hours and a map with directions.
- Whom to talk to in your office regarding patient and billing matters in addition to you.
- A description of services offered and your practice philosophy on treatment.
- Introductions of your office staff (Short bios are acceptable).

Because maintaining a professional image is imperative, your promotion warrants professional design and adept writing skills. It must be tasteful and focus on hot buttons that attracts potential referring physicians to your message. This is achieved through a specialized survey approach.

Business Builders can prepare all of your material, as well as train and manage your office staff person who calls on physician's offices.

If you have questions concerning how to market your practice or desire more in-depth information, email our office.



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