

Assault on Private Practice

by Michael David McGuire

From business assaults by insurance companies... to issues related to patient treatment acceptance... to the increased cost of attracting a steady stream of new patients... the private practice dentist is dealing with a great deal more these days than at any time in past two decades. However, there is an innovative new idea... based on a tested and proven past concept... that can dramatically increase new patient flow and treatment plan acceptance, while increasing net practice income by 30% or more. This new approach is being nationally branded as Quality Dental Plan (details at QDPdentist.com). This approach is now recognized by many as being one of the nation's top solutions for helping increase income and profitability for private practice dentists, as well as giving new patients an additional reason to seek dental care.

“One of the things that we noticed early on as the economy began to sour was that more and more patients were having a difficult time following their suggested treatment plan and some putting off dental visits altogether,” said Samantha Miller, Office Administrator for Today's Dentistry, a private practice dental office in Ashland, OR. “Part of the problem was the fact that people are worried about money and

expense. We eliminated a great deal of this resistance virtually overnight by implementing the program offered by Quality Dental Plan.”

As mentioned above, Quality Dental Plan is the brand name for a patient pre-payment membership plan developed, offered and marketed nationally to dentists by QDPdentist.com. Although the core concept behind the plan offers plan members a lower price for a menu of dental services created and priced by the local doc, the net result is that the local dental office actually sees an increase in patient revenue since all dental fees must be paid, in advance, at time of treatment to qualify for the discount that the local doc has established. “We tracked the decreasing value of uncollected fees from patients over a six month period,” Miller said, “and we noticed that uncollected fees often remained uncollected. This issue was completely eliminated once we implemented QDP in our office since all QDP member patients paid in advance for all services.”

Pre-pay so-called “membership plans” are not new to dentistry... and have a long history of proven success in private practice. However, what is new... and what QDP does so well... is to take this long-proven concept and wrap it in an easy to implement, turnkey system backed by national caliber marketing materials and a national marketing campaign.

“This is one of the smartest practice management tools that I have ever implemented in our office,” according to Dan Marut, DMD. “With QDP we set our own list of benefits, our own pricing structure and determine the fees that we are going to charge. A complete Implementation Guide was included... so set up was easy. The marketing materials are professionally created and customizable by our office.” The QDP branded promotional materials include customizable patient and local business letter templates, a brochure, postcard and radio commercial... all developed by a top New York-based marketing firm. Quality Dental Plan also backs all QDP Member Dentists with strong implementation support, geographic exclusivity and help with local marketing.

“This is a complete turnkey set up,” said Dr. Marut. “We were able to fully implement... and start seeing the benefits of the plan... in less than a month. The Implementation Guide helped me and the front office team get up to speed with very little effort. All management and marketing systems were very easy to implement. The acceptance from patients was amazing.”

Other docs from around the nation have seen the value of implementing quality pre-pay membership plans like QDP. “I have never liked the way the insurance companies dictate to me and my office,” said private practice dentist Dr. Doug Paulus of Massillon,

OH. "By having a majority of patients pay in advance for all services... this hassle has been almost completely eliminated. The patient pays less out of his or her pocket... and we increase practice income." Dr. Carl Stubblefield of Boise, ID agreed. "Quality pre-paid membership plans like QDP can be a huge win-win for both us as doctors and for our patients." In the specific case of QDP from CompleteDentalPlan.com, the local doc remains 100% in charge and collects 100% of all revenue generated from plan membership fees and fees for services. Dr. Daniel Siriphongs of San Andreas, CA indicated that pre-payment membership plans can greatly reduce administrative and collection costs. "This is a major side benefit," he said. "Anything that introduces more new patients into the practice is a major plus."

"It is awkward and uncomfortable for me, personally, to have the front office team have to try and collect on past due patient payment plans and unpaid bills," said Dr. Wendy Crisafulli of Bothell, WA. "Any system that makes it easier for the patient to pursue treatment and eliminates those stressful collection calls for us is a major net positive. Without a doubt... this simple step increases our practice income."

"On the face of it the so-called "self determined discounts" created by us and offered within the plan might look as if it would decrease practice revenue," said Miller of

Ashland, OR, “but the reality is that the discount for the patient is more than offset by the savings we realize from greatly increased treatment plan acceptance, increased collections and decreased administrative costs.. The QDP marketing systems also helps us very cost-effectively reach out to the community to attract new patients.” Another interesting innovation that Quality Dental Plan is offering their QDP Member Dentists is a turnkey marketing system to reach business owners in their local community with a very affordable “dental plan” for their own employees. “The marketing approach that QDP offered was, I think, really brilliant in that they showed us how to reach out to the local community and help business owners find a great way to offer a really cost-effective dental benefit to their employees,” said Dr. Dan Marut, sighting a local retail store and a soft-serve yogurt shop as examples. “With one letter we brought in 20 new patients in one day with just one follow-up phone call. The business owner becomes a hero and her employees will have top rate dental care for less than they would have to pay for dental insurance.” In almost all cases, the cost of a QDP Business Membership for employees is fully tax deductible by the local business owner. “This has proven to be not only a great practice income building tool,” said Dr. Marut, “but also a really great public relations and marketing tool as well, that allows doctors to contribute to the overall wellbeing of their communities. I highly recommend it.”

For more information about how to become a QDP Member Dentist... and to lock in geographic exclusivity for your area... go to QDPdentist.com or call 1-888-960-1221.