Managing Your Practice

Patient-Centered Strategies for Building Your Practice

Polish Your Practice’s Image With Creative Marketing

Maximizing Income While Controlling Costs

Personnel Mistakes Can Be Costly for Practices

Getting the Best Deal on Medical Equipment
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Dear Doctor:

This month’s edition of Doctor’s Digest focuses on a nuts-and-bolts topic: Managing Your Practice. In it you’ll find a wealth of practical advice on how to bolster patient satisfaction, strategies for marketing your practice and your expertise, tips on maximizing your revenue and making smart reductions in overhead, and dos and don’ts when it comes to hiring staff and purchasing big-ticket medical equipment. We hope this information-packed edition will provide solutions to some of the issues facing your own practice.

That is Doctor’s Digest’s mission: to provide physicians with practical, how-to solutions from thought leaders and experts to make their clinical practices and professional careers more successful and satisfying. And now we’re expanding that mission to include the key clinical support staff in your practice—nurse practitioners and physician assistants.

We understand that NPs and PAs play an increasingly pivotal role in healthcare and medical practice management, and they deserve a publication that addresses their specific concerns on the non-clinical issues they face, written from their perspective, not that of the doctors with whom they work. Enter Clinician’s Digest, which will tackle the practice and career concerns of NPs and PAs, in the same comprehensive yet easy-to-read format used by Doctor’s Digest.

Clinician’s Digest’s first issue, Error Proofing Your Practice, will be available on June 1st on a free e-subscription basis on www.cliniciansdigest.net. It’s simple to register and download the issue, and automatic alerts will be sent to readers as each new issue is uploaded. Error Proofing Your Practice will help clinicians recognize common risks for medical errors and advise on ways to avoid communication breakdowns, deal with problem colleagues and place patient safety first. Future topics for Clinician’s Digest will work in tandem with those covered by Doctor’s Digest—delivering solutions to practice management problems to your key support people.

Let us know what you think—of this issue and of Clinician’s Digest. We rely on your feedback to tell us what we’re doing right and what we’re doing wrong. You can send us an e-mail or log on to our Website at www.doctorsdigest.net and click on “Feedback.”

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Managing Your Practice

Rising overhead costs and tighter third-party reimbursement policies continue to put a strain on medical practice profits. Many physicians complain that they work longer hours and make less money. In this environment, doctors need to examine every aspect of their practice to find ways to boost revenues and control overhead expenses. At the same time, though, you need to determine if the way you practice is satisfying to you personally and professionally. In some cases, a restructured practice can result in higher earnings and increased satisfaction—for patients as well as practitioners.

Marketing Internally and Externally

- All aspects of your practice, from the front desk to the exam room to the billing clerk, have an impact on the patient-physician relationship. Placing your patients’ welfare at the center of all facets of the encounter will enhance that relationship.

- Do whatever you can do to make your practice more convenient for your patients—expanded hours, electronic communication, efficient scheduling, etc.

- Happy patients tell their friends about you—and so do angry patients. Make sure that the news your patients spread is good.

- Low-cost marketing tools like practice newsletters and Websites can help you get your message out.

Boost Revenue, Control Costs

- Are you making full use of the capacity and technology in your practice? Are all the appointment slots filled?

- Minimize your no-show rate by making sure that reminder cards or calls are made on a timely basis.

- Are you collecting all the revenue you’re entitled to from all sources—co-payments, deductibles and direct payments from insurers? You can improve cash flow by insisting that all co-payments are made at the time of service.

- Recruiting staff is expensive. Reduce employee turnover by making sure the people you hire have the skills you need and match your work style and attitude.

This issue of Doctor’s Digest offers these and many more detailed strategies for managing your medical practice efficiently. We hope you’ll find it a valuable resource in making your practice more rewarding—financially and professionally.
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