

How to Provide Post-COVID-19 Patient Service

How do we “do” customer service in this ‘new normal’ and virtually?

BY NANCY FRIEDMAN

It’s the same, but a bit more of it. Patients expect great service 24/7/365. They always have... on the phone or in person. Let’s not let COVID-19 be an excuse not to provide it. Yes, many practices are understaffed; however, that has happened before. Many practices are struggling, and that has happened before. Many practices have had to hire new folks to replace the ones that left, and that too has happened before.

It’s not fun, it’s not fair, and it’s not right. However, if you’re going to stay in this fight, and most of us will and want to, we need to up the service angle. We cannot let this virus cripple

Here Are Ours:

1) *Start some sort of training NOW.* Next week could be too late. If you have some patient service training in place, step it up. If you don’t, start something to help your staff go above and beyond. It’s too easy in

4) *Your employees need to have the care gene.* That’s critical. “Patients don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care.” Sitting and reading a book, doing your nails, or talking with a co-worker when a patient walks into

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us. It has done enough damage. Have your staff do more than they used to.

These 5 steps to post COVID-19 patient service will help. Sit with your staff and ‘talk’ with them. Have them understand patient service is not a choice; it never has been. And it’s more important during these times than ever before. How can they help? Get some of their thoughts.

today’s marketplace to go somewhere else than stick around with surly, uneven help. Even the old, “Thank you for visiting us,” “We appreciate your

trust,” and “Have a wonderful holiday” go a long way and cost nothing. 2) *Meet with your staff at the end of the day.* What went wrong? What went right? Capture the ‘right.’

3) *Have your staff put on a mental suit of armor.* Let the verbal projectiles bounce off them. Talk about that. Let the staff know you are aware there are some ‘not so fun patients’ out there. The bulk of them are simply trying to get out of pain.

the store are unacceptable. Jump up, walk over, smile, and say hello. Introduce yourself. Names matter. We need to be different and special during this unusual time.

5) *Most important of all: SMILE.* Have smile lessons if you must. Don’t let your staff enter the office without a smile. “A phony smile is better than a real frown.” It’s not about you—it’s about the ‘patient.’ And no matter what time of year, a smile will win folks over. **PM**



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