

## Guidance on Rescheduling Lost Patients

### **Reschedule and Retain**

Whether your staff diligently rescheduled patients during the closures, or simply canceled all of your existing appointments, as soon as you have a tentative reopening date, your front office staff must work quickly. Each patient needs to be contacted individually to get him/her back on your schedule.

When you have your reopening date, you should update your digital presence to spread the word about when you are reopening. Your front office staff should be well-informed of the messaging and any ads you are running, so they can confirm that information and expand on any details as they reschedule patients. There will also be new obstacles your front office staff will face with your current patients, regarding safety, and preparing your staff for those conversations will help you reschedule and retain more of your current patient base.

### **Communicate Safety and Urgency**

When your front office staff reaches out to these patients, many will be hesitant to book an appointment. Even after you reopen, many of your patients will still be afraid of catching the virus, and they will avoid booking an appointment until you rebuild trust with them. Remember, your patients have not lost trust with you specifically, but they have lost trust in the safety of their environment due to this pandemic and need reassurance.

Your front office staff can help patients overcome this fear and build trust by preparing to talk to patients about the improved safety of your office. Prepare a list of your safety and sterilization measures that your front office staff can read to patients who want to know whether it is safe to be in your practice. Additionally, your front office staff should communicate the importance of hearing health's impact on overall health, which will reinforce urgency that these patients should book an appointment.

### **Answer COVID-19 Related Questions**

The biggest challenge your front office staff will face will be answering COVID-19 related questions. These hesitant patients will have many questions about the safety of your office. Collaborate with your front office staff to prepare answers to these questions, such as:

- Is it safe to come to your practice?
- Will I have to wait in a waiting room with other people?
- Are you checking patients for symptoms before treating them?
- How are you sterilizing your office?
- Is it safe for my loved ones to come in?
- Is there a virtual way to be treated?

## **Confirm Your Marketing**

Your marketing will spread the word that you are reopening, available to help, and that your practice is safe for patients. The information you communicate in your marketing should be confirmed by your front office staff. Keep your staff informed of the ads you are running, so they can confirm and expand on that information: whether it is about safety measures, availability, rescheduling, or special reopening offers. When patients are met with confirmation and reassurance at every step of your marketing, you will build trust with them. Your front office staff is the final step for patients to book an appointment, so make sure they are well-equipped to answer any last-minute questions and reassure patients they are making the right choice booking with you.