

Implementing an Effective Cross-Referral System

► The Challenge

Multi-specialty practices have long struggled with patient conversion. Most patients are either unaware of the additional services offered or don't know that their issue can be treated by an ENT physician or audiologist. Simply increasing the marketing budget is often too expensive and yields limited results.

► The Opportunity

A large, multi-specialty practice with 18 offices in the South Atlantic region was having this very issue. They wanted to find a low-cost way to increase patient awareness of the various services they offered. Working with the practice, Fuel Medical helped determine that the simplest and most effective way to accomplish this was through the use of a head and neck screener at patient intake.

► The Approach

Fuel Medical developed a cross-referral system that can work in practices of all sizes. At the center of this system is the multi-specialty screener, which can be customized to fit the scope of any practice. The head and neck screener contains questions bundled into sections for each type of service your practice offers, such as audiology, allergy, sinus, sleep, voice, etc. The limited number of questions per section is designed to have patients self-identify possible concerns that your practice may be able to address.

► Considerations

Although processes vary from office to office, a key component of this cross-referral system is having the patient complete the screener before they are seen by the physician. Not only does this ensure they are given enough time to think about their answers, it keeps them engaged while waiting for their doctor. This can lead to an increase in patient satisfaction and a decrease in complaints about wait times.

Once completed, the form is given to the medical assistant, who reviews the screener and identifies any red flags for possible additional conditions. This information is then relayed to the physician, providing them with an opportunity to discuss the additional condition during the visit and recommend a follow-up appointment be scheduled, if necessary.

► The Impact

Implementing this cross-referral system increases patient awareness of the services you provide. Their potential need for them is the surest way to increase traffic to those services and keep your patients in-house.

Identifying and treating conditions beyond a patient's original complaint shows that your practice is proactive in regards to their health. This helps foster patient loyalty, which leads to an increase in revenue.

► The Results

Over a one-year period, this multi-specialty practice saw the number of audiology appointments increase by 37.4% and allergy appointments increase by 42.2%.

These consistent conversions of existing patients into multi-specialty users once a screener is added to the intake procedure translates to dependable patient return and, as a result, increased practice revenue.

**AUDIOLOGY
APPOINTMENTS**



increased by **37.4%**



**ALLERGY
APPOINTMENTS**

increased by **42.2%**

► About Fuel Medical

Fuel Medical is the leading business advisory company serving ENTs, otologists, audiologists and universities throughout the United States. Fuel provides and implements custom insights, tools and actionable solutions that enhance practice performance and impact patient outcomes. By combining best practice business strategies with analytics, Fuel Medical collaborates with its members to achieve their goals through effective talent, information and patient management.

Find your custom solution with Fuel Medical.

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