Create more value through cosmetic dentistry

By Roger P. Levin, DDS

People value a beautiful smile even in today’s economy. Many patients will still accept cosmetic service if you continue to promote the value of your practice.

When a high level of enthusiasm for a dazzling smile is conveyed and communication between patients and team members is maintained, the value of cosmetic services is linked to your practice.

Showcase the value of esthetic treatment

Traditional dentistry is concerned with the proper and healthy functioning of the oral cavity, while cosmetic dentistry focuses on improving the patient’s smile and quality of life. Unlike need-based dentistry, cosmetic procedures are viewed as “extras” by patients.

A recent survey of Levin Group clients revealed that the second most difficult challenge to general practices today is reduced cosmetic case acceptance — second only to lower practitioner compensation. So how do you overcome that challenge?

The key to showing patients the benefits of cosmetic dentistry begins with a case presentation that is both motivating and exciting. Simply going through the motions will not cut it.

Patients want to see themselves transformed. Showing patients before-and-after photographs of successful cosmetic cases has been proven extremely persuasive.

Begin a conversation about cosmetic dentistry by asking patients questions such as:
• Have you ever thought about whitening?
• Is there anything about your smile you don’t like?
• Do you know you could have a smile like this? (Use appropriate visual aid here.)

These conversation starters are a great way to get patients to think about cosmetic dentistry.

Extending the value beyond the treatment

When a customer accepts cosmetic services, schedule the appointment right away. Create a spa-like atmosphere where patients are treated like special guests of the practice.

Train team members to call patients by name, provide refreshments and use encouraging, enthusiastic comments before the procedure.

Once treatment is performed, the clinician should place a follow-up call that night to ensure patients are doing well and are satisfied with the results.

Levin Group recommends that practices offer patients a Waterpik® dental water jet as an excellent way to maintain their investment in cosmetic dentistry. Proper home-care is the best method to preserve a new and improved smile.

Exceeding patient expectations is the heart of value creation. Patients expect more from practices that provide cosmetic dentistry.

Look at your practice through the eyes of patients. Could it be perceived as basic or just OK? Be honest.

Every practice has room for improvement. Find those areas and apply the principles of value creation.

You’ll end up with a better team, happier patients and a more successful cosmetic practice.

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