



Practice Focus

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Series 5 Personal Growth and Practice Development

Session 5 Patient Success Equals Practice Success (Part 1)

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Hello everybody, and here we go again. Another super advanced Practice Focus session is heading your way. And boy let me tell you, it's a doozy, a lot to follow here. So, I wanted to say thank you for allowing me into your sacred time, to your team meetings, and your developmental discussions. I do really, really, really appreciate it. And I don't take it for granted. I know you know that. I also just want to, once again, give you a little shoutout and commend you for the time you invest in yourselves. To make yourselves better, not just for your patients and your practice, but most of all, for yourselves, collectively and individually. It's beautiful work you do. Very important, very meaningful things. And as a result of last month, you should be having more productive and meaningful meetings than ever before. That's what we talked about: making your Practice Focuses on improving your communication from every point of contact and engagement, so that you can all level up and up your games.

Now, today, we're going to really get right into it, using our time and communication as a jumping off point to beginning, the next Practice Focus mastery session, by working on all the ways we can enhance your patient experience and help more patients get healthy. Because we know when you achieve greater success with your patients, you accomplish greater success for your practice as a whole.

Okay, now get ready. As I said, a lot of work to be done today, and I'm going to quickly lay it out for you, so we can just get right to it. To give credit where credit is due, the wordsmith master and communication verbiage kingpin, Kevin Kowalke, coined the phrase that I'm going to play off of today, he calls, "The Connected Patient Experience."

I'm going to take some liberties here, but really, truly Kevin created this, not just idea, but this method of looking deep into the patient experience and just really seeing how it all weaves together. And I'm going to speak more on that in just a moment. So, The Connected Patient Experience this month in our Practice Focus, we have four major objectives with this deep dive in mind.

First, we want to define it. Second, we want to assess it. Third, we want to enhance, improve and make it better. Fourth, we want to gain clarity and understanding over each other and tighten up our links in the chain of exactly what The Connected Patient Experience means and really what it's all about and how you bring it to life with each other.

Yes, I know that's a lot of stuff. So let's begin. The core concept of The Connected Patient Experience, and the mission behind it - literally - is every part of the process, and every team member is linked together. Not just in communication, but also in actual steps and protocols. And as Kevin would say, to take it to an even greater level, it's also about the patient feeling that, and being connected to you, all along the way as well. And by the way, that's the tough part. Not so tough to go through the motions, much tougher, to stay humanly engaged with the patient and the patient with you as you roll them forward and through the experience you're creating; thus connectedness.

I call this, "from phone call to follow through," and technically even follow up, which I will say, technically it should be through completion of treatment in their pathway to health, all the way into longterm retention of the patient in your practice. Now, we're going to get to that part another time. For right now, let's simply focus in on the phone call to the follow through, and then the extra special, we can't forget to do it, following up.

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Now, it's your turn. I want you to define together as a team, what you want your Connected Patient Experience to mean to all of you, to mean to your patient. Like literally, I want you to define it, give it a definition, a substance, so that you can judge success by it.

Now, talk about qualitatively, what it feels like, looks like, how you will know when you're successful. Take some time on this, but not too much. We're talking about a quick 10-minute open discussion, and solidification of what it is and how you would judge yourself successful, then done, move on. The important part begins here.

What we're going to do is to assess how we're doing based on the state of ideal. And we're going to tackle two and three all at the same time, since they obviously go together. Assessment and enhancement. Here's how I want this to be different, for your advantage and benefit compared to all the times you've had in the past, simply role-playing and talking through your patient experience, as we have done really, really countless numbers of times. Like links in the chain, I want you to start on the phone and basically answer these five thought-provoking actions and questions.

First, number one, how do I want the patient to feel when I'm on the phone and when I'm done with the phone?

Second, what is the most important thing I want to accomplish, and what information do I want to gather, and also deliver, to prepare the patient for the next most successful step in the process?

Third, am I doing that, and how can I do it better?

Let's just pause right here for just a moment. I used the phone as an example, but for every team member's perspective for your role, within the context of the patient experience, the question is very simple. "How do I want the patient to feel, how am I going to connect with this person doing my role?" And then when I'm done with it. "And then secondly, what's the most important thing that I want to accomplish, and also gather and deliver, to the patient to bring this really to a completeness, before I move the patient on to the next team member and next step?" And then you ask yourself, "Am I doing it - those two things - and how can I make them better?"

That leads us to the fourth piece of the puzzle that you're personally going to assess, discuss and represent. "How am I connecting the patient to the next team member and the next step in the process of our patient experience, and what does success look like with that?" And then of course, finally, the fifth piece, most importantly, the team member that takes the patient from you from here, must answer the question, "How can you do it better?" And this gives everyone a chance to weigh in on ways to improve. Okay?

So, gather up your insights so that you can turn them into actions and commitments to revisit as we build on this next month.

Okay. Once you go through my example of say the phone, all the way to the follow-through and the following-up. That means for any unaccepted or worst-case un-appointed patients, you can think through how you keep the patient from falling through the cracks. You now want to pick up any remaining team members or types of visits, such as hygiene, or follow-up, or post-ops, or therapies, or ortho, TMJ or sleep, or literally anything else, whether that's

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a crown and a delivery, or that's a full arch prep and seating all of the veneers. It doesn't make any difference to me, in the context of your patient experience, you will exhaust all team members, not so much all visits, but all team members, and make sure that you truly have a Connected Patient Experience.

But most importantly, today, the high-level thinking behind the new patient experience, as you walk them through all the steps, the processes and protocols that you have. We want every team member to have a chance to talk about their part and their approach to The Connected Patient Experience, from those five pieces. The feeling during and after, what you want to accomplish, to gather up from the patient and deliver to the patient, so that then you can create the perfect connected piece to the next team member.

And then finally, of course, we go to, are you doing it? And how can you do it better? Your perspective and other peoples'. There you have it, my friends. Listen, as I said, it's so much stuff. It's so much stuff all for one person, for then every single team member to do, but this is what makes sure that there aren't any gaps, which is really what we're doing here.

Making sure there are no gaps. Okay? Once again, we want every team member to have a chance to talk about their part and approach to The Connected Patient Experience. This is, not an easy feat and it will be time-consuming.

You have options today to be able to get it done. You can break into departments and do each group discussion first and then come back together and share. You could take a representative from each department and buddy up and go through A to Z and then come back together.

You can simply stay together as one big group and go through a live patient experience flow as a whole. Just remember to go through each of the five actions and questions so that you get a complete assessment to the enhancements, to the insights and a list of specific things to work on and commit to improving.

You can take the time you have available and divide it by the number of people in the room, and you can easily see whether or not you should create mini groups to go all at once, as in small, miniature, or just share insights back together if you have enough time to stay in one large group and just go around the room and lickety-split, okay, don't rush it, do a great job, but work to the clock, work to the clock.

The very final part of your meeting is as it always is, to finalize each team member's individual decisions and priorities that they're committing to, and then as a whole, your team overall, to come up with agreements as to how you're going to take your Connected Patient Experience to the next level and get it as close as possible to bringing to life your state of ideal.

Now, I'm going to leave you with this famous saying that Maegen references all the time from the great Maya Angelou that, "People won't remember what you said or did, but they will always remember how you made them feel." We want to use The Connected Patient Experience not just in concept or in tactics, but also 100% in that emotion, that human engagement.

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So this isn't just about those steps and tricks, or protocols, or things like this, it's not about what you do in terms of the actual connectedness, but also the feelings you create in your patients by engaging them every step of the way. Not just with you, but connected to each other throughout the entire experience. And that, my friends, is exactly where we'll pick up next month, as I give you specific and exact examples, and give you the ultimate secret to The Connected Patient Experience, which we call Full Circle Communication.

First, though, it's your turn to better your best, and to connect more than ever before, by not just connecting parts and pieces in your protocols and processes, but most of all, connecting with the people, and to use this exercise to facilitate you being even more aware, even more present, even more in the moment because you know that you are all connected throughout the entire experience.

Now, in this case, okay? In this case, connecting people to people, to create your most connected patient experience. This gives you the greatest patient success possible to achieve your greatest potential and the success you are truly capable of as a team and as a practice.

Hey, have a blast, okay? Have a blast, and stay focused in this special and unique Practice Focus and keep connected to each other, to the work you're doing, and the discussions you're having, while bringing the essence and the most important aspects of what you do every single day to life, in the most connected way.