Can You Hear Me Now?

Patient Messaging During COVID-19
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Agenda

- Unique communication needs during COVID-19
- The information you should be sharing with patients
- The emergence of hybrid care
- Making communication a two-way street
The pandemic has stirred up confusion and fear in Americans

- Confusion caused by shifting advice on how to stay safe
- **91% are afraid** of catching the virus
- **One in three Americans** report feelings of anxiety, depression, or both as a result of COVID-19.
Many are avoiding doctor visits

- 45% decrease in cancer diagnoses
- 38% fewer reports of heart attacks
- 30% fewer strokes
- Visits to the ER down by 40%
- Measures of HOW sick people are when they get to the ER is up 20%

If this many are avoiding care for life-threatening conditions, what does it mean for more “mundane” care?

Americans avoiding the doctor hurts everyone. Fortunately, you have great influence in this area.
Americans are looking to YOU for guidance on what they should do

- **69% want healthcare and science leadership** to guide their response to COVID-19.

- **90% trust their personal physicians** more than a government health specialist.

Extensive studies over three decades show that effective communication from a person’s healthcare organization has a “profound effect on health outcomes as well as patient satisfaction and experience of care.”
With great power comes great responsibility...you must stay up-to-date

- Official websites - World Health Organization, CDC
- Industry-specific sources - American Dental Association
- COVID-19 trackers - Johns Hopkins
- News sources - Associated Press, NPR
- State and local guidelines
What information should you be sharing to ease patient fears?

1. General education
2. Patient-specific information
3. Practice-specific information
1. General education-newsletter

- Current COVID-19 status of your area
- Guidelines for protection
- Specialty specific information (how does the pandemic impact your specialty?)
- Don’t forget non-coronavirus education
How do I leverage newsletters?

- [Link] Newsletters: Get Started
- [Link] Newsletters: Quick Tips
- [Link] Design a newsletter
- [Link] Edit and send a newsletter using an existing template

![Newsletter Example](image-url)
Do I have to create my own newsletters?
COVID-19, originally known as 2019-nCoV, is a strain of a large family of coronaviruses which can be transmitted from animals to humans. It was first identified as the cause of a respiratory illness outbreak in Wuhan, China in late 2019. On March 11, 2020 the World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID-19 a pandemic.

Dear Terry,

We hope you and your family are coping well during these very difficult times. In an effort to provide our patients care during local quarantine, self-isolation and general social distancing measures, we now offer telehealth appointments.

Telehealth gives us the ability to provide quality healthcare services safely and remotely to patients via computer, tablet or mobile device. Simply click below to get started.

Request Appointment

Please call us at 801-331-7207 with any questions regarding telehealth. Distance is no longer an obstacle to great care!

Alpine Clinic
What are newsletter best practices?

1. Purpose—Why are you sending a newsletter?
2. Call to action—What do you want patients to do?
3. Subject line—What is the open rate?
4. A/B testing
   a. Subject lines
   b. Newsletter content
5. Iterate—Take what you’ve learned and improve.

View a detail report for a sent newsletter
2. Patient-specific communication

- Use targeted messaging
- Address high-risk patients
Create patient groups to send ongoing messages

- Entire patient base
- Patients with scheduled appointments
- High-risk patients

Creating different types of patient groups
Groups: Get Started and Quick Tips video.
3. Practice-specific communication

- Changes to processes
  - Mitigate safety concerns
  - Improve efficiency
- Open or closed? Hours?
- Pre-visit instructions
- Appointment reminders
- Surveys
- Are you offering telehealth? How can patients access it?
Incorporate your telehealth tool

**SR Supports 3rd-party Telehealth Tools**

1. Create the telehealth appointment type in your PM
2. Include the provider specific url in the pre-visit instructions
3. Let patients know (newsletters, inbound calls, 2-way-texting)

**Create Pre-Visit Instructions within Appointment Reminders**

New Pre-Visit Instruction

If appointment provider matches
- Dr. Janet Baker DDS

If patient group matches
- Teledentistry

Add this content to the appointment reminder:

Please click the following link to begin your appointment with Dr. Baker:
https://srteledent.com/d/1THZeARbf-pMx9VrRpp5629tMxwZUayCKVfljDnTOAznA/ed

NOTICE: This feature allows you to author and insert pre-visit instructions into patient email and/or text message appointment reminders. By using this feature, you acknowledge that (i) communication methods such as regular email and text messaging are not secure or encrypted; (ii) depending on what you author, the information you include in your pre-visit instructions may be considered PHI or HIPAA.

I am authorized to agree to these terms on behalf of the practice.

Cancel  Save
Implement telehealth

- Expand your virtual office with Solutionreach
  - Create a telehealth appointment type in your PM
  - Include your provider-specific telehealth link in the pre-visit instructions
  - Launch billable virtual check-in services
    - Telephone
    - Text/Image (SR Conversations)
  - Create a digital patient intake experience with SR Intake
A study from May of 2020 found that the majority of Americans would like to continue using telehealth after COVID-19.

In-person visits + distance visits = Hybrid Care
Hybrid care requires excellent communication and a unique workflow

- Ways to set up each specific visit type for scheduling and billing
- Processes to ensure patient, provider and staff satisfaction
- Reminders that contain important instructions and links
- Digital tools for intake/registration
- Digital payment tools
- Two-way text to quickly address issues
• SR Hybrid Care
  ○ SR Intake for digital registration (with COVID screening forms)
  ○ SR Telehealth (mobile HIPAA-compliant audio and video)
  ○ SR Pay (text bill reminders and mobile bill pay)
  ○ Packaged at one low price
• Combined with Solutionreach platform, you get an end-to-end workflow to support both types of visits.
• Poll
How to make sure patients actually engage with your communication

- Communication is always two-way....how can you engage patients?
- Preferred method (review this now)
What does the research have to say?

Most popular methods include:

- Text
- Email
- Phone
- Mail
How often should we send info?

- Too much is better than not enough (right now)
- Newsletters
  - Weekly or bi-weekly
- Text communication
  - Anytime change occurs
We recommend 3-3-3 (turn off weekly for now).
Create a calendar and stick to it

- Social media
- Newsletters
- Texting
- Website
Upcoming sessions:

- June 24 - Using Technology to Create a Touchless Patient Experience
- July 1 - 5 Critical Steps to Ensure Success with Telemedicine
- July 8 - 10 Social Media Marketing Tips to Bounce Back from COVID-19
Reach out!

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