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Addressing the WDS situation to termination:

Make it a point to address as many patients as possible before providing WDS your 60 day termination notice. If you are able, getting through a full recall cycle is best. Go through the WDS patients due in on the schedule. As a team each morning, decide which team member would be best suited to conduct a conversation about what WDS is planning to do and how this (if not soon but one day) may have a detrimental effect on their dental care. Use terms you feel would be best understood by that particular patient. Maybe they are someone who has already expressed displeasure with the insurance provider or is "anti" national healthcare. Whatever it might be, speak to it. Use wording like "You are not going to believe what your provider is doing!" or "Have you heard...?" Choose wording to include "Your benefit provider" or "Your employer's choice for dental WDS which is forcing...". This helps to assign responsibility. Tell the patient WDS will be sending them propaganda directing them to clinics where costs to WDS are reduced. Cite the chance they may be treated by less qualified team members and doctors. Remind the patient of the time and expense the Doctor goes to with CE and the never-ending pursuit of progressive development and procedures in his/her field. Remind them of all the things which separate your practice from the "dental mill." It seems WDS is going to make it extremely difficult for the patients to receive the best care. Like all big insurance companies, their priority does not seem to be that their clients obtain the "best" dental care, but rather to insure their net profit increases annually. Meanwhile, the patients are treated by a dentist (chances are, very young, inexperienced and unsupervised) and employees whose goal is to see as many patients in a day as possible and may withhold options (which may be the best option) regarding their treatment in an effort to cut their own costs. Continue to cite other examples you have seen with patients which have returned to your practice from these clinics.

Finish it with a statement about yourself and what you and the practice have always stood for. Don't be afraid to let them know for the first time in years, modest fee increases have been disallowed and yours, like any other small business, has struggled through with the increasing costs of running a business. Labor, supplies, utilities, lab fees (with precious metal prices) increasing at a minimum of 3% each year, and the fact that you have been handcuffed by the insurance companies have all been costs you have absorbed. You have taken on these increased costs without compromising the manner in which you deliver care - still quality and with the belief that the patient comes first.

Take every opportunity to discuss this with the patient. There will be those who will be unsympathetic. You or somebody on the team will have a good idea who those people are. Those are handled on a case by case basis. When a team member stands up for the Doctor, it holds a lot of weight.

Prior to sending written notice of termination to WDS, have a well-crafted letter already sent to your WDS patients. Reiterate what you have been verbalizing to them. If you would care to view sample letters, they can be found on our website at www.knutzenmcvaygroup.com.

Keep close track of patients who notify you they will be transferring to a network provider. Make it a point to send them a short letter within the next six months conveying that they are very much welcome back into your practice anytime.

Each practice should tailor their approach to this differently. Discuss this as a group. Do your due diligence and base your decision on what is best for your practice.

You can reach me on my cell phone at (425) 780-9733 or through e-mail at todd@knutzenmcvaygroup.com.

Sincerely,

Todd McVay
TM/km

our commitment
is to
YOUR success.