Wainright & Wassel DDS

Step By Step Reopening Gameplan

horizontal line

**PREPARATIONS PRIOR TO RETURNING TO THE OFFICE:**

1. **COMMUNICATION WITH OUR PATIENTS… DIFFERENT WAYS**

* Instagram and Facebook 4-5 post a week
* Keep it Normal and Consistent
* Covid -19 info
* Updates on what our our office is doing to prepare to bring patients back
* Updates on reopening: projected date of return
* Dental Emergencies-what to do
* Add a little humor, staff spotlights videos ….masks, wash your hands videos, etc.
* Let patients know that we miss them and we care… “relationship”
* Newsletters through emails, text messages, and calling patients
* 1-2 business team answering phones…we are still here
* 2 others working from home going through the emails, text messages and correspondence from patients …working on the schedule.. been rescheduling patients
* Inform patients of new protocol and provide instructions for parking lot check in

1. **COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR STAFF (THE SOUL OF YOUR BUSINESS ARE YOUR EMPLOYEES)**

* BASECAMP: App on your phone and access it through your laptop. The entire staff can communicate with each other as a whole, as well as in subdivisions for each group: hygiene, assistants, business team. Through this app, we can share documents, schedules, and “chat by the campfire”.
* ZOOM MEETINGS: Once a week …Manager hosts meetings with the entire staff (doctors included), then separate meetings with each team: hygiene, assistants, and business team.
* Individually reach out to each team member. Let them know you are there for them. Some may have concerns they are not comfortable expressing in a group setting

I think talking and keeping in touch with our staff makes everyone feel like we are still a family unit. Communication is everything. Even though everyone is not in the office…. they still feel connected.

1. **RESCHEDULING PATIENTS**

* Business team moved patients from the days we were closed, one day at a time. Usually 2 days prior to scheduled appointment.
* Reschedule low risk patients further out. Those with perio and high risk of re-infection, bring back sooner ….All patients will receive the same utmost protection from infection, but all will feel differently about returning. **LET PATIENTS DECIDE**!!!
* For patients already scheduled on the days that we plan to reopen, we will go through the schedule and remove 1-2 patients per hour. This creates space to “stagger and extend” each appt.
* Add 10 -20 minutes on to each hygiene appointment
* Add 20-30 minutes on to the doctors appointments (2 columns per doctor) Keep the doctor time the same… just extend the assistant time
* The doctor will have to let the assistants and hygienists do as much as they can legally leaving the doctor more time to do more things.
* Doctor time is the most valuable time! Use their time more wisely!
* Have a soft reopen…. seeing less patients
* Open up more hours. Extend your working day and consider opening some holidays that you had originally planned on closing (either with full or partial staff). Extend Friday hours. We usually work 7:00- noon on Fridays 1-2 docs…. extending that to 3-4 docs and more hygienists & extending hours to 7:00-2:00, no lunch.

1. **PREPARING TO REOPEN THE DOOR CHECKLIST:**

* Acquire proper PPE within the guidelines of the ADA, CDC, and State Dental Board THIS IS CRUCIAL
* Social Distancing protocol in place
* New check in procedure in place
* New check out procedure in place (“zero touch” check out)
* Credit card processing payment option on website
* Care Credit processing on our website
* What works for your office in the space that you have? Set up a step by step plan for the staff (PPE Protocol)
* Set up a date for the team to practice a “**dry run”** (extremely important point!)
* Go over new verbiage & conversations that we will be having with patients.
* Prepare your team to answer the difficult questions

1. Is it safe?
2. How will I pay for this?
3. Do I have to come into the office?
4. Is your team healthy?
5. Have any of your patients been diagnosed with COVID-19?

* Write up an updated office infection control and sanitization protocol for your team.
* Train staff to present infection control measures to be ready for the “THE INFECTION CONTROL TOUR”
* Add an infection control page to your webpage and feature a link for it on your home page
* Make sure all your equipment is up and ready to go….

**5. What kind of PPE is our staff going to be using?**

* Scrubs will not leave the premises
* Hired a laundry service to pick up twice a week
* All shoes worn in clinical area will stay at the office and sprayed down with Lysol end of day
* Surgical mask grade 2-3, KN-95 or N-95
* Face Shields
* Hair Nets
* Scrub Caps
* Disposable Surgical Gowns
* Of course gloves.. lots and lots of gloves
* Hand Sanitizer everywhere
* The BusinessTeam will have removable desktop plexiglass barrier shields, gloves, masks, hand sanitizer, and clorox wipes.
* We will also supply pens for our patients to keep in case they have to sign something. They will keep these instead of wiping down all the pens all day long. All of these items will be on each of the business team’s desks so that the patient can see all we are doing to protect our staff and our patients.

**6. Clinical Staff Infection Control New Protocol: From start to finish**

* Clinical Staff members will be entering the office through the back door in their street clothes.
* Clinical Staff will change into their scrubs/shirts/jackets and clinical shoes upon arriving to work early. These clothes and shoes will be left in a separate laundry area at the office each evening.
* Each clinical staff member will have 6 sets of scrubs and will be provided with sew-in name tags for each top and bottom
* A laundry service will come every Monday and Thursday and will deliver clean folded scrubs in their corresponding name labeled baskets.
* Clinical Staff will then pick up all their PPE consisting of surgical masks Level 2 and 3, N-95 or KN-95 (just approved by the FDA), hair nets, scrub caps, disposable surgical gowns, and lots and lots of gloves, hand sanitizer. (We have a small PPE room set up with all the new PPE gear)
* We will have one staff member assigned to take all employees' temperatures with the infrared thermometer. This will be done after clinical staff changes and before they are allowed into their operatory.
* ADA has supplied a form to be filled out to record each of your employee’s daily temperatures. The staff’s name, date, and temperature will be recorded for each day. Link to the ADA’s “Return to work Interim Guidance:

<https://pages.ada.org/return-to-work-toolkit-american-dental-association?utm_campaign=covid-19-Return-to-Work-Toolkit&utm_source=adaorg-home-rotator&utm_medium=adahomerotator&utm_content=covid-19-interim-return-to-work>

* Throughout the day staff will be abiding by the ADA, CDC, OSHA, and NC Dental Boards guidelines.
* End of day all clinical staff will throw all their disposable PPE away in a large trash container supplied before changing into their street clothes.
* Clinical staff will change into their street clothes and place soiled clothes in laundry containers supplied
* Clinical staff will spray off clinical shoes worn this day with Lysol.
* Clinical staff will wash their hands and arms before they leave.

**7. THE “RETURNING PATIENT EXPERIENCE”**

* Set up a step by step “RETURNING PATIENT EXPERIENCE” (NEW BUZZWORD)
* Prior to appointment, patients will receive a “wellness screening form” with their reminder text or email. They will be required to complete this form prior to entering the building.
* Patients will receive a video on our new “PPE” procedures with their reminders.
* All patients will get a personal phone call from our office before their appointment even if they have confirmed and have their “wellness” forms back in. We will ask them if they have any questions about their appointment or our office at this time. Assure them of their safety if they have any questions.

Also , inform you patient of these new protocols:

* + If you develop any cold like symptoms, please reschedule
  + Come alone if you can. If someone has to come with you, they can help you come in but will have to wait in the car
  + Please do not arrive earlier than your scheduled appointment time. When you enter, please wear a mask, scarf, or bandana to cover your mouth and nose.
* Patients have the option to pay ahead of their visit or use our “zero touch” terminals
* When a patient arrives at the office they will call or text us that they have arrived (New Check in Procedure…. “Curbside Check-in”)
* Patient stays in their car until we text or call their cell.
* When the hygienist or dental assistant is ready for the patient, we will text or call the patient.
* Patient comes to the entrance. Patients will take a position in line and stand on our marked decals. We have placed decals at the entrance 6 ft apart. (We will be staggering patients so we hope not to have a lot of patients waiting outside)

Note: The front door is used for an **ENTRANCE ONLY**. This door will be marked on both sides of the door with a sign that says ENTRANCE ONLY!!

* A clinical staff member (or manager) will be taking the patient’s temperature with an infrared thermometer. If there is no fever, the patient then enters the office and uses the hand sanitizer and will be handed a mask.
* Patient will go to a floor decal (in patient order of entry) and wait until the hygienist or dental assistant calls their name. (There should be no wait since we are texting them to say we are ready) We will have them do this just in case there is a wait for some reason.
* Patient goes to the operatory with the clinical staff member, where they will be seated.
* Bib is placed around patient's neck
* Hydrogen peroxide rinse is given to patient (1.5% hydrogen peroxide) 1 TBSP swished in patient’s mouth for 60 seconds
* Eye protection is given
* Temperature recorded in chart

***For Hygiene only:***

* ***The use of intra oral suction will be used to decrease aerosols during appointment***
* ***If a patient has an appointment with a hygienist, remind them that the use of ultrasonic scalers will be limited due to the creation of aerosols.***
* Patient has their hygiene appointment or treatment with the doctor/assistant. (Business as usual here)

When appointment is completed:

* If using routing slips, these should be placed in a clear plastic folder and be removed using proper PPE. <https://www.staples.com/Poppin-Clear-Set-of-3-Zip-Folios/product_570192>

(clear folders we bought for routing slips)

* Make sure the patient has their mask on and then take the patient to the “zero touch” check out stations.
* These stations will have the floor decals in front of the check out station and others 6 ft apart. We do this just in case there are more people that want to check out at a time.

\*For patients that don’t have a balance and have already made their next appointment, they can leave the office. They can bypass the check out station and go directly to the Exit Door.

* “Zero Touch: check out consists of touch to pay via Apple Pay, Tap to Pay (Newer Credit cards have this)
* Patients can pay on our website through a link to our Credit Card Processor
* Patients can pay via Care Credit on our website. Care Credit has sent all their clients a “link” to add to their website so that a patient can pay by clicking on this link. The payment will go directly into your bank account like any Care Credit payment does.

Advice: Money is easier to collect at time of service instead of asking them to pay at home via your website. That is just the way it is.

* After paying and going over any additional treatment, the patient will proceed to the “**EXIT DOOR**”. This door will be clearly marked on both sides of the door.
* Before leaving, the patient will again use hand sanitizer that is located right beside the EXIT DOOR!
* Patient leaves the office happy and safe!

Just remember that YOU’VE GOT THIS!!!!

Communication is the key to both your patients and your staff.

KEEP IT NORMAL!!! MAKE IT SEEM LIKE WHAT YOU ARE DOING IS THE NORM!!

I personally feel that if your staff feels safe then they project this to your patients so they will feel safe.

The patients feel the “vibe” of your office. Same goes with the mood of the office!!!

PATIENTS FEEL EVERYTHING.

**Good luck and happy reopening!!!!!**