

WHY ARE WE ALWAYS RUNNING BEHIND?

| HANNAH LIVELY, FAADOM



Does your practice find itself taking patients to the back 15 minutes or longer after their appointment time? Do you have employees staying past closing to finish tasks and complete patient care on a normal basis? Here are some reasons your practice may be continually running behind, and a solution for each!

NOT GETTING PATIENTS BACK ON TIME

If you are having a morning huddle that starts at 7:45, the huddle should end at 7:55, and your staff should be heading straight to the reception area to get their first patient. However, after huddles, employees often hang around to chat, which delays them from patient appointments by five to 10 minutes. If this is the case, it is hard

to catch back up until after lunch, when the exact same problem rears its ugly head again. Once the huddle is complete, everyone should head immediately to their desk; to the front to get their patient; or to their operator. No one should stand around talking, eating, or doing anything other than getting to work. If the patient can be on time, we can have the respect to get them back and start on their procedure.

PATIENTS NOT FILLING OUT PAPERWORK

How many times do patients come into your office without filling out their new patient paperwork? It seems insane, since we can now

email or text the paperwork to them before the appointment. The most efficient way to ensure this is complete is to let the patient know on the phone that you are going to be sending them paperwork, and it is important they have that information filled out before they come to the office. If they cannot get that paperwork filled out before then, they will need to

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arrive early (give them a specific time) to complete that paperwork.

BEING UNPREPARED

In dentistry, there is no way to be prepared for every situation, but you can always be prepared for what you know is happening in the office that day. This can include talking about patients in the huddle, setting up rooms the day before, and making every employee aware of their schedule. Working as a team truly helps

everyone be prepared and helps the office run smoothly and on time.

IMPROPER SCHEDULING

Every practice management system comes with scheduling blocks to help you map out your day. It is important that you use these blocks properly, to ensure your time is managed wisely and effectively. A doctor cannot be in two, three, or four places simultaneously. Overbooking causes the practice to run

behind, and creates frustration for employees and patients. Managers and doctors should sit down and discuss the best way to arrange block times to help the practice meet production goals and manage time well.

These are just a few reasons your office is behind each day. Fortunately, a few simple adjustments can help alleviate the problem. Start with one thing, master it, then move on to the next. You will see your office running on time in *no time!* ■



MEET THE MEMBER

Hannah Lively, FAADOM has worked at Allen Family Dentistry for over a decade, beginning as an insurance coordinator. She now holds the role of business manager and has assisted the Allens in opening three additional practices. She graduated from Texas Christian University with a degree in Business, focusing on Entrepreneurial Management. Hannah has been a member of AADOM since 2018 and earned her fellowship designation (FAADOM) in 2021. She is currently working towards her mastership designation (MAADOM) with hopes of being inducted in 2023. Her favorite part of working in the dental office is getting to know the patients, hearing their stories, and helping them achieve the smile of their dreams.

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