



Collection Tip of the Month

Ask anyone in the retail industry what the first words are that come to their mind when they think of Nordstrom, and they'll immediately tell you "customer service." I recently came across a book that I purchased a few years back called "The Nordstrom Way To Customer Service Excellence" and I couldn't help wondering what a physician's office could learn from a this iconic retailer.

In past newsletters, I have written about how the healthcare market is more competitive than ever. I have often discussed to improve your collections you must shift your resources from the back-end to the front. Patients are becoming shoppers and want their healthcare experience to offer convenience, consistent communication, price transparency, and they want a knowledgeable and friendly staff to guide them through the revenue cycle. So I want to take a look at best practices at Nordstrom and offer ideas on how you can implement them in your physician's office:

1. Empower your employees. The Nordstrom employee handbook has one rule: "Use good judgement in all situations." The handbook then goes on to say if you have any questions on what that means, ask your supervisor. Dave and I consistently hear from your employees that they don't have clear guidelines and that they do not have the authority to make a decision. Establish a set of guidelines and allow your employees to use their best judgement if they need to deviate. It will motivate your employees and make for a better patient experience.
2. At Nordstrom they believe in helping customers find what they're looking for faster and check out faster. For your office: Have your patient information form, health history form, and financial policies available on your website or mail them a welcome package if time allows. Patients prefer to fill them out at home at their convenience rather than 5 minutes before their appointment. You will get more accurate information which is the key to collections. Inform the patients that payment will be due at the time of service. Take the time upfront to calculate their co-pay and self-pay portion. Offer various payment methods and be ready to negotiate payment plans if necessary.
3. Build a more personal relationship with each patient. At Nordstrom every employee introduces themselves and calls their customers by their first name. They walk around from behind the cash register, hand you your package and say thank you. They phone their customers to follow up on their purchase, remind them of sales, and often times hand write thank you notes. For your office: Give your patient's a reminder call or text about their appointment. Greet them and put them at ease. Clear up any old

balances and review their insurance coverage. Have a mini-financial consultation with them to prepare them for any self-pay balances. See if there are any obstacles for them to pay in full. Discuss payment plans if needed. Having a greater degree of empathy for your customers will enable you to see and solve problems that you previously might never have noticed before.

4. At Nordstrom they empower customers to spread positive word-of-mouth. They don't ask them to tell their friends about their shopping experience. When a shopper has a great experience they will tell everyone they come across without being asked. Same for a bad experience. Give your patients a good experience and they will spread the word without you asking.

A good question to ask yourself is, "when was the last time you empowered your staff to use their good judgement instead of relying on you or a policy to make decisions?" Even if you answered "never," it's never too late to start thinking about how you might empower your employees and see how they perform differently. I am betting your patient's will notice for the better.

Congratulations to our newest Professional Collection Specialist Brittney Kuykendall. She received her ACA accreditation this week!!



All NEW! All FREE!

How Can I Earn CEU's By Attending a CDA Seminar?

Many of you belong to various professional medical office management associations and are looking for industry professionals to conduct a seminar at your local or state meetings. CDA is now offering a free seminar called "9 Red Hot Ingredients to Fire Up you're A/R Collections in Just 30 Minutes a Week?" for your medical or office managers

association. We will be conducting a seminar for the American Association of Professional Coders in February and they will receive 2.0 CEU's towards their professional certification for attending. Also, we were approved by the American Academy of Medical Administrators are allowing their members 1.5 CEU's for attending a live seminar or webinar.



Download yours today

You can view a short video on the seminar by going to <https://www.cdac.biz/spiceitup>

If you are interested in learning more about how you can bring our seminar to your association, please call Dave or Tony.

Upcoming IPA Seminar

Join us on Thursday, May 12th at 7:30 am for the Independent Physicians Advisors meeting. I will be conducting the presentation. Topic is:

9 Red Hot Ingredients to Fire Up Your A/R Collections in 30 minutes a week.

Learning Objectives:

- Improve Your Point-of-Service Collections
- Importance of Pre-Visit Consultations
- What Patient Information is Critical To Obtain
- Setting an A/R Timeline

Schedule:

7:30 am Hot Breakfast & Networking
8:00 am Presentation By Tony Muscato
9:30 am Q&A and open networking

Location:

[Maggiano's Little Italy](#)

516 N Clark St,
Chicago, IL 60654
[\(312\) 644-7700](#)

Register Below Link:

<http://www.ipamd.com/events.php>

Thank You For Your Trust!!

We are looking to help more clients like you. The greatest form of flattery is when one of our clients refers us to one of their colleagues. If you know someone that can benefit from our services, let us know and we will be glad to follow up.

Chef Dave's Kitchen**Paleo Tuscan Chicken Skillet Recipe (low carb)****Ingredients**

- 1 lb. chicken breast tenderloins;
- 1 onion, diced;
- 3 cloves garlic, minced;
- 12 oz. mushrooms, sliced;
- ½ cup sun-dried tomatoes, chopped;
- 15 oz. fire-roasted diced tomatoes;
- 1 tsp. oregano;
- ½ tsp. thyme;
- Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper;
- Cooking Fat

Preparation

1. Melt some cooking fat in a large skillet placed over a medium-high heat.
2. Add the chicken and brown for 3 minutes on each side.
3. Remove chicken and set aside on a plate.
4. Add some more cooking fat to the skillet if necessary.

5. Add the sliced mushrooms in a single layer and brown for a few minutes per side. Remove from the pan and set aside.
6. Add the onion and cook until soft, about 4 minutes.
7. Add the garlic and sun-dried tomatoes and sauté for 2 to 3 minutes.
8. Stir in the diced tomatoes, oregano, thyme, and season with salt and pepper to taste.
9. Transfer the chicken back to the pan.
10. Cover and cook until the chicken is cooked through, about 10 to 12 minutes.
11. Return the mushrooms to the pan, combine well, adjust the seasoning if needed, and serve.

All the best,

Tony Muscato, VP of Sales

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