



Collection Tip of the Month

Nothing ruins your day more easily than an angry patient that takes out their frustrations on you. Dave and I hear the "war stories" all the time from our clients.

Often the patient is upset with their bill because they don't understand it and they call you to "discuss." Often times the "discussion" doesn't go like you want it to. We recently did some training in our office on how to handle angry customers so I thought I would share it with you this month.



When it comes to calming angry patients, a skillful use of language is very important. The experts have identified four main customer personality types: The Off-Loader, The Legitimate Grievance, The Threat-Maker, and The Vulgarian. Here is an explanation of the personality types, with words and phrases most likely to defuse the situation:

The Off-Loader

This patient generally does not have a legitimate grievance. Rather they have suffered a recent personal strain and they want to vent. This frequently involves amplifying minor complaints out of proportion. Take the patient as seriously as possible and use empathetic language at all times. Here is a list of phrases best suited to this type of caller:

"I am so sorry that you feel this way, Mrs. Brown..."
"As a solution, may I suggest that...?"
"What I will do right now is..."
"We really appreciate this feedback, Mrs. Brown..."
"May I arrange for an update call at a time most convenient for you?"

The Legitimate Grievance

Mistakes happen; it's a fact of life, and it's forgivable. You have severely failed your patient and the situation needs to be handled quickly and correctly so not to ruin your office reputation. Here are some words of empathetic reassurance...

"Thank you so much for letting us know about this, Sir/Madam..."
"I'm so sorry to hear about this, Mrs. Brown..."
"I completely understand how you feel, Sir/Madam..."
"Thank you so much for your patience/understanding, Mrs. Brown..."
"I will action this for you right away..."

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The Vulgarian

Ah, the Vulgarian: a fascinating specimen, easily identifiable through its signature high pitch and generous use of profanity. Though no employee should be expected to put up with personal insults, it is industry standard for you to warn abusive patients before ending the conversation. Still, there are a series of phrases which can help to restore calm. You must stay cool under pressure; needless to say, there can be no excuse for insulting a patient – even if done in retaliation. Here are some phrases you can use:

"I truly understand your concern, Sir/Madam, but unfortunately we cannot tolerate the kind of language you are using right now..."
"I'm going to do my very best to help you, Mrs. Brown..."
"You seem very upset, Mrs. Brown. Would you prefer to continue this conversation through email?"
"I'm sorry you're so upset, Sir/Madam. Would you like for us to call you back when you feel a little calmer?"
"I apologize, Mrs. Brown, but if you continue to use this language, I will be forced to end this call."

The Threat-Maker

Easily confused with The Vulgarian, The Threat-Maker is different altogether. While the former's intention is to insult the call handler into cessation, the latter seeks to obtain appeasement through

emotional or even physical intimidation. The vast majority of threats are empty threats. Even so, many find this complainant's tactics the most provocative of any irate caller. As such, it's important again not to react to intimidation; to do so would just give the caller further ammunition.

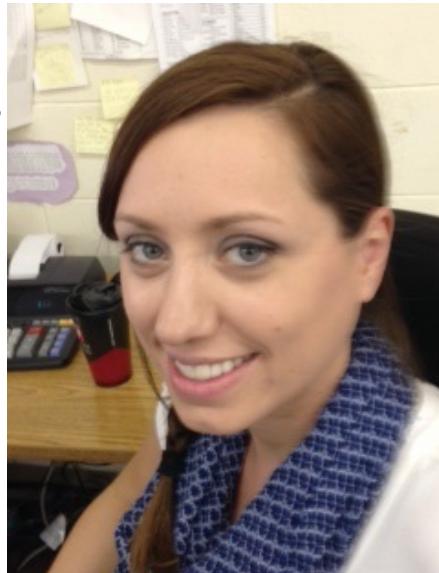
Sticking to one's guns is the key to success over the Threat-Maker; offering inappropriate compensation will serve only to encourage future complaints. Moreover, it's important to remember that, regardless of how unpleasant he or she might be as a person, each and every one of your patients is an essential source of revenue for your business. Here are some phrases you can use:

"I do understand the inconvenience you've faced, Sir/Madam..."
"Let me see how I can fix this, Mrs. Brown..."
"I recommend that you (insert action here), Sir/Madam, so that I can take further action without delay."
"I am more than happy to help you, Mrs. Brown..."
"For the quickest resolution, I would request you to..."

With practice, I am confident that you vastly reduce these "angry patient" situations. Good Luck!!

Associate Spotlight

This month's associate spotlight is on Rugna Bockelman. She has been in our Payment Department for 5 months. Rugna enjoys spending time with her two daughters especially watching them play softball.



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 just conducted the seminar for the American Association of Professional Coders and they received 1.5 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.

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.

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

It is getting to be sweet corn season in Illinois. Here are a few unique recipes to change up the traditional buttered sweet corn. Enjoy!

How to Cook Corn:

Boil: Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil; add husked corn and cook until tender, about 4 minutes.

Grill: Brush husked corn with oil; grill over high heat, turning, until lightly charred, 8 to 10 minutes.
1 ear = 1/2 cup kernels

Corn in Marinara Sauté 6 sliced garlic cloves in olive oil, 1 minute. Add two 15-ounce cans crushed tomatoes, 2 cups water, 2 sprigs basil and a pinch each of red pepper flakes and salt; simmer 10 minutes. Add raw ears of corn and cook 10 minutes. Sprinkle with parmesan.

Beer-Boiled Corn Bring two 12-ounce bottles amber beer, 2 cups water, 2 tablespoons Old Bay Seasoning and some salt to a boil in a large pot. Add raw ears of corn and boil until tender, about 4 minutes.

Buffalo Corn Whisk 6 tablespoons melted butter and 3 tablespoons Buffalo wing sauce; brush on cooked ears of corn. Sprinkle with crumbled blue cheese, celery salt and chopped scallions.

All the best,

Tony Muscato, VP of Sales

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