

Referral Return Protocol

When a referring dentist entrusts you with the care of a patient, it is equally important to communicate both treatment outcomes and any challenges in scheduling the patient for treatment. Maintaining this communication ensures the referring dentist remains informed about the current status of their patient's care and condition. The following considerations apply when efforts to contact the patient are unsuccessful.

- The referring doctor values your opinion and treatment. They expect that you have made a concerted effort to schedule and treat the patient.
- Three separate attempts should be made to reach the patient. It is ideal if the attempts are within a 14-day period.
- The attempts to reach the patient should be documented.
- If available, utilize calling, texting, and emailing.
- Maintain compliance with HIPAA and patient communication standards.
- When a patient has given a timeline in which they are considering scheduling, make note on a calendar and follow up (“after the holidays”, “we are away for the summer”, “after my daughter’s wedding”).
- If you are not successful in reaching the patient, based on the contact information received, a letter, email or text should be sent to the referring office and the patient.
- Document the referral, attempts to contact and communication with the referring doctor in your system.