PRACTICE MANAGER

Staff Meeting

Properly run staff meetings are important for team building and maintaining team morale. It's important that staff meetings remain organized and that they are managed in a way that prevents them from becoming complaint sessions. Here are some tips for how to conduct a proper staff meeting:

Schedule

Staff meetings should be held every two weeks during a time that is least disruptive for the practice, with all staff in attendance. You may need to block out some treatment time or pay staff overtime to attend, but it is a small price to pay for ensure everyone is aligned. Staff meetings should last no more than one hour.

Prepare

Create and distribute an agenda well in advance of the meeting. After the meeting has been run a few times, staff can be invited to submit requests for matters to be added to the agenda, and management can prioritize those if/when appropriate.

Format

Staff meetings should briefly cover

- announcements and upcoming changes
- each department's recent month's productivity and projected productivity for the coming month
- training on practice matters as prioritized by management

Briefing

Quickly brief the staff on any practice changes, news, events, points of interest, announcements, etc. This will keep the team informed, which contributes to office morale and enhances efficiency.

Production

Choose measurements for the front and back office that you can discuss comfortably with all staff. This may include anything from patient satisfaction levels to productivity as measured in dollars. These measurements will help ensure that everyone is aware of setbacks or improvements and can participate in the actions that will fix or support the current situation.

Training

Pick a training topic in advance and either distribute training materials or briefly cover the topic in a lecture/workshop. It's a good idea to include a mix of clinical and administrative topics. Then, practice and discuss the timing and details of implementation so it is a well-coordinated effort.

Focus

It is common for issues to come up during a staff meeting. Perhaps team members have concerns about certain changes or implementation plans. It is vital to recognize that the staff meeting is a place to note such concerns, but it is not the time to attempt to solve the issue. Staff meetings often get derailed by focusing too heavily on these issues, which causes the meeting to exceed its scheduled time and causes unpleasant experiences. If an issue is brought up in a staff meeting, simply acknowledge the issue and state how it will be addressed (e.g., schedule a private meeting between the team member and their supervisor), schedule a separate training session for those who will be impacted by the issue at hand, etc.

Proper and routine staff meetings are the key to successful office training and coordination. It's worth the time it takes to develop and refine a workable format. Don't make the common mistake of deciding that the meetings are not working after only a few meetings and then abandoning them. With persistence, you'll implement an approach that provides the fastest way for you and your team to make improvements in the best interest of your patients.