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ABOUT PATIENT TESTIMONIALS

Hello Doctor! One of the most powerful tactics you can incorporate in your practice is the use of patient testimonials. The general public does not fully understand Chiropractic care. Patient testimonials can help ease the fear, skepticism, and anxiety that commonly surround a procedure the public views as alternative or “different”.

There are two general uses for patient testimonials: internal and external marketing.

1. Internal Marketing:

This basically refers to the use of patient testimonials within the confines of your own practice. You can show patient testimonials to family and friends of current patients who may be Chiropractic skeptics. You can either do this aggressively or take a more passive approach. One great idea to get your testimonials noticed without being “in the face” of the patient or coming off as “pushy” is to put together a binder and fill it with written/text patient testimonials. You can acquire an attractive 3 ring binder at your local office supply store. For a more personal touch I suggest one of the binders with a clear plastic cover that allows you to place cover sheets behind the front and back cover and along the spine. You can then customize the binder with your practice name etc. Leave these binders in the reception area, in treatment rooms, and other areas where patients and family members can easily browse through them. You’ll be amazed at how many patients look through this information!

Another internal use example would be to incorporate patient testimonials into your patient education presentations such as your PowerPoint presentations. Testimonials work VERY well when discussing the usefulness and effectiveness of Chiropractic in your presentations. For those more enthusiastic and technically inclined, you can even incorporate patient testimonials into your brochures, pamphlets and fliers. With the availability and affordability of digital cameras you can even obtain photos of your patients and place them in your practice materials with their testimonial! We’d recommend using the separate photo permission form if you plan to do this.

Another idea that works well is to hang an attractive bulletin board in the reception area and/or treatment areas of your practice. Keep patient testimonials in a file and hang one or two at a time on the bulletin board. Rotate these out however frequently you’d like: weekly, monthly etc.

A final thought is to use relay testimonials verbally as part of your “table talk”. Instead of talking about the weather or last night’s game, talk about how Mrs. Smith can now return to work thanks to Chiropractic care. As long as you have the signed release and don’t reveal any protected private health information you should be fine! Just be sure you keep it general and don’t go into specific details that the patient didn’t consent to release to the public.

2. External Marketing:

This basically refers to your public use of patient testimonials outside of your practice in an effort to generate new Chiropractic patients from the “general public”.

There are countless ways to use patient testimonials externally. The most obvious is you can include them in your print and display ads directly. With enough testimonials you could launch an entire advertising campaign based solely on how satisfied your patients are!

These testimonials work pretty much anywhere. You can include them in your direct mail postcards, “new mover” welcome letters and all of your general advertising. Put them on the back of business cards, or in other creative locations. The sky is the limit.

Another great idea is using your patient testimonials in a press release to get the attention of the local media. Who knows, with the right testimonial base you might grab the attention of the local paper, television station, or radio show and get some free publicity!

Another GREAT idea is to create a separate portion of your website dedicated to patient testimonials. The benefits here are two-fold. You can appeal to those people already visiting your site OR you can use the testimonials as a “landing page” and use them to drive potential patients to your web site. Confused? Here’s how it works.

Create a separate page on your website or even a separate website dedicated to your patient testimonials. For example if your site is www.mainstreetchiropracticnyaddayadda.com you could create www.mainstreetchiropracticnyaddayadda.com/testimonials. On this page enter all of your wonderful patient testimonials but be sure to place some attractive links back to your practice home page. Now when you run your print ads, newsletters, display ads, yellow book ads or other advertising you can use a phrase like “Read what happy Chiropractic patients have to say about Chiropractic care. Visit: www.mygreatwonderfulpatienttestimonials.com” (Hopefully you could have a shorter and easier URL but you get the picture!)

This will drive traffic to your site and the links back to your home page will have curious prospective patients browsing for sure. This technique allows patients to know that you have had plenty of Chiropractic patients in the past and it also saves you valuable space which is always at a premium in print and display ads! Another benefit of this technique is you use the new “testimonial” web page as a “landing page” where you can track direct visits to the page and use it as a way to track effectiveness of your advertising. For example you could create different testimonial pages for different ads and track which gets the most visits. It is extra work but it is a great way to gauge which advertising is working best for you.

Those are just some tips to get you started in the world of Chiropractic patient testimonials. Let’s look at the process itself.

SO HOW DOES THE TESTIMONIAL PROCESS WORK?

Just 4 easy steps!

1. **Ask for the testimonial**
2. **Get the testimonial**
3. **Get permission to use the testimonial (without this step ALL the other steps are for nothing!)**
4. **Put that testimonial to work!**

Step one: Ask for the testimonial. This is sometimes the most difficult part of the whole process! Asking for a testimonial can be uncomfortable. Have your staff help. Sometimes that friendly front desk assistant is much more effective than the doctor! Most doctors get a good “feel” for patients over time. Those patients who are most willing to give testimonials are going to be obvious. The friendly and outgoing patient who has responded well to care is always the first choice to ask directly. You generally just KNOW which patients are the good candidates to approach directly. If you don’t ask... you don’t know! So don’t be shy.

Another direct approach is asking for a testimonial as part of your progress evaluation. When completing evaluation questionnaires patients might be more aware of just how helpful Chiropractic care has been. Stick a testimonial request and release in with patient progress paperwork.

You can also try obtaining testimonials by mailing out the forms to past and present patients. This is obviously a little less effective and more costly due to postage etc. but it does work.

The indirect approach works well too. You can simply leave these testimonial forms within easy access for patients around the office. Once you start building and adding testimonials in your “testimonial binder” you can leave blank forms in it as well. You’ll be shocked at how many patients want to add their testimonial so they aren’t “left out”. Patients want and deserve to be recognized for their hard work as well. As you know Chiropractic isn’t a totally passive form of healthcare. Patients need to follow treatment instructions and comply with provider recommendations for care to be successful.

Step two: Get the testimonial. This is as easy as having the patient complete the paperwork and return it to you. Offer them the option of filling and turning in immediately, turning it in on the next visit, or emailing/faxing/ mailing the paperwork. Make it convenient for the patient. The cost of a postage paid envelope is well worth getting a legally usable and highly effective testimonial!

Step three: Get permission to use the testimonial. This is the most important step. Make sure the patient has signed the consent to release form. Without this you can’t really publicly use the testimonial! Double check to be sure the patient has signed the release when they turn in the paperwork!

Step four: We already reviewed ideas on how to put those awesome testimonials to work. Those ideas are just the tip of the iceberg. Be creative and have fun with it.

I hope you find the enclosed Chiropractic patient testimonial tips and free templates useful and effective in your practice. Remember, patient testimonials promote your practice AND our wonderful profession.

Yours in Health,

Dr. James

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