

Medical Practice Trends

Podcast #15

Mary Pat Whaley

Why Your Practice Still Needs a Brochure

Dr. Polack: This is Peter J. Polack, M.D. with another Medical Practice Trends podcast and our guest today is Mary Pat Whaley, a practice management consultant who blogs on ManageMyPractice.com. Welcome Mary Pat!

Mary Pat: Thanks for inviting me.

Dr. Polack: So our topic today is 'why your practice still needs a brochure'. In this day and age of websites and mobile marketing and things like that, is there still a place for good old-fashioned print marketing materials?

Mary Pat: I believe there definitely is a place. I think that the best combination of sharing of information is some print media, some video and some digital media because everybody learns a little bit differently.

I think that the practice brochure remains very important information piece to give to patients – current and future patients hopefully, and also to market your practice.

Dr. Polack: This is especially helpful if you want to spread the word about your practice to other medical practices. For example, if you are in a particular specialty and maybe you get referrals from primary care practice, this is really the only way that you can sort of get a foot in the door as far as getting the information about your practice is perhaps to have some brochures there in that referring doctor's practice.

Mary Pat: Definitely the referral staff in practices just love to have information and brochures and maps because when they are referring patients to you, patients will have a lot of questions about where are they and what will happen there and what is going to go on when I get there.

So having your brochure is extremely important and you would be amazed how many specialists do not think to take brochures specifically to the staff of referring practices.

So, extremely important, even down to as simple as what the specialty does because not everybody knows what's the difference between a urologist and a neurologist.

Dr. Polack: Oh boy, that's kind of scary but you are right. And we also found it helpful to have in addition to the brochure, a pre-printed referral sheet that has the different names of the doctors, their specialties or sub-specialties, if that's the case, and phone numbers and maybe even have a liaison person that deals specifically with the referring doctors.

Mary Pat: And what's especially important is to make it easy for the practice to send patients to you, the specialist. You can even have a little insert in your brochure so the referring staff picks up your brochure, slides out the insert, fills out the referrals,

hands the brochure to the patient – very simple, very convenient for them. You want to be the easiest practice in town to be referred to.

Dr. Polack: What are some other uses that you'd say that could be...I am thinking right off the top of the head, for instance, health fairs and they can certainly be sent out to the patient prior to their visit in your practice?

Mary Pat: A lot of people don't realize that the welcome wagon is still around. They are called different things but if you are a primary care practice in particular, OB/GYN, pediatrics, giving brochures to the welcome wagon and putting the little insert in there that has a free meet-n-greet, a 15-minute visit so that new people moving into town can come and meet you before they decide if they were spending money with you – could be Chamber of Commerce, real estate offices, rental agency offices, hotels, people coming to interview for jobs or tourists – just about any place that you can think of that people might be browsing for other information and come across your information and they just want to pick it up and tuck it in their purse or fold it over and stick it in their back pocket, if you are a man, it's going to help.

You want to be the seen and heard practice in town because patients believe that better care comes from somebody who is on the leading edge and doing things like marketing and has a good first class patient brochure.

Dr. Polack: And I had read in previous years that in marketing they talk about five touches to consumer, they may drive by and see up a business on a billboard, it's one touch. They hear them on the radio – that's two. They may see in the newspaper. I hear now-a-days it can be 7, 8, 9 times that a consumer, and a patient is a consumer I guess, so that they need is multiple sources to reinforce information – is that correct?

Mary Pat: That's absolutely correct and physicians are finally not afraid to do some of the types of advertising or marketing than in the past it was very taboo. Everybody sees commercials at the movie theater. You can put information about your practice in restaurants, in the bathroom.

You can use the QR code, which is the little Quick Response code that kind of looks like a little block of a little checkerboard block. So you can use that at a lot of different places and people with Smart Phones can shoot that and it goes right to your website.

There's a lot of new and very exciting things that can be done to help increase that number of touches.

Dr. Polack: That's great. If someone wants more information, can you remind us of your website?

Mary Pat: Definitely, you can find me at www.ManageMyPractice.com and certainly available to help anybody who wants to talk more about using a brochure or marketing their practice.

Dr. Polack: Okay, well thanks for your time.

Mary Pat: Thank you very much.