

## SA-VIT COLLECTION AGENCY TIPS OF THE MONTH ARCHIVES



June 2008

### **Keeping Patients and Having Them Refer Others to Your Practice**

As a contractor once said, to satisfy customers and get referrals he only has to "Return calls and clean up." It is simple but true.

It is thought that by giving patients excellent care little else matters. However, care is subjective. How do the patients "feel" about the treatment?" Do they worry about test results? Can they speak to someone when they are concerned?

In most medical practices patients spend the least amount of time face to face with the doctor and most of their time interfacing with other people in the practice.

The patient's first exposure to the practice is making an appointment. Is your telephone system and telephone receptionist patient friendly? Call your office periodically and pretend to be a new patient. Would you like to come to this practice?

Call patients quickly with test results, and always before a weekend. The longer patients have to wait the more they worry about their condition. Even bad news is better than no news.

Try not to over book patients. If you must, then tell the patients there may be a 15 to 30 minute wait to see the doctor. Or if the doctor has an emergency, give the patients the option of waiting or rescheduling their appointments.

Don't have people transferred to voice mail. If the front desk is busy have the calls transferred to a list of other people in the practice, all the way up to the administrator if necessary. Nothing is more anxiety producing than talking to a machine and having to leave a message.

A patient-friendly practice will keep patients and get more patient-to-patient referrals.