

COVID-19

Scheduling Strategy – Ghost Hygiene Schedule

We know that COVID-19 will create some uncertainty around patients keeping their appointments. Even before COVID19, our most effective offices have been employing a technique called Ghost Hygiene. This helps practices who suffer from an 85% or less fill rate to overbook the schedule slightly to anticipate changes in the schedule.

Create a Ghost Hygiene Column

Ghost Hygiene: Create a holding spot for hygiene patients. These patients are used to fill openings or to create a schedule that can be covered by a part time RDH provider that is on call or temporary. It allows you to evaluate supply and demand as you approach the upcoming day. Ghost Hygiene is a managed proactive double booking with an initial outcome.

- If you know you can hire a temp hygienist you can schedule a full column (determine days).
- If you feel you will be using your current staff, you should only schedule 1 patient in mid-morning and 1 patient in the mid-afternoon per column of hygiene. If you have two columns or two hygienists scheduled, then book 2 patients in the mid-morning and 2 patients in the mid-afternoon. You want to consider which appointment slots are hardest to fill or are more likely to cancel. In some offices, the 10am or 2pm might be troublesome. We recommend booking these additional appointments in the ghost column on the half hour slots so that if all appointments confirm, you can run staggered hygiene.
- You will always be more successful with adjusting a patient's appointment time from a reschedule than cancelling the appointment and tracking them down from a past due list. Always reschedule - do not cancel, use the Ghost Hygiene schedule to offer them a tentative day and time.
- If there is a hygienist that wants to increase their hours in the future to make up for lost hours, add those in (extend future work days)
- Don't forget the power of seeing patients on Fridays or Saturdays in the future *** (there are many states that allow hygienists to see patients without a doctor on site)