

Now that you've got your Professional Referral pads you need to know how to use it to get the most out of them. To help you get started, we've provided a few tips detailing how you can introduce your Professional Referral pads to health care professionals and colleagues, and launch your referral program.

1. Depending upon the type of Referral Pad you have (i.e. Cosmetic, General, Orthodontics, etc.) create a specific list of professionals you wish to refer to.
2. If you have a referral-sharing relationship with a certain colleague, simply mail or drop one of the referral pads off to his or her office with a personal note. If you do visit in person, bring a gift basket of goodies to drop off with the Referral Pad.
3. Draft a letter of introduction to your colleagues. Explain, in detail, the services for which you are asking for referrals. Describe the symptoms with which their patients may be presenting; explain how and what you do to treat the problem and restore health. Then explain the ease of use of the enclosed referral pad. Ask to schedule a meeting in which you can further explain your services, and how you and the doctor can form a mutually beneficial referral relationship. Send the letter with a referral pad, and be sure to let them know that they may call you to set up the meeting or ask any questions.
4. Host an Open House in your practice and invite health care providers and their teams. Provide tours, refreshments and brief presentations on the specialized services for which you want these doctors to refer.
5. If you would like to establish a referral relationship with health care professionals you know casually or don't know, consider hosting a lunch and learn. Invite them to your practice, or if the group is larger, a restaurant. Give a 15 to 20 minute presentation on the care and services you offer and how it can benefit the patients these doctors refer, i.e.: TMJ care, splint therapy, neuromuscular dentistry, sleep apnea,

cosmetic dentistry, sedation dentistry, etc. Follow up with a question and answer period, then hand each of your guests a referral pad. *Important note:* Whether you're inviting doctors to your office or meeting for a lunch presentation, make sure to include Office Managers, yours and theirs! Office Managers are going to be the liaisons between your offices; they have to be "in the loop" to make the referral process flow smoothly and efficiently. Their complete understanding of the referral program and its mutual benefits is essential to its success.

6. Create a Healthcare Networking Group. Invite individual specialists (one for each area of specialty) to join your group, including doctors, dentists and other healthcare providers (i.e. a cardiologist, orthodontist, periodontist, chiropractor, rehab therapist, etc.). Meet as a group once a month following an established protocol:

- 15 to 20 minutes of socializing/networking.
- Three 10-minute presentations from the group's members (this opportunity rotates each meeting), followed by a short Q & A.
- 60-second elevator pitch by each member every meeting. This acts as a reminder of what types of patients to refer.
- Ask members to schedule at least one monthly person-to-person meeting with each other so you can get to know each other at a more personal level and feel more confident in your referrals.
- Share any referrals you have received from the group in the last month.
- Members are allowed to miss only one meeting every 6 months and must send a representative to sit in for them.

### Most Importantly...

Recognize those who refer to you by sharing case notes, sending a "thank you" note and gift and by referring back.