

## Coronavirus (COVID-19) Talk Tracks & Tips for the Healthcare Industry

In these difficult times during the COVID-19 outbreak, companies that provide essential services have a lot of changes to deal with in day-to-day operations. Here are some talk tracks and tips to help guide your conversations with patients during this pandemic. We want all healthcare professionals to stay strong and remain healthy.

-The CallSource Call Coaching Team

### Get Clear on Internal Communication

Internal Communication is key for all practices. It is important to stress health and safety first for your employees and your patients.

CallSource recommends owners and managers talk to your employees to make sure everyone is clear on what to tell patients who call as well as what to do in specific situations. Front office staff and management must all be on the same page and speak with a united voice. We recommend you stay up to date with your state's laws and follow proper protocols.

Remind patients you are an essential business and you want to do right by the patient. It is ok to not know everything, but it is your job to find out and let your patients know.

### Add Context Regarding Safety Concerns

In these times, it is acceptable to ask if anyone is sick or has been out of the country before scheduling an appointment. It is important to add context to help patients understand why these questions are being asked. Here are some tips for what to say regarding safety and health concerns.

"Due to the recent health concerns in our country, I have a few questions we are asking everyone for the health and safety of our employees and patients. Has anyone been feeling sick or having symptoms similar to COVID-19 symptoms? Has anyone been out of the country in the past few weeks in your family?"

### How to Politely Turn Away Business

If a patient thinks they may have been at risk or exposed to COVID-19, you want to emphasize that your company's number-one priority right now is safety. While you don't want to turn away business, you do not want to put anyone else at risk.

Do not cancel-reschedule.

"I am sorry to hear that you haven't been feeling well. Due to the current climate, our practice's top priority is to keep all of our employees and patients safe and healthy. I would be happy to schedule an appointment for you in 3-4 weeks to ensure that everyone is feeling better by then."

What to say if the sick patient's situation is an emergency:

"I'm so sorry to hear that you aren't feeling well and are dealing with this emergency. The safety of our patients and our employees are our top concern right now, and we'd like to help in whatever way we can. Let me get a hold of one of a doctor or qualified practitioner to see if they can give you a call."

**No matter how you communicate to your patients in this situation, it is essential to continue to build that trust and your relationship with them to do what you can.**

## Explain Your Process

It is more important than ever to thoroughly explain your process and reassure your patient that you are taking all steps necessary to provide them with the service they need while also keeping everyone safe.

Personalize what you are doing by telling the caller it is for their safety and comfort. Write down specific talking points to help you remember each important point.

Explain the changes your practice has made.

What can the patient expect from you?

What do you expect from them?

## Tips for Overcoming Objections

In any other time, usual objections may revolve around pricing or scheduling concerns. Now, many patients may now be afraid to come to the office because of safety and health concerns. Here are some ways to overcome those objections so you can help the patient and book the appointment.

### Empathize and Reassure Concerns

- Always restate the patient's objection and let them know you understand.

**It is essential that the patient knows they have been heard.**

- It is more important than ever to empathize and reassure callers, they have chosen the right practice.

"I certainly understand your concerns, and I do want to assure you that we are taking all of the necessary precautions for both our patients and staff against illness."

*[Discuss what steps your company has taken to minimize the risk].*

### Examples of steps:

- Providing all clinicians with hand sanitizer, gloves, & masks
- Sanitizing all public spaces every fifteen minutes
- Staggering appointment times
- Wiping down or eliminating tablets and letting patients verbally confirm and pay by phone with front office staff to limit contact

"Considering the recent health issues, I want to assure you that we are taking all the necessary precautions for the safety of both our patients and staff against illness and are taking extra precautions during this time. We are asking employees to stay home if they are showing any symptoms or feeling ill. Other precautions include limiting physical contact, as well as wearing gloves, face masks, and booties. Our technicians will thoroughly clean and sanitize all surfaces before you arrive. If you prefer, we can also take your credit card information over the phone to limit contact even further."

## Emphasize the Importance of Service

Help patients remember why they scheduled the appointment and the importance to keep the appointment even during these times.

- Reiterate that your practice is considered an “essential business” and is working to maintain the health and safety of everyone in the practice.
- Be empathetic and assure patients you are doing everything you can that to keep everyone safe. If they are still not comfortable coming in for an appointment, don't let them cancel - reschedule!

“I want to assure you that we are taking every measure to ensure that everyone stays safe and gets the service that they need. Our company falls within the essential business guidelines because it is important for you to stay safe in your home. It is important to ensure your systems are maintained, especially when you are spending more time at home so that you don't end up in a bind. This is a preventative maintenance to keep you comfortable and safe in your home and is less intrusive than an emergency situation.”

## Tips for Outbound Calls

If you are not receiving enough inbound calls or are not at capacity to serve patients, focus on making outbound calls to current and past patients as well.

- Ask questions on how they are doing and check-in about their needs.
- Share with them the importance of keeping healthy.
- Remind them of other services you provide that may help them.
  - Show empathy for what they are going through and reassure them that you are there to help.

## Takeaway Tips

- Focus on the patient and their needs.
- Prioritize the health and safety of your employees and your patients.
- Reassure callers that you are taking their concerns seriously and implementing necessary changes to procedures to keep everyone safe.
- Be empathetic.
- If your front office staff has had to make accommodations by working from home, don't let technology distractions minimize your number one focus - **helping the patient**.

CallSource Call Coaching focuses on helping our clients better serve their patients.

If you think your company can benefit from one-on-one or group coaching sessions, give us a call.

## [COACH MY CALL HANDLERS](#)