



How To Handle Short Notice Reschedules

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Each time a patient calls to reschedule short notice, they will be assigned a number : 1, 2 or 3. Decide where you want to put this number in your patient's demographic information such as a note section or as a popup of some kind. We will reference the number of short notice reschedules within an 18 month window of time.

Listen & Ask

When your patient calls to cancel short notice, (and they will- regardless of your policy), it is a good idea to listen before responding. Most likely the patient will start the conversation by saying they need to reschedule their appointment. We can ask: "Is everything ok?"

We Look Forward to Seeing You

It's nice to then tell our patients we were looking forward to seeing them. "I know Janet (your hygienist) was looking forward to seeing you too."

Reschedule

Offer the patient your next available appointment which will be 1-3 months out (use your judgement) Just try not to give the patient your very next available time. Unless of course you feel there is a great reason to do so. Especially if your patient has not had to reschedule short-notice before and has a really valid reason to do so.



Patient Commitment

Once you make the new hygiene appointment, you can now gently remind your patient "We do ask for 2 business days' notice please, should you find you need to reschedule this appointment. Would you be able to do that for us? " Wait for their commitment. "Thank you" We want to say please. Say thank you. And remember tone is everything. We can always be kind.

Call List

Offer to place patients on your call list to move their appointment forward should there be a schedule change. Be sure to ask what days and times might work best for patients and how to best reach them.

First Reschedule in 18 Months

If this is the first time this patient has rescheduled their appointment short notice, mark their account somewhere that you designate with the number "1". I also recommend creating a procedure code such as "1RESCH" to post in patient ledger as a permanent record. Remember, we are monitoring during an 18 month window. Everyone gets one FREEBIE!

Second Reschedule in 18 Months

If this is the second time this patient has rescheduled their appointment short notice, mark their account in the same place you had the number "1" but change this to a number "2" and date. Maybe a procedure code such as "2RESCH" for patient's ledger. Our patient conversation can express more concern over finding a time that works really well for our patient and avoid another reschedule short-notice.



Third Reschedule in 18 Months

If this is the third time for the same patient to reschedule short notice, change their number to "3" and date. Remember to note the short notice reschedule in the patient ledger. Maybe with a "3RESCH". Now, our patient is not rescheduled. We offer to work them into our schedule as changes occur and say "Our schedules just aren't lining up.. let's try something new this time! Let's call you.. what works best for you?"

Patient Can Preschedule Again

We do not want to punish our patients. Once a 3-striker gets into our schedule (and we do want to work on this for them), they can preschedule again. But they may find they prefer to be an "on call" patient. Some people just have tough schedules and scheduling in advance just doesn't work well. It's okay. In fact, it's great!

Let Me Know How it Goes!

If you are having any trouble understanding or implementing this system, please feel free to reach out to me. I'm happy to answer any questions. And would love to hear your success stories! I promise, it does work very well in better schedule management and everyone on the team knows just what to do.

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