Contactless Registration Tips

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Many practices have moved to a contactless registration process. As the term infers, the process is completed without physical interaction with the patient. Patients are seeking safe environments, and the touch-free process can offer significant benefits for your practice. Consider these strategies to achieve an efficient and effective contactless registration process:

1. “Walk through” the process from the patient’s perspective, not just from the viewpoint of your practice. Begin with the patient contemplating a contact with your practice. What do they see when they land on your website; can they seamlessly get an appointment?
2. Consider the process after the appointment is scheduled. Are the registration link and instructions clearly displayed and usable once an appointment is brokered? Does the patient get a link to your forms and questionnaires -- or do you have to tell the patient where to go? If you do, how effectively does your staff accomplish this? Are the forms and questionnaires easy to complete and free of redundancy? Your process can be terrific, but it will not work if patients cannot get there -- or get

through it.
3. Provide clear instructions to your staff. If your team does not understand the process, they won't be able to convey the inner workings to your patients. Invest time in walking them through the process by having each team member schedule an appointment for themselves. Role-playing is the best teacher! Provide scripting for your team based on frequently asked questions.
4. Segment the process for effective quality improvement. Having someone declare: "It doesn't work!" cannot and will not help you. When you provide training tools to your team, delineate each aspect of the process. Pinpoint errors connected to that segment; ask for screen shots so you can immediately get to the bottom of a problem – and fix it.
5. Supplement the process with curbside check-in. Provide a method – text a number; scan a QR code; etc. – for patients to declare their presence, thereby making both the registration and the arrival process "hands-free."
6. Provide bi-directional communication for patients. As you consider how to refine your process, do not forget about the psychology of waiting. Patients want to be informed; information transparency is critical so be sure to have mechanisms not only to pull information from patients – but to respond back as well.
7. Integrate payment mechanisms now. Getting your telemedicine program up and running was the priority, but it's now time to step back and make sure that all your arrival processes are replicated in your new workflow. That includes payment. Make sure your contactless registration process includes the ability to collect payments due at the time of service – and ideally, past balances as well.

Embrace feedback about your new process, as it's unlikely that we'll ever return to the "old" way. Watch for emails or other communication from patients about the process; embed feedback mechanisms into the process. Proactively seek advice from patients who have gone through the process by reaching out to a patient or two every few days. The road to a new workflow is riddled with potholes, but it's unlikely that we'll be making U-turns.

Adopting and perfecting contactless registration requires change, but it can elevate your practice's efficiency – and the service you provide to your patients.
