

OFF THE CUSP

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THREE WAYS TO ASSURE YOUR DENTAL PRACTICE COMES BACK STRONGER THAN EVER

By Patterson Dental

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The coronavirus pandemic has clearly impacted dental practices everywhere. With [76% of dental practices in the U.S. open for emergency care only](#), it can be easy to stress about the future of your practice. Amid the uncertainty, it's important to remain optimistic and think of ways to turn the negatives into a positive.

[Imtiaz Manji](#), the co-founder and chairman of Spear Education, recently shared his ideas on how to navigate the coronavirus crisis and how dental practices can use this tough situation to improve their business and come back stronger. In a [video address](#), Manji shares the following three key areas of focus:

1. **Take the long view** – Focus on where your dental practice will be once you're on the other side of the crisis. "I'm not talking about people exploiting a difficult situation for their advantage," Manji says in the video. "I'm talking about having the foresight to see that there is always going to be an upturn after a downturn. And how it makes sense to focus your energies on getting prepared when the sun breaks through again." By viewing the crisis as a short-term roadblock and focusing on where you see your practice in the long term, you can better prepare for your return.
2. **Focus on what you can control** – Although you may feel a sense of hopelessness during this unprecedented global crisis, it's important to take a long view and to consider what you can do today to prepare for the future. With this mindset, you can see that you have more control than you may realize. Manji points to things like ensuring future appointments are kept and any recently canceled appointments are rescheduled. "Often these discussions tend to slide by the bustle of a busy recovering practice," says Manji. "Now is the time to prepare those notes and have those deeper discussions when you see them next."
3. **Redirect downtime** – Whether downtime for your dental practice means the entire office is shut down or there is more time between patients, this is the perfect opportunity to educate your staff to improve the knowledge and skills of your entire office. "Many of you are continuing to pay your team even though the patient schedule is shrinking or you're not there at all," says Manji. "You need to use that precious free time to ramp up the practice's competencies in anticipation of those patients coming back and having a full schedule that will inevitably be coming your way soon." Now is the perfect time to focus

on education and staff communication to [ensure your dental team remains strong during this crisis](#) and comes out the other side even stronger.

When you put your focus in these key areas shared by Manji, the future of your dental practice starts looking more positive. One thing we'd add is the importance of patient communication during this downtime and once your practice is fully open again.

As Manji mentioned in No. 2 above, it will be important to reach out to patients to assure any canceled appointments are rescheduled so that your office gets back to a full patient schedule as soon as possible. But another consideration is the inevitable apprehensiveness patients may have at coming in for a regular checkup on the coattails of a pandemic. It will be important to communicate with your patients the extra infection control precautions your practice is taking to ensure their safety.

If you're looking for a patient communication tool for your practice, consider some of the options within [Patterson Revolve Software Solutions](#). [RevenueWell](#) offers a patient communication portal with appointment scheduling, online payments and more. With [Solutionreach](#), you can reduce no-shows and cancellations, fill last-minute appointment openings, increase patient visits and improve patient satisfaction. And finally, [CAESY Cloud](#) offers educational videos and materials that will help you better communicate diagnoses, treatment plans and general oral care to your patients.

If you want to go a step further, now is the perfect time to integrate teledentistry into your practice. Read the [three key things dentists need to know about teledentistry](#) as shared in a recent blog post by Bryan Laskin, DDS. With [OperaDDS Teledentistry](#), patients send in all the information you need (including photos) to get them set up with the correct provider, amount of time, or to simply reassure them that their chipped filling is okay to address in the morning. [RevenueWell Virtual Office](#) offers video conferencing for teledentistry that delivers a reliable, safe, and secure connection to your patients. Learn about both OperaDDS Teledentistry and RevenueWell Virtual Office on our [teledentistry page](#).

With many states putting plans together focused on lifting stay-at-home orders, opening certain businesses and getting their economies going again, we're starting to see the light at the end of the tunnel. By taking the long view, focusing on what you can control and making the most of any downtime, dental practices are poised to rebound to levels beyond where they were before the COVID-19 crisis.

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From Patterson Dental's blog, Off the Cusp. View the original blog post:

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