



# THE PRACTICE BOUNCEBACK BLUEPRINT **STAGE 1**

Reconnecting and  
Communicating With Current  
Patients to Fill Your Schedule

# BOUNCE BACK STRONG

Your practice can thrive again  
after COVID-19 closures.

In the last few months, dentistry — and the world — has been turned on its head.

When you were making 2020 New Year's resolutions, you never could have anticipated you would be forced to close your practice, furlough or even lay off staff, watch your revenue dry up or convince patients it's safe to receive treatment in your practice. But that's today's reality.

Even as you face new challenges of reopening after COVID-19 closures, you have the same pressures as in January, including increased competition, open schedules and reduced profitability due to lower insurance reimbursements.

## Weathering the Storm

All these issues have created a perfect storm for dental practices. The good news is you can weather it and come out on top with effective communication to your patients. Communication becomes even more critical during times of crisis to inform and reconnect with your current patients.

## It Starts With a Plan

Now is the time for your team to learn how to strengthen their communication muscles — to create a simple plan that uses best practices and modern technology to simplify communication with current patients. Reengaging with patients will help fill your schedule, improve your online reputation and get revenue flowing again as you reopen.

This eBook is the first of two that will guide you through making a bounceback plan as you recover from COVID-19 closures.

In Stage 1, we'll discuss how to engage your existing patient base while creating future opportunities for prospective patients. Stage 2 details what to do next to attract those new patients. As you follow the tips in both, as your practice reopens, you'll be perfectly positioned to make a strong and speedy comeback.



## REENGAGING WITH EXISTING PATIENTS

As you face the challenges of reopening, you need tools that make it easy to communicate with your current patients.

Henry Schein One offers industry-leading, end-to-end dental technology — from patient acquisition to automated reminders supporting all core communication tasks in your practice.

Tools like Dentrix Patient Engage and Dentrix Website simplify and streamline tasks and help make work easier for you and your team.

Whatever your practice management system, Henry Schein One has patient communications, reputation management and online marketing solutions that will work for you.

# PATIENT COMMUNICATION: MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER

Use technology to make patient communication easier.

Does your team get bogged down in time-intensive activities, like never-ending appointment reminder phone calls or emails? Technology that automates the communications process can help your team be more efficient and productive — and even help protect your patients.

## Communicating in the Time of Coronavirus

COVID-19 has changed the way we interact with each other, so likewise, you'll need to consider new patient communication solutions. Consider these ideas as part of your bounceback plan:

- 1 Automate outbound communications with your patient communication service. It's quick to send a simple email or a short text through [Dentrix Patient Engage](#) to let patients know what's going on as your practice reopens.
- 2 An eNewsletter is another great way to keep patients up to date with new policies and safety protocols.



### HOW DO YOU REACH PATIENTS?

Dentrix Patient Engage is a patient communication service that makes sharing news about COVID-19 updates simple, with built-in campaign templates and communication resources.

You can email newsletters to tell patients what your practice is doing. Post new policies on social media. Or upload a quick video to your YouTube channel showing how your team has taken extra precautions. The possibilities are wide open.

**MAKE A PLAN:** What ways do you want to communicate with patients? See the ways Dentrix Patient Engage makes staying in touch with patients easy.

- 3 Dentrix Website gives you many website and other tools that help you broadcast important news and messages.
- 4 Get new patient and continuing care appointments on the books quickly by including a Request Appointment button. Dentrix Patient Engage and Dentrix Website allow you to include this in different platforms, including online search results, marketing emails, social media outlets or your eNewsletter.
- 5 Create a virtual waiting room. Use two-way texting to ask patients to fill out digital forms for insurance and medical information before they come in. Text or email a link in their reminder message, and they can complete forms ahead of time, instead of in the reception area, so you can follow local social distancing requirements.
- 6 Stay in touch — without overcommunicating. Send reminders with custom parameters so patients aren't annoyed by multiple email, phone and text reminders.

These are new times that call for new ideas. Technology changes quickly, and there may be many patient communication options available since the last time you looked. If you'd like a free product review, visit [Dentrix.com/eBook/Patient-Engage](https://Dentrix.com/eBook/Patient-Engage) to see how much more impactful your patient communication can be.

## A Powerful Online Presence

Review your website for the following:

- **Does it appear in the top few search results?** Set up a Google Analytics (GA) account and load GA onto your website to measure your most popular pages, where your visitors are coming from and whether it's for the first time or if they're returning.
- **Consider why a patient comes to your website.** What information might they be searching for? Is it easy to find?
- **Is your website up to date and attractive?** Review others' websites to see what they're doing.
- **Is your website easy to navigate using a mobile phone?** Does it load in four seconds or less?
- **Does it provide COVID-19 and other educational content,** making it a valuable resource for a patient now and in the future?

**MAKE A PLAN:** Set goals to improve your website based on your answers. Dentrix Website has expert tools to guide you through everything you need to create and maintain a website that enables you to effectively communicate with patients. See what Dentrix Website can do for your practice.

# A WEBSITE THAT CONNECTS AND REASSURES

Create an “online office” that communicates your practice’s branding and values.

Your patients are a little nervous right now. They want to be safe, and they’re seeking information about the precautions your office is taking to calm their fears.

Your website is one of the best tools to communicate COVID-19 information with your patients, reassuring them and answering their questions while conveying the branding and feel of your practice.

Take a look at your website as if you were seeing it for the first time. Is it modern and inviting? Is the information not only educational but timely, including your office’s COVID-19 response and policies? Do you have several pages that link back to each other to help raise your Google ranking?

Remember, as you evaluate your website, more than half of visitors will view it on their mobile phones. So it must also be responsive, which means the page automatically resizes itself based on the visitor’s screen size.

Dentrix Website offers all of these features and more, making it simple to create an online office that is inviting, reassuring and effective.



## Patients Want Answers

Patients are especially concerned about health issues right now. Your website can provide educational content about oral health as well as time-sensitive concerns. The more educational this content is, the more your patients will consider you their trusted health advisor.

You can deliver the content in a blog, on your website, on social media and through other tools offered by Dentrix Website.

Your website should also allow patients to request a continuing care appointment to help reduce inbound calls. If your website doesn’t support that function, at the least, you should display a contact button that can notify team members so they have flexibility in responding.

# CULTIVATING THE BEST ONLINE REPUTATION

## Showcase the good work you're already doing.

As you focus on creating the best patient experience for current patients in Stage 1, you'll want to capitalize on those positive experiences by asking happy patients to give you an online review. New reviews enhance your online reputation and can help you in Stage 2 when you market to new patients because you not only need to keep current patients happy, you must also plan ahead and continue to attract new patients to thrive.

Reputation management can be complex and time-consuming, but [Dentrix Patient Engage](#) greatly simplifies the tasks and makes them cost-effective. For starters, it lets you send a quick survey to patients to rate your practice. And there's no better time than when the patient is checking out, satisfied with their visit, to ask for a review. You can also collect reviews from patients with targeted marketing campaigns. Your reputation management service should allow you to automatically guide incoming reviews to various platforms, like Google.

But before you can guide where reviews are posted, you need to know where your business is listed. Many websites automatically create business listings, so your practice is likely listed in lots of places you aren't even aware of.

[Dentrix Website](#) seeks out all these listings and displays them for you in one place. At that point, it's easy to claim the listings so you can consolidate them and get rid of the extras.

## DO'S AND DON'TS FOR PATIENT SURVEYS

What does a good patient survey look like? Here are a few pointers.

### DO

- Send the survey within 24 hours
- Capture positive reactions on the spot by texting a survey link to a happy patient
- Keep it to two or three good questions
- Automate survey requests to make them easy to collect

### DON'T

- Don't ask yes/no questions
- Don't be fearful of asking patients to take the survey
- Don't send multiple surveys to a patient who's coming in for frequent treatment

**MAKE A PLAN:** Gather ideas for survey questions, then write a few that you can use and start sending emails out.

# WHAT LIES AHEAD

Focus on making technology updates now — while time is still on your side.

Depending on local regulations, you may have reopened with restrictions, have limited hours or even still be closed. This forced slowdown is definitely painful, but it also gives you the precious gift of time.

Before you are back to full activity, you have a great opportunity to review the effectiveness of your technology solutions. Consider the following as you evaluate your current tools:

- Are your current tools giving you the efficiency and automation you need to effectively mass communicate with existing patients?
- What tools might you need in the near future to better communicate with existing as well as new patients?
- If you have standalone solutions, would you benefit from a package that offers a comprehensive approach (and a bundled rate)?

## The Future Looks Like...

While no one has a crystal ball, you're likely soon to be busy getting caught up as patients need to be rescheduled. At the same time, local restrictions might create bottlenecks, such as requiring you to space out appointments more or seat patients in every other chair to allow for proper social distancing.

When your patient flow is restricted, it's even more crucial to fill every possible time slot to maximize revenue. Examine your upcoming appointments for hygiene and the doctor, and make a plan for scheduling.

Typically, 75–80 percent of a doctor's production comes from hygiene, so you'll want to be sure your hygiene schedule is as full as possible. X-rays, exams, diagnoses and treatment plans made during the hygiene appointments create future procedures and appointments for the doctor. An average production mix of 65–75 percent for doctors and 25–35 percent for hygiene is ideal.



## TECHNOLOGY THAT SUPPORTS YOU

Effective time management will be a critical part of your recovery. Use your technology to automate tasks to save your team time.

A good patient communication service will not only help increase efficiencies and reduce headaches, but it will make it easy for patients to get in touch with you — and get back in for treatment.

This is a good time to think about whether your office systems play well together. Will updating or upgrading hardware or software enable your whole office to care for patients more efficiently?

**MAKE A PLAN:** Take a technology inventory. What's working well — or not? Find out how patient communication, online marketing and reputation management tools can support your ability to run at peak efficiency as you reopen.

**Patient Communication:**  
[dentrrix.com/patient-engage](https://dentrrix.com/patient-engage)

**Website & Online Marketing:**  
[dentrrix.com/website](https://dentrrix.com/website)

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# PUT YOUR PLAN INTO ACTION

As you make a plan based on the tips in this eBook, you'll be positioned to bounce back strong as you engage with your existing patients in the best ways.

- Help eliminate complex, time-consuming tasks by communicating with many patients at once with **Dentrix Patient Engage**. These tools let you stay in touch (without over communicating) in the ways patients prefer.
- Make sure your website is current and that it conveys to your patients that you're a trusted source of information with the tools in **Dentrix Website**.
- Capture positive experiences of current patients with **Dentrix Patient Engage** so you can use their positive ratings and reviews in your marketing.
- Take time to reevaluate your technology and think about how well it's supporting you. Patient communication and reputation management services like **Dentrix Patient Engage** can save staff time and help you better connect with patients in meaningful ways.

Find out how a comprehensive set of tools can help you communicate effectively with current patients, leverage powerful positive reviews, keep your schedule full and — best of all — get revenue flowing again. Find out more or see a demo:

Dentrix Patient Engage: [dentrix.com/patient-engage](https://dentrix.com/patient-engage)

Dentrix Website: [dentrix.com/website](https://dentrix.com/website)

And be sure to read the next eBook for Stage 2, which is focused on marketing and communication to prospective patients.





Bounce back quicker with innovative solutions from Henry  
Schein One. Get a demo of the tools in this eBook at  
[Dentrix.com/PatientEngage](https://Dentrix.com/PatientEngage)

[Dentrix.com/PracticeMarketing](https://Dentrix.com/PracticeMarketing)  
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