

DENTIST-PATIENT RELATIONSHIP

CHECKLIST #3

MANAGEMENT OF PATIENT NONCOMPLIANCE

Patient noncompliance may be a difficult challenge for dentists. Noncompliance may include missed appointments, failure to follow the plan of care, take medications as prescribed, or obtain recommended tests or consultations. The reasons given by patients for noncompliance vary from the denial that there is a dental problem to the cost of treatment, the fear of the procedure or diagnosis, or not understanding the need for care. Dentists need to identify the reasons for noncompliance and document their efforts to resolve the underlying issues. Documenting noncompliance helps to protect dentists in the event of an untoward outcome and allegations of negligence in treating the patient.

	YES	NO
1. An office policy is in place to notify dentists promptly of all missed and cancelled appointments. This is done on a daily basis.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. A formal process is in place for follow up with patients who have missed or cancelled appointments, tests, or procedures. This process includes recognition of the nature and severity of the patient’s dental condition to determine how vigorous follow up should be. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The dentist makes a telephone call to the patient as a first step when the patient’s condition is serious. • If the patient’s dental condition is stable or uncomplicated, staff contact the patient to ascertain the reason for the missed or cancelled appointment. • All attempts to communicate with the patient are documented in the record. • If no response or compliance results, a letter is sent, by certificate of mailing, outlining the ramifications of continued noncompliance. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. During patient visits, the importance of following the plan of care, taking medications as prescribed, and obtaining tests or consultations are emphasized.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. The patient’s input is sought when establishing a plan of care. Socioeconomic factors may contribute to the patient’s noncompliance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. To reinforce patient education, simple written instructions are provided regarding the plan of care. The teach-back method is used to confirm that patients understand the information and instructions provided.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

MANAGEMENT OF PATIENT NONCOMPLIANCE (continued)	YES	NO
6. With the patient's permission, family members are included when discussing the plan of care and providing patient education in order to reinforce the importance of compliance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The attorneys at Fager Amsler Keller & Schoppmann, LLC are available to discuss continued patient noncompliance and the possible discharge of a patient. They can be reached at **(855) FAKS-LAW** (855-325-7529).