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Despite the economy, some practices are expanding. They are working differently, adopting new protocols, improving customer services, and changing their focus. These practices have located their barriers and are more aware of missed opportunities.

The high performance practices are focusing more on reactivation and retaining existing patients. The average practice has approximately 1,000 people due for recare. The value of each patient to the practice is $1,000 annually. If you can reactivate as few as 10%, this would bring in an additional $100,000 in production.

I've listed steps to walk you through a successful reactivation project to help you reactivate lost patients and regain momentum in your practice.

STEP 1—Utilizing your computer software, generate and print a list of all patients that have not been in the practice for at least 6 months, going back 3 to 5 years. This report will contain patients that also have outstanding diagnosed treatment. The idea is to get them in the office for needed treatment.

STEP 2—Choose a recall card to be mailed to these patients. For best results use the following message on a bright colored postcard.

Dear Jane,

We miss seeing you in our office. As you know, when dental decay, gingivitis, periodontal disease, or other complications are discovered in early stages, treatment is not complicated and costs are less. Please phone the office at (insert your phone number including area code) for a convenient appointment.

Retaining up-to-date contact information for patients is vital to your practice. Therefore, it is recommended that you include the statement “Address Correction Requested” on the front of the recall postcard, under the return address. Be prepared to receive updated patient addresses for anyone that has moved.

STEP 3—Print the cards and mail all of them at once.

STEP 4—Begin calling patients on the list 2 weeks after mailing the cards. Many of them will call upon receiving the card.

Happy scheduling!