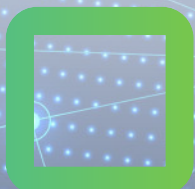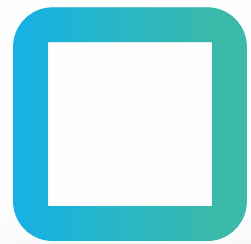**MedMatch** NETWORK ™

THE NEXT EVOLUTION OF PHYSICIAN MARKETING:

Smart Online Referral Network

Physician Networking

For many years, physician networking has acted as a solution to medical marketing, practiced by most physician offices and considered to be the more responsible and ethical form of marketing among providers. Among the elite ranks of physicians, it is believed that professional credentials and reputation should speak for themselves through "word of mouth" among patients and colleagues alike, helping to drive referrals.

Even when physician offices originally created marketing departments, the target audience was to "solicit" referrals from other medical providers and not the patients directly. Marketing representatives were dispatched to meetings, conferences, and medical offices directly to introduce the services they represented and to distribute marketing materials including pamphlets, referral pads, and other branded tools.

Physicians themselves understand the importance of connecting with their colleagues to establish professional relationships, as well as to communicate the services they offer and specialize in so that they can be called upon to **co-manage patients.** Any physician wanting to establish themselves in their community participates in other marketing initiatives, including personal visits to offices to meet other providers, attending open house events, professional association conventions and conferences, and other community-based gatherings.

> I will not be ashamed to say "I know not," nor will I fail to call in my colleagues when the skills of another are needed for a patient's recovery.

I am referring to quality patients who:

Have insurance that your office accepts.

Can pay out-of-pocket without insurance.

Are open to building lasting relationships.

Have healthy behaviors, such as scheduling and attending follow-up visits & annual visits.

Are being referred by colleagues who will prescreen them and provide their patient history.

Physicians Networking

In traditional referral network building, your biggest limitation is physical: you, yourself. You can only physically be in one place at one time.

Even when you have time to attend a meeting where you meet and network with your peers or other professionals who can refer patients to you, how do you follow-up on these new connections and nurture the professional relationships you just ignited?

You might follow-up with phone calls, schedule another visit or meeting, or perhaps you will pass off the connections to your marketing team to manage.

I have good news. I left out one lesser known, but major marketing tactic from those mentioned above—one that will help you leverage something you already do daily: smart referral networking.

What To Know Before Optimizing Your Referral Networking

⠿ Referral Facts

Now more than ever, modern medical practice relies on coordinating care between specialists. Due to the fact that in the United States, about 4.5% of visits result in a referral, it can be discouraging when patients are lost as a result of incomplete or unsatisfactory referrals. For Primary Care Physicians (PCPs), your practice's profitability is largely reliant on patient retention, involving follow-ups and continuity of care.

For Specialists, nearly 45% of new patients come from referrals. This means that networking with PCPs and other Specialists is of utmost importance. You know that effectively communicating with the patient's other physicians is imperative to quality care and improved outcomes.

If your referral communication methods are outdated, it can lead to serious problems, such as referral leakage, mismanaged patient care, and lost time and revenue. This can cause poor patient satisfaction, making marketing your practice unfeasible.

Alternatively, **with smart referrals, you can decrease referral leakage and increase your confidence in the referrals you make,** all thanks to the improved communication methods smart networks provide.

What To Know Before Optimizing Your Referral Networking

The Referrals You Make Have More Potential Than You Think

The introduction of online networking helps physicians connect with professionals in their area to refer, receive, and manage patients. Adding a smart online referral network improves patient experience and patient acquisition, while providing a means to nurture the professional relationship with your colleagues.

This means that your outreach ensures quality, pre-vetted referrals from members in your network. As mentioned above, you need more than just patient acquisition, you need pre-qualified patients. The standards for quality are different for every practice. Fortunately, smart referrals allow you to build a profile so that your network knows exactly the patients who you are seeking.

Smart online referral management systems offer gains by merging marketing and operational systems to improve patient retention and satisfaction without costly investments.

Click to get started with a FREE DEMO

How Can Smart Online Referrals Improve My Practice's Outcomes?

Introducing Smart Online Referral Networking

Imagine if you could refer and schedule your patient to a specialist in your patient's network within 15 seconds...and be able to track it.

Smart referral networking is an online, cloud-based plug-in software that takes advantage of every means available, including artificial intelligence, to make quality referral connections. It integrates with your current EHR system and builds on something you are already doing: sending and receiving referrals. A well-designed online referral network connects you to thousands of relevant and pre-vetted colleagues and specialists and helps you track your patients' journeys while enhancing your patient pool.

Are you one of the **40% of primary care physicians** without access to a referral provider directory through your healthcare system?

Smart referral networking does not have a single definition, and different healthcare providers implement it in different ways. However, the best software integrates the latest technology and simple communication with patients and network physicians. Let's take a closer look at each of these elements to see how they work.

Adopt the Latest Technology into Your Referral Network

Today's patient referral networking demands security, efficiency, and interoperability to facilitate cloud-based sharing of electronic patient health information.

Serverless Cloud Computing.

With most electronic health records (EHR) moving to the cloud these days, the migration reduces the burden of having to maintain your own local servers. Cloud computing facilitates integrations with many applications, such as smart referral systems, that enhance your EHR capabilities. Smart referral systems eliminate the need for paper-based patient record transfers and outdated or non-existent tracking methods, reduce the risk of mistakes, and enable you to make and receive referrals with more confidence.and ultimately office efficiency and patient experience.

Security.

Many doctors stick with fax- and paper-based referrals because of security concerns. Your smart referral network must be fully HIPAA and HITECH Act compliant, giving you and your patients the best privacy for their EHRs and other sensitive health information.

Efficiency.

Building technology into your online referrals means your staff members spend less time doing manual processes like faxing, follow-up phone calls, and patient follow-ups.

Interoperability.

Your online referral network needs to stay up with the latest federal requirements for medical software interoperability. The software APIs should be current with HL7 FHIR Release 4.0.1 and comply with all CMS and ONC interoperability rules.

Essentially, smart referrals eliminate the need to manually coordinate the secure physical transfer of patient records. This means that everyone in your organization can spend more time concentrating not only on serving more patients but serving them better.

Communicating Better with Patients and Referral Specialist Providers

Communication between providers and patients has historically been a weak point of referral networking. For example, about half of doctors surveyed say it is hard to know whether a referral doctor is in their network. Additionally, four-fifths of those surveyed admit to referring patients out of network.

In a fax-and-paper world, patient referral processing and obtaining patient health records cause delays in the continuum of care. Slow analysis of patient data, based on the review of physical files or fragmented online data systems, causes patient delays. These delays lead to patient uncertainty, which can result in missed consults or other treatment opportunities.

Smart online referral networks benefit:

- ✓ *You*
- ✓ *Current colleagues and network members*
- ✓ *Trusted network of providers that you can connect to*
- ✓ *Ancillary Service Providers*
- ✓ *Patients with improved continuity of care*

Smart referral systems are revolutionizing the healthcare industry, by helping physicians like you and me get back to clinically caring for patients.

A New Patient-Communication Interface

Gone are the days of having to use traditional marketing to interact with current and prospective patients. Making better referrals means better patient referral experiences, better specialist care, and reduced risk of out-of-network referral leaks. By one estimate, leakage can decrease by up to 20% within six months of adopting a smart referral network.

Sending patients personalized reminders about upcoming appointments encourages them to stick with their treatment plans. They also promote your primary care practice, and attract new patients to you and your specialists of choice.

Physicians are paying more attention to what matters to their patients. Seamless access to one's own health data is important as well as understanding how doctors use that data to optimize assessments, specialty referrals, and treatment plans. You want your patients to be confident in your decisions about their care. Smart referral networks allow you to enhance your doctor-to-patient communication and achieve best practices for their care.

A larger referral network supports targeted referrals, which ultimately will lead to a greater patient satisfaction with the referral experience. Smart online referral networks have three outstanding benefits:

The network encourages more referrals among more physicians, which means better care and less hassle.

The relationship between the patient and referring physician is built on trust, due to the patient's improved care quality and certitude in their physician's decisions.

Satisfied patients become "brand ambassadors" for your practice, referring their connections to you directly.

Physician Communication Done Right

Improved communications among all parties involved in the referral—the referring doctor, the receiver of the referral, and the patient—offers multiple advantages:

Reduce out-of-network referrals by up to one-third compared to traditional referral methods.

Enable more targeted referrals through access to a broad online network of physicians and specialists in multiple practice areas.

Provide doctors and specialists who receive referrals with real-time access to patient health information at the time of referral, and give the referring physicians faster access to the results of those specialist visits.

Reduce legal liability risks by encouraging patients to complete their referral appointments and to provide feedback on their treatment.

Identify optimal referral partners. Smart online referral networks allow patients and physicians to give feedback and quality of care ratings, giving you and your patients more confidence in your referral choices.

Encourage more patients to make their referral appointments by sharing more information with them, automating patient appointment reminders, and enabling them to know what to expect from their referrals.

How to Get Started with
Smart Referral Networking.

**It is easy to sign up – Learn more
at medmatchnetwork.com.**

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