

OUTLINE OF PROJECT ON TIME MANAGEMENT

For practitioners probably one of the biggest problems faced is the need to manage their time to ensure maximum efficiency

Most time management experts seem to agree on one thing. They say that one of the first things people need to do in order to manage their time is to determine how they use the time now. This is where this audit fits in

A time audit is the tool used to determine or measure how practice time is used. Once a time audit has been completed the results can be used to identify areas in the use of time or in the practice processes where changes could effect an improvement in the management of practice time.

Suggestions for planning a time audit in order to record where time goes

1. Efficient use of the clinical time.
 - the appointment length versus the clinical procedure to be completed
 - or who manages our appointment times. E.g. RCT – 15 minutes: alginate impressions 45 minutes
 - or who is responsible for the lab work return date
2. Wasted time: - how much time is wasted by: -
 - late cancellations
 - or missed appointments

There may be other aspects. Each practitioner can determine what aspects to audit.

To understand where the time goes, it is important to assess how it is actually used. One way of doing this is to keep simple operating records and for this a yardstick or measure is needed in order to evaluate our use of time. So the purpose of this audit is to provide a yardstick or measure of clinical time.

An Audit Outline needs an aim, objectives and a method.

8.1 Aim.

To carry out an audit of the use of clinical time in General Dental Practice

8.2 Objectives.

These are the steps or processes used to carry out the aim.

- Review literature
- Set standard
- Decide sample size
- Design data collection sheet
- Record use of time
- Analyse results
- Evaluate and consider changes

8.3 Method: - This sets out how the objectives are carried out

- Review Literature

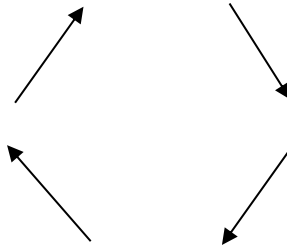
We can use the internet. PubMed is a useful site. BDA? Denplan?

- Set Standard

Remember the Audit Cycle.



Set Standard



For a first-time Time Management Audit, it may necessary to set a self standard as there are no previous yardsticks or measures to use as the standard. The outcome of this first audit will however give a measure or yardstick which could in future be used as the standard against which subsequent time audits could be measured

- **Sample Size**

The sample size needs to be sufficient to be representative of how time is spent. If a one week period only was recorded then it is very possible that the week selected would turn out to be atypical. To obtain a balanced sample it is suggested that the minimum time recorded should be a four week period.

Data Collection

Design a sheet on to which clinical activity and inactivity over each week period can be recorded. This process in itself will give a start in observing time usage more effectively. What is to be recorded? Some suggestions are: - length of treatment session, type of treatment planned, cons, periodontics, prosthetics, surgery, endodontics, cancellations, missed appointment, NHS or private. Possibly UDAs complete or UDAs lost. The completed data collection sheets become the results.

Time Management

Data Collection Sheet

Record everything you do during each half-hour period of a week that you choose.

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
8:30						
9:00						
9:30						
10:00						
10:30						
11:00						
11:30						
NOON						
12:30						
1:00						
1:30						
2:00						
2:30						
3:00						
3:30						
4:00						
4:30						
5:00						
5:30						

- Analysis of Results

To analyse the results it is probably easier if a summary of the results or data collected is made onto another chart or summary sheet.

Time Management

Analysis of Results – Summary Chart

ACTIVITY		MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	TOTAL	PERCENT*
CONS	DNA								
	LATE								
	C/A								
	NHS								
	PRIVATE								
PERIO									
Total Hours									100

Once these charts are completed they can be used to try to identify areas where improvements could be made.

- Evaluation and Conclusions

Outline conclusions: - weaknesses or problems identified.

Draw up possible plans for effecting improvement.

Possible Problems	Possible Solutions

The final part is to consider how to implement the possible solution that would lead to improvements in the use of practice time