

A man with dark hair, a beard, and glasses is smiling broadly while shaking hands with another person. He is wearing a light blue button-down shirt. The background is a blurred office setting.

ASTYM[®]

**5 STEPS
TO MORE
REFERRALS**

5 STEPS TO MORE REFERRALS

Referrals are often the most direct way to increase profitability. Nearly all healthcare models benefit greatly from receiving more referrals. Whether you're a private practice owner, a director of rehab, a clinic manager, or a practicing clinician interested in becoming the "go-to" therapist, these steps will help get you noticed and get more referrals.

1

FOCUS ON CASH-BASED BUSINESS:

The Cash-Based Business Model will keep receiving more and more attention as we see requirements of third-party reimbursements increase and payments decrease. Some practices opt fully into a cash-based business model while others offer select cash-pay services. Offering select cash-pay services can help ease you into this business model. Be aware cash-pay services may be a new concept for your patients. Give them options for payment or create discount plans for your cash-pay services. For example, "Buy 4 treatment sessions, get one free." or "Only pay \$20 down during your first visit."

Here are some ideas for cash-pay services to get you started:

- **Maintenance Programs:** Physical therapy can have a long-lasting impact and also help your patients make real gains in function through maintenance programs such as aftercare, recovery, or just general maintenance. By offering programs tailored to your patients' needs, you can turn your patients into clients who continually return to receive your services.
- **Athletic Performance for Recreational Athletes & Weekend Warriors:** You can help this demographic prevent and minimize injuries by addressing flexibility issues, muscle imbalances, and core strength deficiencies. For example, you can work towards increasing truncal rotation in golfers or help speed up recovery between heavy workouts for strength and endurance athletes.
- **Chronic Low-Level Pain:** Many people don't realize that minor, chronic pains can be addressed through proper physical therapy. You can offer treatment services to help people with sore shoulders, text neck, aches from old injuries, and general tension/stiffness.

Healthcare is complex and sometimes larger healthcare organizations can make patients feel insignificant and unheard. With a cash-based model, you're able to focus on the individual needs of your patients, giving each patient a more positive experience. Patients then share their story with their friends and family (and possibly on social media), leading to more self referrals. With value-based healthcare on the horizon, exceptional patient experiences are necessary for the future of your practice.

Before pursuing cash-based business, check with your legal and business advisors to stay in compliance with your practice act, the terms of any contracts you may have with third-party payers, and the rules and regulations of Medicare/Medicaid. Generally, direct payments from Medicare patients are not allowed unless you are a non-participating provider.

2

INVEST IN CONTINUING EDUCATION THAT GIVES YOU A RETURN ON INVESTMENT (ROI)

You're most likely required to maintain your license through CEUs (Continuing Education Units). The exact number of credit hours varies per state, but in most cases 20-35 hours are required every 2 years. Measuring the impact of a continuing education course (CE course) within your practice can be tricky. To lay the groundwork for measuring the profit of your CE course, talk with your team and agree on a couple of specific business objectives that matter to your clinic.

For example, you can measure the impact of your CE course by how often you or your clinicians use the treatment, protocol, or equipment in the clinic. Keep a record of how often you use it and how happy your patients are with this new option. Compare this, and whether you get new referrals to offset the cost. Preferably, you should be using your new knowledge, technical skill, or equipment at least once a day in the clinic to be getting an adequate ROI within a year of your course. If new referrals are coming in, calculate the added revenue you are receiving and deduct the cost to find out the amount of profitability you are seeing.

3

FIND YOUR NICHE MARKET

Niche markets help differentiate your practice from other local rehab clinics/competitors and can help focus your efforts into becoming an expert in a certain area. You can take your passion and make it a specialty area of your practice. There are often overlooked niche areas that have large potential patient populations. If you pick one of these underserved areas, then practice growth may happen fast.

Here are a few niche markets you could start treating:

- **Mastectomy Recovery:** Many breast cancer survivors suffer with restricted movement and pain that you can help eliminate through rehabilitative therapy.
- **Insulin Injection Site Fibrosis:** Individuals with diabetes that use insulin daily have a high risk of developing lipohypertrophy and scar tissue around the injection site. This is not only painful and restrictive, but it can also affect medication absorption. Understandably, diabetics are in serious need of help with these issues.
- **Activity Specific:** Whether it's a competitive sport or outdoor activity, you can help prevent injury and enhance performance. Achilles tendinitis, ankle sprains, and other overuse injuries can be prevented with proper treatment and therapy. Dancers, musicians, and performing artists are subgroups that are underserved and need early intervention to prevent overuse injuries.

4

MARKET YOUR PRACTICE

With tens of thousands of clinics across the nation, it can be hard to stand out among the competition. To truly stand out, you'll want to use a combination of outreach efforts and strategize the best way to engage your local community. A great way to engage your community is by offering free screenings.

You can screen for muscle imbalances, flexibility, abnormal movement patterns, etc. After the screening, talk with them about their results and how physical therapy can help correct any issues that could lead to bigger problems down the road.

One of the best ways to market your practice and expertise is by talking about the specific challenges your patients may face and how you can solve them.

By defining the key problems your patients face, you can help guide them to a solution. Try focusing your content by asking yourself these questions:

- What problems do your patients face that physical therapy could help? What can you help them avoid? What fears can you help them overcome? What will their lives look like after you solve this problem?
- We suggest brainstorming a few talking points surrounding these questions.

5

USE PATIENT SUCCESS STORIES AND TESTIMONIALS

Your patients can be some of the best spokespeople for your business. If your patients are happy, they will most likely mention their experience to their friends and family which increases your credibility as a reliable source for care. A trend we see on the rise within the field of rehabilitation is “exceptional patient experiences.” Referral sources and payers look to your patients to learn more about how you provide care. Demonstrate your trustworthiness by marketing your patient’s testimonials and reviews on social media, your website, or in advertisements.

HOW ASTYM® THERAPY CAN HELP

If any of this sounds complicated, don’t worry, you don’t have to do it alone. Once you become Astym Certified, you will be able to treat tendinopathies and scar tissue with the highest rates of success, resulting in many happy patients and good word-of-mouth marketing. All Astym Certified providers have access to full-time clinical support and Advanced Astym Application Courses, where scientifically-developed, detailed protocols and strategies are taught for particular patients and conditions. Expertly treating tennis players, golfers, diabetics, and post-surgical patients are just some of the courses offered. In addition, pre-prepared, professionally designed materials are provided by the Astym program to use once these specialty skills are learned (announcement letters to area physicians and referral sources, professionally designed brochures, rack cards, wall art, social media shareables, and advertisements). These can all be customized with your logo or contact information and can easily establish niche markets.

SEE WHAT ASTYM CAN DO FOR YOU BECAUSE YOU DESERVE TO BE EXCITED AND CONFIDENT ABOUT THE FUTURE OF YOUR PRACTICE.





BETTER TREATMENT. MORE REFERRALS.

SUPERIOR RESULTS.

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