



The thought of implementing Forward Booking seems very daunting. “But we have always done it this way” is the common theme of many practices will hear when change is occurring. We heard many barriers such as “I don’t like to be pushy, I feel like I am selling, the client doesn’t know their schedule.” How can we make our team and our clients understand the importance of scheduling their next appointment before leaving the clinic? What are the benefits to everyone? The answers are very simple.

The first step that we took to implement forward booking was to make a list of the “whys” for the team to understand. Why is it important to the clinic? The number one reason is it provides the best care for the patients that we are seeing. Our medical team’s goal is to provide the best care to their patients. How can they do that without having an appointment scheduled? Forward booking ensures that our doctors can quickly and efficiently monitor the progress of their patients. Could you imagine not seeing your doctor for over a year?

At our practice, we utilize travel sheets to document all exams and treatment to the patients. One of the last steps in completing the travel sheet is to high-lite the next appointment. When the doctor decides when to follow up, an appointment date is written in this very important section. As the technician is finishing the appointment, he/she will address the client and state “Doctor Steph wants to see Fluffy back in 2 weeks.” We call this the “white coat mentality.” Once clients hear “the doctor”, they are already thinking about their upcoming schedule and when they are available.

When the client is escorted to the reception desk to pay, the team effort does not stop. Our Client Care Coordinators are the last line of defense to ensure that the client will schedule Fluffy’s next appointment. Our CCC’s reiterate that the doctor needs to see Fluffy in “two weeks.” “Mrs. Smith, Dr. Steph said that she needs to see Fluffy back in two weeks. That puts us at the week of May 1st, does the same time as today’s appointment work for you? Great! We have her down on Wednesday May 3rd. Here is an appointment card with that date” Using this verbiage has not only gained the trust of the client with the exceptional care that our doctors are giving but lets them be a crucial part in the health of their pet. It also alleviates the idea that our Client Care Coordinators are being “pushy”.

As stated above, the biggest benefit to everyone is a healthy, happy pet. So what’s in it for the team? This is the list that could go on and on. Forwarding booking provides more appointments. More appointments leads to more revenue. More revenue leads to more hours. More hours lead to bigger pay checks. Bigger paychecks lead to happy team members. See where this is going? Forward booking is a WIN/WIN for everyone involved.