

First Impressions

Seeing Your Business from Your Patient's Perspective

**How can this help
you?**

You never get a second chance to make a first impression

- But you get plenty of chances to ruin it
- Minor improvements to lots of areas will make a big overall difference

The first impression

- Almost invariably the website
- Yellow pages are pretty much dead (possibly still of use for an elderly demographic, but even my 83-year-old dad buys everything on the internet, these days!)
- Almost everyone uses Google

Your website

- It's there to make life easy for your potential patient
- Make sure your phone number is always visible (not hidden away on a contact page)
- Basic editing is simple: it can be done cheaply by someone else, or learned easily by you

Your phone number

- A landline number looks more professional
- You don't have to have a landline to have a landline number

The second impression...

- Could be Google Maps (street view), or Google Plus
- You can control some of the images the potential patient sees in Google My Business

And when they call

- The phone is answered (good)
 - By you: not necessarily best use of your time
 - By a receptionist

- By an answering service
- The call goes to voicemail (not so good)
 - The message should be personalised (and preferably should promise a call back in a short time)
 - Standard, mobile phone voicemail messages sound very unprofessional
- It rings, and rings... (inexcusable)

How is the phone answered?

- It's easy for a receptionist (or you) to create a bad impression through poor telephone technique
- Ring your own clinic occasionally and check that your staff have got it right
- Record your calls and do some occasional random checks (you must tell staff that you are recording calls, but you need not tell callers)
- The aim here is to find out, with the help of your team, how you can improve patient-handling

Your clinic's image

- Is it smart, and tidy on the outside?
- Is it clean and well organised on the inside?
- Is there too much clutter (stacks of never-used leaflets for example)
- Are the magazines in-date?

How does the patient feel?

- Do they know where to go and what to do?
- Every uncertainty detracts from their overall experience and their confidence in you.
- The healing process works better in a confident patient.

Receptionists

- How do they interact with the patients?
- Name badges have been shown to dramatically improve customer satisfaction