

## IS YOUR OFFICE GIVING PATIENTS THE RIGHT MESSAGE? • BY TONI BRISTOL

Many of you raised your fees in January. When you raise your fees it is important to do a review of the quality of your office appearance and any handouts or brochures that you give patients. Do they represent the quality of service one would expect for the fees you are charging?

Look over your brochure rack. Are there any brochures which are leaning over, looking like they have seen better days? When is the last time you reviewed your home vision therapy sheets? Are you giving out copies of copies of copies or are you giving patients good quality printouts? While you may not think parents give them much thought, a parent called P.A.V.E. a number of years ago to complain that the quality of the handouts at her doctor's office was so poor that she needed confirmation that vision therapy was valid and asked for a referral to another doctor.

Another area of your practice to review is what message your VT equipment sends. How old is it? Do you have enough of each piece of equipment for all the patients that are seen at one time? Do any of your patients have to wait for another patient to finish so they can do their next activity? If you answered yes to any of these questions, it's time to invest in more equipment.

Does your VT room look like you put it up overnight or does it have the same professional image that the rest of your office has? For example, folding tables are often very handy, but if that's all you have in your VT room, please consider investing in better quality tables. Folding tables send a transient message.

Other items to review include your messages on hold and your outgoing message on your voice mail. Are they up to date? Does your outgoing message still give your holiday schedule?

Take the time to do a review of your office, starting with your outside practice sign and your listing in the lobby directory. Pretend you are a patient coming to your office for the



*Is your reception area warm and inviting?*



*Is your vision therapy room organized and does it look professional?*

first time and make a list of all the things you need to upgrade. If you don't see anything, ask your spouse, or a good friend to come by and help you out.

All of the above items send a message to your patients; are they sending the right one? You take great pride in what you do, make sure every part of your office reflects this.

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*Photos courtesy of COVD Past President, Lynn F. Hellerstein, OD, FCOVD*