

FollowApp.Care

Leading cosmetic dentist outlines the role AI plays in his practices to enhance high level of patient care and retention

Dr Mark Hughes has attained a reputation as one of the world's most accomplished cosmetic dentists. He combines cutting-edge dental technology with an eye for aesthetics. The latest tool in his digital arsenal – Follow.App Care, an AI system which delivers automated notifications to patients post-appointment.

“My dental practices are high end”, explains Dr Hughes. “We do specialist level cosmetic dentistry. The demands of our patients are rightly very high, and the quality of our work has to be sublime. We pride ourselves, and market ourselves, as having a very, very high level of customer service.”

Dr Hughes explains how the app supports the elevated patient care his practices provide.

“We currently use Follow.App Care in both my London and Beaconsfield clinics. Every single person is contacted using the system. The app is very, very clever. It has solved a problem we faced – we had protocols in place and a desire to contact all our patients after every stage of treatment, but that puts a burden on our admin team and our staff. Not only that, it puts a burden on the patient, because they have to be available for either a call or an email. Because Follow.App Care is automated, it has freed up my team’s workflow, and the patients can respond in their own time, without any pressure of a phone call. They can write whatever they feel without feeling concerned about what the person on the other end of the phone call or the email might think. It has solved a lot of problems. I think there would be huge uproar if we took it away now. Certainly now that I've been using it and I see the benefits as the practice owner, I would be very disappointed if we couldn't continue to use it.”

Dr Hughes outlines the benefits he has experienced from using the AI technology.

“I am both a practice owner, and am also very clinical and busy with patients. In the past I may not have had access to feedback from a patient regarding clinical treatment or customer service. Recently we had some feedback from a mum whose child saw our orthodontist and there was a comment about pricing. It was good to see that; I probably would never have heard her comments in the past. It's great as a business owner to be able to get feedback.”

“There are also huge benefits for my reception team and treatment coordinators. They don't have to spend hours chasing patients for feedback, so it's taken a huge workload off them and allows them to focus on things like lead generation and following up treatment plans, which are very valuable to the clinic. But at the same time, when there's something that they need to respond to or action, there is a report on the app, so it's not forgotten. **It has 100% helped the consistency of communication. It means that we are following up everybody. Nobody gets missed.**”

We have noticed that that the frequency and consistency of response from patients has massively increased.”

Boosting Google reviews

“We’ve only had five star reviews since we’ve used Follow.App Care. Rather than having to chase the patient manually and to ask over and over again, the system prompts them to do it and guides them to leave a review in an automated fashion, which is a huge help for the team. What we have noticed is that we’re consistently getting reviews without having to ask. We’re still asking in person and following up those that have left a lovely comment but haven’t written a review. But the automated ones are pretty steady and quite reflective of the number of patients that we see. It means that we’re guaranteed to get reviews even if we do nothing.”

Patient retention is key to a growing dental practice. Dr Hughes shares how AI supports with rebooking existing patients.

“The patient is encouraged to book their next appointment via the app. It means we have a much more efficient way of following up patients. For example, if somebody says they are keen to book an appointment but haven’t found the time, then I know that my team would put that person to the top of the follow up list to contact. Whereas if they make it very clear that they’re considering their treatment options or they’re going away, we know that that person shouldn’t necessarily be chased at the top of the queue, and we should follow up in a few months. It makes our manual follow up, which is still an important thing to do, more efficient and focused.”

“We run reports on new patients anyway, but Follow.App Care gives us immediate feedback as to how successful those first consultations are. We always offer a complimentary follow up consultation, but the app gives us an opportunity if someone is a bit unsure to put that person to the front of the queue for a manual follow up. In terms of the new patient retention and successfully converting new patients who might have been forgotten about previously or not followed up as efficiently and as quickly, we’ve definitely seen a big improvement. Then the second aspect is recall patients. It’s building a culture where the patient is more likely to book at the time of the appointment and booking in advance, rather than having to rely on a recall or a chase email or something that comes further down the line.”

“The system is wonderful”, concludes Dr Hughes. “If a practice has customer service at the top of their priority list, I can’t see why you would not have it in your system and for a relatively low cost compared to what it would cost to pay the salary of a team member and just for the efficiency it brings. **I think every dental practice who prides themselves on their care and their customer service should have it.”**

How FollowApp.Care works:

1. Integration: Integrates with your practice management system to automatically extract the data needed to ensure appointment notifications trigger patient communications

2. Communication: Makes patients feel cared for, while checking up on post procedural health, requesting feedback and prompting reviews.

3. Results: Results are analysed and collated in the FollowApp.Care web application where clinics can resolve flagged issues or sit back and watch FollowApp.Care work for them by garnering improved Google reviews.

More than 5,000 dentists have already used FollowApp.Care - predominantly in the UK and Australia, and millions of patients have connected with them through the app. For more information please visit <https://www.followapp.care/>

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