



HOW TO HANDLE PATIENT OBJECTIONS

The fastest way to increase patient visits is for patients to have full compliance of their Plan of Care, and reduce patient cancellations. It is important to be able to communicate effectively, especially at the front desk, and to have a clear, repeatable systems in place.

A patient objection usually means one thing: “I’m not clear”. Whether it is a lack of communication by a member of your team or written materials, when a patient has an objection, something wasn’t communicated clearly. Most patient questions and objections come from lack of clarity during the pre-intake, intake or patient engagement processes.

The key to handling a patient objection is to first acknowledge the question (do not get defensive), and then try to understand “why” they are asking it. This requires the front desk to have good listening skills, empathy and training on the company policies.

DO NOT TAKE IT PERSONALLY! The worst thing a front desk person can do is bring emotion into the conversation. This can create tension within the conversation creating an adversarial relationship with the patient. Keeping your cool and staying helpful and positive is vital.

From an Owner’s perspective, these objections are an opportunity to fix the issue and provide clarity and training to your team.

The following objections and responses are to be used as “guidelines” on how to answer patient objections. These are NOT meant to use as an exact verbiage to respond. Every practice has unique policies, processes and procedures. The front desk person will respond according to their training and the processes and policies of the clinic.

Objections	Responses
<i>“Do you accept my insurance?”</i>	<i>Good question! Yes, we “accept” it, but you may be asking if we’re in-network. The answer is no. However, we would be happy to check your benefits and call you back today with exactly how much you would be responsible for. Is that okay?</i>
<i>“Do I have to pay my copay now?”</i>	<i>Good question! Yes, we ask all patients to pay at the time of the visit. If you would like, you can pay “ahead” of time if you rather not have to worry about bringing your checkbook or credit card every visit. Would you like to do that?</i>



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<p><i>“Do I have to schedule all of my visits today?”</i></p>	<p><i>Great question! Yes, we find scheduling all of your visits allows you to maintain consistency with your care, with your PT, and for your convenience to reserve the times you want.</i></p>
<p><i>I can’t afford it.</i></p>	<p><i>Thank you for your question. What exactly can’t you afford? Maybe there’s something we can do to help.</i></p> <p><i><u>{Additional responses:}</u></i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>∅ We offer qualified patients a payment plan. Would you like for me to check into that for you?</i> <i>∅ Yes, there is a bigger investment for our services compared to other places, but our results speak for themselves. However, if you’re looking for a cheaper place (in-network), I would be happy to find a place for you. Do you want me to do that?</i>
<p><i>I’m feeling better, do I really need to come in (for my session today)?</i></p>	<p><i>Excellent question! The short answer is Yes. The initial goal of your plan is to help eliminate pain. Now that your pain is gone (better), your PT can focus on strengthening and stabilizing the area so you can return to full activity and reduce the risk of the problem returning.</i></p>
<p><i>I need to cancel my appointment.</i></p>	<p><i>Thank you letting us know. I know the therapist wanted to see you 2x/wk. Are you able to come in tomorrow at 3pm? If not, we can add an appointment on the end of the plan of care. How is Tuesday, March 20th at 3pm?</i></p>
<p><i>“Why do I have to pay a cancel fee?”</i></p>	<p><i>Good question. A cancellation fee is for patients who do not give us enough notice (at least ____ hours). This not only affects your personal progress, but also doesn’t allow us enough time to fill your time slot with another patient. We are happy to extend you a “free pass” this time, but please give us at least ____ hours next time. Okay?</i></p>
<p><i>“I’m busy at work, do I really need to come in 2x/wk?”</i></p>	<p><i>I certainly understand you’re busy. However, you’ve entrusted us with your care and based on your evaluation your therapist believes 2x/week is what it will take to get you back to full activity. Would you like to speak with your therapist to see if the plan can be changed?</i></p>
<p><i>“Can I go on hold for a while?”</i></p>	<p><i>Thank you for your question. What do you mean exactly by going on “hold” for a while?”</i></p>



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	<i>If you would like to change your plan of care, I can have your therapist speak to you about that. Would you like me to do that?</i>
<i>“Can I think about it?”</i>	<i>Of course. What exactly do you want to ‘think’ about? Unfortunately, I cannot guarantee that you will be able to see the PT you want at the time you want. It will depend on how busy their schedule is. Is there a reason why you want to hold off on (restate the reasons they came in)?</i>
<i>“I don’t have my calendar with me”</i>	I understand. It happens. We find it is best to make all of your appointments now and when you get home, you can call us back if any of those visits don't work. Your PT's schedule is getting very busy and I want to make sure you get the appointment days and times that work best for you. How does that sound?
<i>“I only want to see _____ (Dr said only to see the owner)”</i>	"I completely understand that you want to see X PT. He/she is completely booked. I know that he/she would not want you to wait to get the care you need. What if we did this... I will schedule you with Y PT. She/he is terrific! I will let X know and she/he can work with Y PT to make sure that you receive the best care for your issue. (If a Dr recommendation add: We will also let your doctor know so there's no confusion)