

Self-study instructions for “*Risk management: a practical guide for dentists*”

1. Read the attached document, “Risk management: a practical guide for dentists.”
2. Answer the questions in the quiz by circling the appropriate answers.
3. Print your completed answers and return to DBIC Risk Management Department at:

DBIC Risk Management Department
The ODS Companies
P. O. Box 67250
Milwaukie, OR 97222

Or fax it to us at (503) 765-3511

Name (please print) _____ Date _____

Address _____

Email _____

Phone _____ Fax _____

To qualify for your continuing education credit and a discount on your professional liability policy premium, please read “Risk management: a practical guide for dentists” and complete the following self-study exam.

Self-study evaluation/ Risk management: a practical guide for dentists

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement by circling the appropriate number (1 = disagree, 5 = agree)

- 1 2 3 4 5 The quiz was difficult.
- 1 2 3 4 5 The information provided was relevant to our practice.
- 1 2 3 4 5 I learned something about dental care risk management that I was not aware of before the quiz.
- 1 2 3 4 5 The quiz helped crystallize the information presented in the reading materials.
- 1 2 3 4 5 The module was an effective tool for self-evaluation of my risk management knowledge.
- 1 2 3 4 5 I would recommend this self-study program to colleagues.

Please let us know how this self-study program might be improved

Were there other topics that you wish were addressed in the reading material?

Please list

Other remarks or suggestions

Exam/Module 1: An introduction to risk management

1. A patient can go from patient to plaintiff for which of the following reasons:
 - a) A dentist criticizing care given by a previous dentist
 - b) Financial incentives
 - c) Problems with patient-dentist communication
 - d) Unrealistic expectations
 - e) All of the above

2. Everyone in the practice should follow good charting techniques. Which of the following should never be done?
 - a) Entries should be detailed and thorough.
 - b) A single line should be drawn through an error.
 - c) Entries should be timely and in chronological order.
 - d) Addendums should be posted on sticky notes.
 - e) None of the above

3. Medication orders and prescriptions should be clear and specific to avoid confusion and tampering. For example, if the prescription is written with no refills, spell out “zero” refills on the script.
 - a) True
 - b) False

4. The doctor has an obligation to advise the patient of the ideal treatment plan — not just the plans the patient can afford or that are covered by insurance.
 - a) True
 - b) False

5. Some malpractice claims are filed in retaliation for collection actions. Before sending an unpaid bill to collections, you should:
 - a) Confront the patient
 - b) Review the chart for mitigating circumstances before approving collections
 - c) Send the patient a warning letter
 - d) Instruct the collection agency to file no collection lawsuit without the dentist’s permission
 - e) A and C
 - f) B and D
 - g) All of the above

Exam/Module 2:

Patient communication

1. From the very beginning, preparing your patients for their best experience with your practice is essential. Effective ways to educate your patients are:
 - a) Provide an informational brochure about your practice.
 - b) Develop a practice website.
 - c) Send patients a Welcome to the Practice letter.
 - d) Require all new patients attend a new patient educational seminar.
 - e) A, B and C only
2. If your patient has an adverse outcome, the best plan is to:
 - a) Cross your fingers and hope things get better on their own.
 - b) Have an open conversation with the patient as soon as possible, and if appropriate, present a treatment plan and document everything in the chart.
 - c) Notify the patient of errors by other providers, so they can direct their anger appropriately.
 - d) Dismiss the patient from your practice, offering 30 days of emergent care.
3. The noncompliant patient can be the most unreliable and the most litigious. When treating this patient, you should:
 - a) Document the treatment advised, alternative treatments, risks and the patient's questions.
 - b) If the patient elects a lesser treatment, fully document the treatment, observations, concerns and conversations with the patient during each visit.
 - c) If the patient refuses treatment, document the details of the refusal and note patient's comments in quotes.
 - d) All of the above
4. A patient care agreement is a unique contract negotiated between the care provider and the patient for the purpose of addressing issues specific to that relationship. It should:
 - a) Include the provider's home phone number for contacting the provider after hours.
 - b) Define ground rules for continued care.
 - c) Include the patient's authorization to share the agreement with the patient's insurance carrier.
 - d) All of the above
5. Effective pain management requires that the patient and doctor work together. Patient noncompliance with an Agreement for the Use of Medication in Pain Management is a sufficient reason to terminate the dentist-patient relationship.
 - a) True
 - b) False

6. You may dismiss a patient from your practice for many different reasons. Which of the following do you need to do when dismissing a patient?
- a) Send the patient a letter using certified and regular mail.
 - b) Provide emergent care for 30 days.
 - c) Offer copies of the chart to the new provider.
 - d) Tell your staff.
 - e) Tell the patient why you are dismissing them.
 - f) All of the above
 - g) A through D only
7. Invasive, elective and restorative procedures are not permissible during the entire pregnancy for healthy women.
- a) True
 - b) False
8. To avoid postural hypotensive syndrome, pregnant women should be:
- a) Only treated in the first two trimesters
 - b) Given nitrous oxide
 - c) Placed in a semi-reclining position, encouraged frequent position changes or given a pillow under the hip
 - d) All of the above
9. A variety of federal and state laws require you to provide limited English proficiency (LEP) patients with an interpreter or auxiliary aids to ensure effective communication. The interpreter or auxiliary aids must be provided at no cost to the patient. Who decides if an interpreter or other aid is necessary?
- a) The patient makes the decision.
 - b) The provider makes this decision, but only after consulting with the patient or patient's representative.
 - c) Only an independent interpreter is authorized to make this decision.
 - d) None of the above
10. Is the provider obligated to use an interpreter selected by the patient?
- a) Yes
 - b) No

Exam/Module 3:

Practice management

1. It is important to you and your patients that dental staff document the exchange of certain information conveyed over the telephone. Which of the following types of information should always be documented?
 - a) Significant patient anxiety
 - b) Change to or ordering of medications
 - c) Significant medical advice
 - d) All significant changes in health status
 - e) All of the above
 - f) B and C only
2. When responding to a request from a Child Protective Services worker for information relating to a minor patient, which of the following needs to be obtained?
 - a) A signed authorization from the minor patient's parent(s)
 - b) A court order
 - c) A subpoena
 - d) None of the above
3. When releasing a sedated patient from your practice, your chart notes should reflect that:
 - a) The patient was conscious and coherent
 - b) The patient was assisted to the car by an escort, along with the name of the escort
 - c) The escort (name of escort) was properly instructed
 - d) A copy of the instructions was given to the escort and also filed in the chart
 - e) All of the above
4. Which of the following steps can dentists take to minimize the chance of being victimized by drug scams?
 - a) Only the dentist has refill prescriptive authority
 - b) Dentists should quickly respond to pharmacist's telephone inquiries
 - c) On call dentists should wait to prescribe controlled substances until the patient's attending dentist can be contacted
 - d) All of the above
5. Which of the following should not be done when dispensing sample drugs to a patient?
 - a) Ask the patient if he or she has any known allergies and document this information in the chart.
 - b) Give the patient written instructions on how to take the medication.
 - c) Include the doctor's home number in the event of an allergic reaction.
 - d) Include the doctor's name on the written instructions.
 - e) Include the date the samples were dispensed in the written instructions and in the patient's chart.
 - f) None of the above

6. With regard to privacy practices, patients have the right to:
- a) Ask you to restrict certain uses and disclosures of their protected health information (PHI)
 - b) Request to see and get a copy of their protected health information
 - c) Request a list of disclosures of their health information
 - d) All of the above
 - e) A & C
7. Examples of appropriate disclosures of PHI include which of the following?
- a) Employees discussing or revealing PHI or other confidential information to friends or family members
 - b) Employees discussing or revealing PHI or other confidential information to other employees without a legitimate need to know
 - c) The disclosure of a patient's presence in the office
 - d) None of the above

Exam/Module 4:

Managing your dental records

1. Good charting is one of the most important patient care and risk management skills a healthcare professional can develop. Which of the following does not conform to good charting guidelines?
 - a) Document facts, impressions, clinical judgments and treatment objectively. Be specific and avoid general statements such as “patient doing well.”
 - b) The dentist should chart last (after the hygienist and assistant).
 - c) Add omitted information by identifying the entry as an addendum or late entry, and date and sign the entry.
 - d) Chart all potential contributing patient acts.
 - e) None of the above
2. Care providers should document positive as well as negative comments from patients, using quotes when appropriate.
 - a) True
 - b) False
3. When referring a patient to a specialist, be as specific and clear as possible. Chart notes should include:
 - a) Date patient referred
 - b) Type of specialist and his or her name
 - c) Reason for referral
 - d) All of the above
4. The dental record should provide sufficient information for another dentist to understand the treatment provided, planned next steps and why those choices were made. Another dentist also should be able to maintain continuity of the patient’s care.
 - a) True
 - b) False
5. Charting for patients receiving nitrous oxide should, in part, include:
 - a) PARQ conference with the patient
 - b) Patient’s orientation at discharge
 - c) Reason for administering nitrous oxide
 - d) Total time sedated
 - e) A, B, D
 - f) A,B,C,D

6. Many practices have switched or will switch to electronic records. Which safeguards should be implemented?
- a) Practice data encryption
 - b) Back up once a year
 - c) Store backup data away from the office
 - d) After making changes to the record, hit “save”
 - e) Require staff members to type their name at the end of each entry
 - f) All of the above
 - g) A, B, C, E
 - h) A, C, E

Exam/Module 5:

Malpractice issues

1. When is a general dentist held to a specialist's standard of care?
 - a) When the general dentist attempts a procedure and the evidence suggests that it should only have been performed by a specialist
 - b) When the general dentist insists on completing a procedure after complications arise, even though he or she could have safely referred the patient to a specialist
 - c) A and B

2. Placing something in your patient's chart that is negative about past treatment done by others can inadvertently place you in the position of being a plaintiff's expert witness.
 - a) True
 - b) False

3. If you are sued, you should do the following:
 - a) Continue to treat the patient until the case is settled.
 - b) Offer to pay for a specialist's services.
 - c) Tell your staff and instruct everyone not to talk to anyone with questions about the case without obtaining your permission.
 - d) None of the above

4. A statement of apology is not admissible in a civil action if it is made within:
 - a) 15 days of the incident
 - b) 30 days of the incident
 - c) 60 days of the incident
 - d) 90 days of the incident

Exam/Module 6: Final thoughts

1. Doctors should always consider whether the services they would like to provide fall within the course and scope of practice of their dental license. The dental practice act is determined by:
 - a) Your state dental association
 - b) Your state board of dentistry
 - c) Your state insurance department
 - d) None of the above

2. When providing complimentary care to staff and family members, it is permissible to bill “insurance only.”
 - a) True
 - b) False

This ends the online risk management module.