

# Working Smarter not Harder: Practical Strategies for Office Improvement

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**Question:** How can we structure office practice to take best care of our patients, do it efficiently, and enjoy it!

**Introduction:** Primary care has become increasingly complex, with higher rates of chronic illness, increasing clinical practice guidelines and more and more administrative responsibilities. How does a primary care physician meet all of the growing requirements and still have the energy and emotional reserve to connect with patients? We believe that an organized system of care, founded on core teamwork at the point of care and simple organizational tools can go a long way toward improving both quality of care and provider satisfaction.

**Guiding Principles:** There are two principles that we feel can help guide practice innovations:

- Promise to patients: “We will know who you are, and we will be ready for you” \*
- “At the center of primary care are face-to-face human relationships.”

## **Principles of Practice Redesign: Taking a Systems Approach**

- Design the system so the majority of work occurs correctly by default
- Build a framework so each staff person works to the full level of their ability
- Minimize tasks the physician does that are within the skill set of others on the team
- Recognize that the majority of quality is related to clinic operations
- Pre-appointment organization pays off with a smoother, more comprehensive and yet more relaxed visit.

## **9 Strategies for Practice Redesign**

- Planned Care Appointments
- Post-appointment order sheet
- Pre-appointment questionnaire
- Empowered teamwork
- Streamlined Prescription Management
- Visit Summary
- The Annual Comprehensive Care Visit as an Organizing Principle
- Rapid Access
- Intentional Behaviors

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