



Session Notes 8-17-2014

IS THE JUICE WORTH THE SQUEEZE ?

**Clinic Management Strategies That
Produce More Surgeries, More
Revenue and More Options**

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Humane Alliance Budget Spreadsheet

1. This budget format allows you to think about the big-picture operations of your clinic. What if I raise my prices by \$5...what if I do community cat surgeries for free...what if I want to hire additional staff...what if I can reasonably do 1 more surgery per day.
2. Use historically accurate data from you clinic to get the most out of the spreadsheet. What % of your patients are female dogs vs. male cats...what % of your clients buy rabies vaccines.
3. A blank budget spreadsheet is available with two types of guides to help you -- video tutorial or written guide. The same information is in both guides. Click [here](#).
4. The hypothetical clinic we profiled in our session: it cost \$227/hour or \$3.79/minute to run the clinic.

Humane Alliance Inventory Spreadsheet

1. Read the "NOTES" tab before you start and follow the few simple tips to keep the spreadsheet working for you. Navigate to humanealliance.org/e-learning/administration/recordkeeping&documentation/Inventory
2. Use the spreadsheet to track spending on all things consumed in the course of doing surgery: drugs, oxygen, syringes, gloves, suture, trash bags, laundry detergent, paper towels etc.
3. If you total your spending over 3-4 months and divide by the total number of surgeries during the same time period, this equals your average consumable spending per surgery. This figure is very important to "juice worth the squeeze" and is used in the budget spreadsheet.

Discussion: Appointment Scheduling & Capacity

Dealing with no-shows was the most prevalent posting in this category:

1. Deposits do help reduce no-show levels but there was discussion if this was a barrier for our target audience.
2. When considering deposits, you have to factor some "juice worth the squeeze" items such as the cost to manually enter the deposit, the staff time & hassle factor to do that entry plus accounting requirements to track deposits or refunds.
3. Many clinics track their average no-show rate and overbook by that %

Discussion: Appointment Scheduling & Capacity continued

4. Use deposits only if person has no-showed multiple times or if one person has multiple animals. Clinic HQ can now track previous no-show for clients; check with your software.
5. Use a waiting list to call in the case of no-shows.
6. Use a missed call book or system to check missed calls every 2 hours
7. Anything you can do to reduce your call volume will help keep up with the phones
 - Clinic HQ has an online scheduling module. Cary B. has a scheduling widget which can be used with many other software programs. Email Cary for contact to software developer.
 - Be sure your website is clear about pricing and FAQ. You have about 10 seconds to "hook" a visitor so it should be easy & obvious to find the relevant info. "Top 10 reasons to S/N" is not particularly relevant because they are already ready to alter their pet.

Discussion: Client Communications (Admissions & Discharge)

1. Anything that extends your morning check-in process is a major flow stopper. Remember 15 minutes = 1 surgery. A few suggestions/thoughts from the group:
 - Minimize late arrivals by giving clients a specific drop off time rather than window.
 - Weigh the risk of accepting late arrivals especially if it requires vet to come out of surgery. Ferals are an exception and can arrive a bit later in the morning without interrupting flow.
2. The discharge process can be made more efficient when you can group people together and do group discharge and then spend a moment with each client. Individual discharge could represent over 1 hour of staff time.
3. Other discharge ideas:
 - Collect \$ at check-out. Approximately 40% of the group does this.
 - Give discharge instructions at check-in, unless this slows down the morning.
 - Check your state veterinary practice act as it may require you do discharge instructions both verbally and in writing. Using two approaches is a quality standard of care regardless.
 - Add discharge instructions and incision pictures to your website
 - A video version of the discharge instructions can help round-out the process. It can be as simple as a power point on a loop. Mountain View Humane (Roanoke VA) has a discharge video <http://www.humanealliance.org/e-learning/additional-resources#general>.

Discussion: Staff Management

1. Having staff in clearly defined roles facilitates good communication, patient safety and improves flow.
Sample job descriptions: <http://www.humanealliance.org/e-learning/administrative-human-resources>
2. Clinics with good flow deploy their staff at "highest & best use".
3. Inter-personal drama, "front vs. back" drama can be prevalent:
 - Cross-train personnel
 - Nip drama in the bud by having the co-workers meet face-to-face
 - No gossip policy
 - Slow to hire; quick to fire. Use working interview to test for culture fit.
4. How to motivate staff to have sense of urgency on "light days"
 - Surgery start time should be part of everyday milestones whether 15 animals or 50
 - Use slower days to practice emergency protocols or lunch N learns
5. How to manage wellness programs with S/N services
 - Watch your "juice worth the squeeze" if wellness reduces the number of surgeries you can do in a day. Use the budget spreadsheet to weigh the revenue from wellness each day vs. lost surgeries. Also need to weigh potential staff overtime and burnout.
 - Many attendees reported that they run wellness either with a separate medical team or run wellness on a completely different day. Separating "church & state" can lead to better efficiency for both programs.
6. What to do with a vet with slower surgery times:
 - First evaluate if slower production is due to surgical technique or interruptions in flow.
 - Is vet being supported by a well-trained medical support team (highest & best use)?
 - Look for additional training opportunities. Conferences, wet-labs, other S/N clinics in your state or Humane Alliance. <http://www.humanealliance.org/vet-training>