

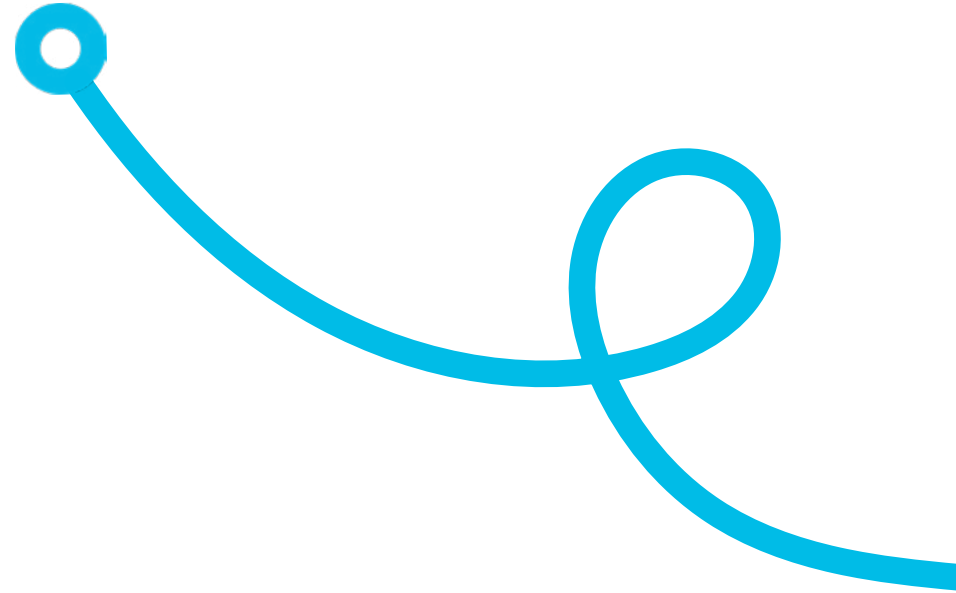


## GUIDE

# Managing Staff Shortages With Automation



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# Staff Shortages in the Dental Industry



## Staff Shortages in the Dental Industry

Staffing shortages have been on nearly every dental or oral surgery practice owner's mind in the last few years. This has been an ongoing trend, and is likely to stay one in the years to come. This has had a significant impact on practice owners and staff as they grapple with issues like burnout and lost revenue. In fact, in a recent report<sup>1</sup> 27% of practices said that staff shortages were one of the reasons that their appointment schedule wasn't full.

This means that dental and oral surgery practices have had to get creative when coping with staffing shortages. In this guide, we'll explore not only what is causing these staffing shortages, but what your practice can do to reduce the impacts of staffing shortages at your practice. Plus, we've included some messaging templates for patient reminders and recalls for you to implement as you get started on your automation journey!

# 27%

of practices said that staff shortages were one of the reasons that their appointment schedule wasn't full.



# Recruitment and Burnout



## Recruitment and Burnout

Recruitment is a top challenge in 2024, with 60% of dentists saying that recruiting new staff is their top priority<sup>2</sup>.

While there are a lot of factors that contribute to staffing shortages at dental and oral surgery practices, the main one in recent years was the Covid-19 pandemic. This is not unique to dentistry. Many healthcare workers have gotten burnt out and left their profession, especially in the early pandemic. It has been an incredibly challenging, constantly changing time in healthcare, with stress levels rising for everyone in the profession.

In dental and oral surgery settings, dental assistants and dental hygienists are experiencing especially high dissatisfaction with their professional lives. Earlier in the pandemic, one report noted that 43.1% of dental assistants and 66.8% of dental hygienists in the U.S. who were no longer working the field had left their positions voluntarily. Among the reasons listed for job dissatisfaction were unsatisfactory pay<sup>3</sup>.

One of the main reasons that dental assistants and dental hygienists are choosing to leave the profession is burnout. In fact, about 1 in 3 dental assistants and hygienists report that part of their reasons for leaving their job was being overworked, in addition to poor workplace culture<sup>4</sup>.

# 60%

of dentists saying that recruiting new staff is their top priority.

# 1 in 3

dental assistants and hygienists report that part of their reasons for leaving their job was being overworked.

# How Automation is Covering the Gap



# How Automation is Covering the Gap

Many practices are starting to leverage automation in order to mitigate the effects of staff shortages. Here are a few ways they are using technology and automation:

- **Digital forms.** Digital forms are a common way practices use technology to save time. Not only can automating waivers, pre- and post-procedure instructions, and other forms increase efficiency, but it also means that less forms are lost because patients always have them accessible on their phone or computer. Digital forms also allow patients to fill out forms on their own time, rather than eating into appointment time.
- **Reminders.** Automating reminders takes a lot of the administrative burden off of staff members at dental and oral surgery practices. This also decreases the need to make phone calls, giving back a significant amount of time to staff.

- **Mass messaging.** Similarly, mass messaging allows staff to reach many patients at one time. This is a great way to communicate anything from sudden closures to parking notifications — and can also be leveraged for marketing purposes!
- **Waitlist.** Virtual waitlists allow you to quickly and easily fill in your practices' appointment schedule when there are cancellations, automatically notifying patients if there is an opening.

While the staffing shortage may not be solvable overnight, technology can help fill the gap and help practices meet their patients' expectations.



# Messaging Templates



## Messaging Templates

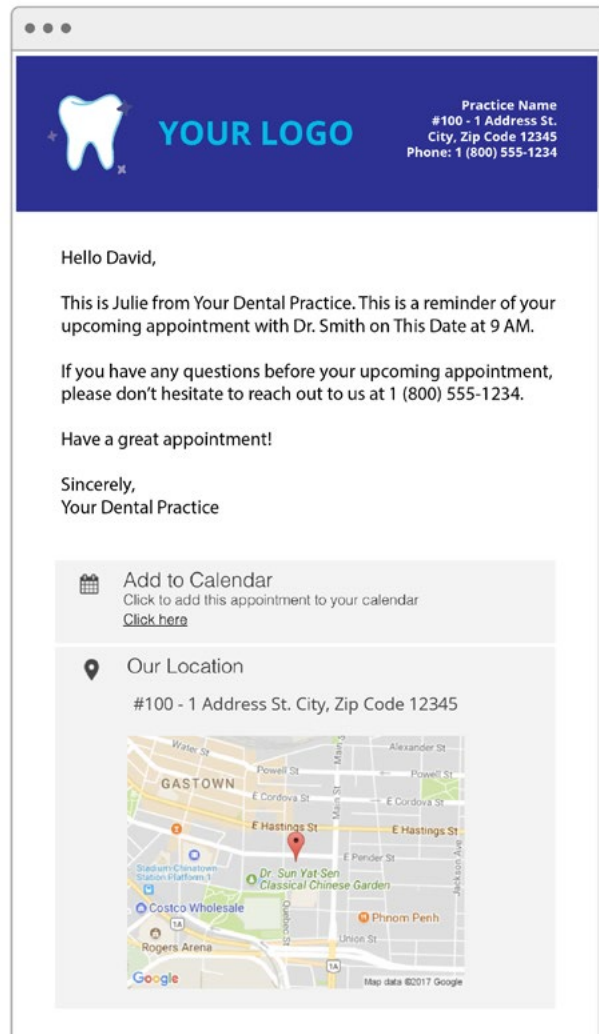
To make it easier for you to save time and start filling more of your appointments, we've created four plug-and-play communication templates for you to use. Our clients use similar templates within the Intiveo platform, and you can use them as you please to remind your patients to attend appointments and book follow ups!

Tip: Recently, Intiveo published Dental Patient Engagement: 2024 Benchmark Report, featuring data from over 1,700 dental and oral surgery practices. What we found is that patients far and away prefer texting to other forms of communication, highlighting that patients prefer user-friendly, easily-accessible ways of communicating with their healthcare providers.

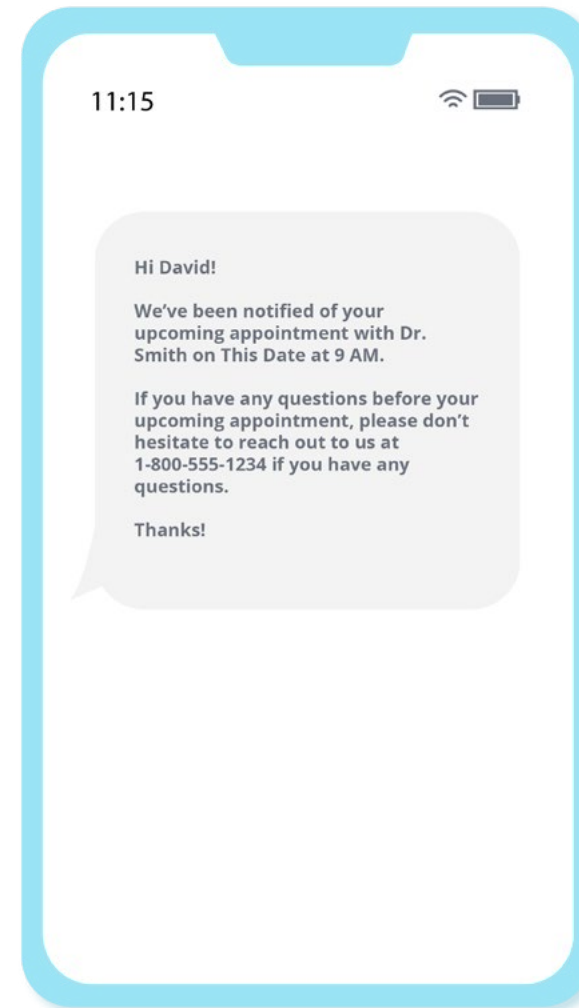


# Messaging Templates

## Appointment Reminder - EMAIL

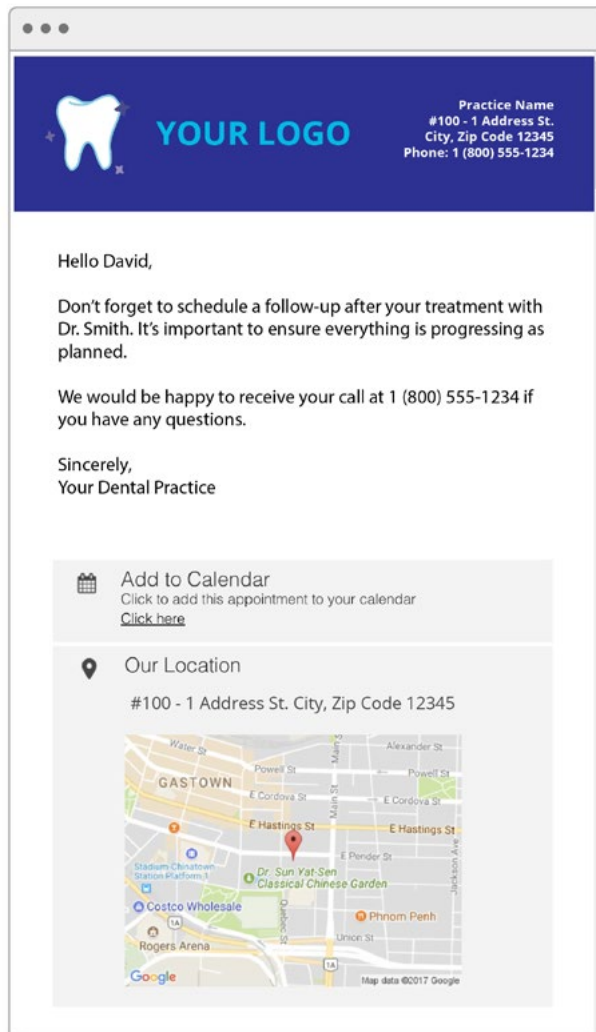


## Appointment Reminder - TEXT

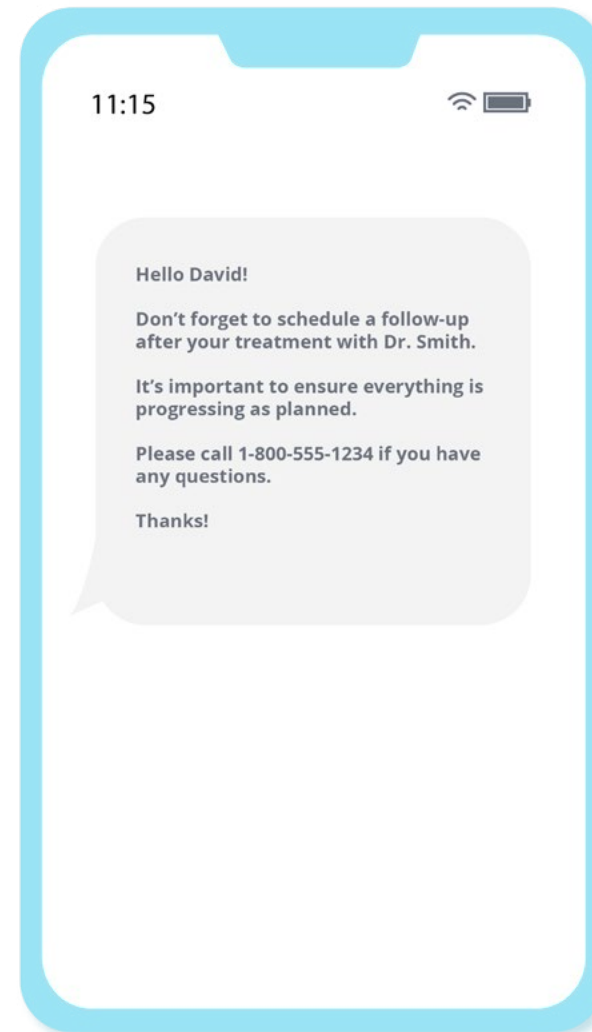


# Messaging Templates

## Follow-up/Recall EMAIL



## Follow-up/Recall TEXT



# Beat Staff Shortages With Intiveo



Intiveo is a patient engagement solution that integrates with over 40 practice management platforms. We offer a library of resources, including a blog and podcast, to support dental and oral surgery practices as they navigate today's dental industry.

Curious to learn more about Intiveo's platform? Let's chat!

# Endnotes

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