



## Going Private is More than Converting to a Plan

### Paul Mendlesohn talks about CODEplan and the techniques for practice development.

The changes to NHS dentistry have precipitated a rush of conversions to private practice. Many principals have chosen the dental plan route, to offer their patients a convenient way to budget for private treatment and to be registered with the practice. There are two main types of dental plan, capitation which includes treatment and prevention plans which provide check-ups, hygiene, x-rays and access to emergency services.

Changing an NHS list to a private one can be achieved in a number of ways, like skinning the proverbial cat. It can be done over a period of years, over 6 months, with a capitation or prevention plan, with insurance schemes or just pay as you go. There's no right or wrong path, but the strategy can be designed for maximum success. The considerations include:

- How long have the dentists been at the practice
- The ethical selling ability of the dentists
- The profile of the private treatment provided i.e. just fillings or advanced crown and bridge or implants
- The socio-economic mix of the patient base
- The private/NHS percentage
- Perhaps most importantly - Are the dental fees set at the right levels?

### The Conversion is Just the Beginning

Once you have completed the conversion process the real work begins. Private practice is fundamentally different to NHS practice in that there is practically no limit to how far you can develop it, and also that it needs a more proactive approach if profitability is to be maintained and improved. This brings us new and interesting challenges and as in most ventures, we are limited only by our confidence and imagination. Here are just a few fundamentals of dental business development:

- Branding, internal and external marketing
- Customer care
- Team work, training and delegation
- Efficient appointment book handling
- Ethical selling
- Treatment planning
- Specialist services such as ortho or endo
- Additional services such as Botox or laser treatments
- Regular financial analysis and planning

Ideally business development is a cycle, starting from where you are plan the next two years setting personal and practice goals, fulfil the plan and then plan the following two years and so on. Taking this time for business planning, like taking the time for treatment planning will dramatically impact on success.



Using a plan to convert to private practice is a tried and tested technique, but all too often the business development strategy is overlooked. Many practices have successful conversions but then can get bogged down e.g. by having too many patients and therefore appointments being too short to offer the patients advanced options.

If you visit the website [CODEuk.com](http://CODEuk.com) you will be able to download the Guide to Success in Dental Practice which leads you through the 7 steps for year on year growth of patient satisfaction and profitability.

CODEplan comes with the expertise of the CODE team and our dentists are given on-going practice development advice, consultancy and training depending upon their needs.

Call 01409 255551 or email [info@CODEplan.co.uk](mailto:info@CODEplan.co.uk) now to make an appointment to discuss your strategy with a CODEplan consultant.