

GROWING OUTSIDE PATIENT REFERRALS CARDIOLOGY CASE REVIEW 0021

One frequent objection we receive from Cardiology practices is that they question our results because we always publish our outcomes in terms of increases in diagnostic service testing. Apparently some Physicians think it's harder to gain new patient referrals than diagnostic testing referrals. I almost thought this assumption was true until I went back and looked at our past results as well as our results for a current Cardiology client:

The Practice-Reps Case study 0017 details our experience in 2003 with a 17 man cardiology group in central Pennsylvania where we were able to grow their outside patient referrals by:

40% in 2003
31% in 2004
15% in 2005

Again these were growth figures compared to the previous year in outside patient referrals.

Is it easier to grow outside referrals out in the countryside? Maybe, but growth is still possible in the inner city.

In August of 2009 we began an engagement with a 13 man, long established cardiology practice in Northeast Philadelphia. This is a densely packed, highly competitive, working class section of Philadelphia. In this case we were focusing entirely on new outside patient referrals as the diagnostic market was entirely saturated in this geography.

In this case the client wanted "just sales, no marketing". In other words they wanted strictly field representation to the PCP community in an effort to gain back lost referrals while gaining new sources that may have been overlooked recently. The client had sufficient collateral marketing materials so there was no need to reinvent the wheel. We used these current brochures, flyers and web site while we went into the field just **three days per month** for this client.

Now, at the end of twelve months we realize that we've earned back lost referrals and we brought in **87 new patients** from new outside referral sources for this client. This represents a **13% increase in new outside referrals** compared to the previous year.

In retrospect it may be easier to drive new outside referrals when you have a hot new diagnostic service center but we can still drive a significant amount of new volume with a strategic focus on growing outside referrals in any market place.