

RAY OF LIGHT

TRAITS OF A QUALITY MEMBERSHIP PLAN

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In this month's Ray of Light, I want to address a recent promotional piece I received from Klear – a competitor to DenVantage. A heading in the marketing piece, which was supposedly a comparison of DenVantage and Klear, caught my eye immediately. It was "Why dentists have switched from DenVantage to Klear." After checking with the other partners and with Meg, our administrator, none of us are aware of a single dentist who has actually switched from DenVantage to Klear! After seeing that, I had to wonder about the honesty of the rest of the piece.

In reviewing their comparison, I could see no 'clear' advantages for Klear. All items listed were either on par with DenVantage, or DenVantage was superior. We spent some time looking into their claims and would like to share our findings with you.



The items Klear listed as why dentists with DenVantage switched to Klear were:

1. *Over 2X the case acceptance with a membership plan verses non-member patients.* DenVantage has had the same results: actually up to 4X.
2. *87% of patients renew their membership each year.* DenVantage renewal rate is higher: over 90%.
3. *Klear provides a customer representative you can call.* When I look on their website, there is no phone number listed. With DenVantage you can call Meg directly without hearing, "Press one if you are..." The DenVantage number is boldly on our website.
4. *Completely free to implement* – same as DenVantage.

The bottom line is, Klear did not have any information about the benefits of DenVantage to substantiate their claims. Even more importantly, their entire message is misleading because it claims these are reasons DenVantage members have switched, when the truth is, no DenVantage member we are aware of has ever switched from DenVantage to Klear!

While both plans can benefit your practice by increasing your case acceptance by over 2 times, and increasing patient commitment to preventive care or periodontal maintenance, here are some of the advantages we found for DenVantage:

1. DenVantage is the only plan we have seen in which patients sign a contract committing to keeping their appointments or paying a rescheduling fee. We have found this one advantage reduces broken appointments by about 50%.
2. DenVantage reduces A/R by requiring, in writing, that patients keep their account balances at \$0.
3. Most plans promote deeper discounts in their monthly membership fees. (Kleer recommends a sweet spot of between \$25 to \$30 per month for an adult preventive plan.) DenVantage recommends assessing your individual profitability and has found that the acceptance rate is just as high when setting your fees at a reasonably profitable rate.
4. Almost every other membership plan on the market presents the discounts on other procedures as a percentage – often 25%, which we feel is much too deeply discounted for a high-quality practice. DenVantage recommends setting your benefits in the range of 8% - 12%, but not as a percentage, rather as a dollar amount. You set the benefit for each procedure as a specific dollar amount, which better communicates the actual value to the patient and allows you better control of profitability. (\$180 benefit towards a crown sounds better to the patient than 10%, for example.)
5. Overall, the cost of Kleer is about 25% higher than DenVantage, plus, Kleer adds the bank charges on top of their per patient fee further increasing the cost. (DenVantage includes the bank charges in our already lower-than-Kleer \$3 per member fee.)
6. DenVantage is owned by dentists who use it every day in their own practices. This means we are constantly looking for ways to improve because it directly affects us!
7. DenVantage has you use your own fee schedule and promotes a healthy, profitable fee that allows you to provide the high level of care you can be proud to support for years to come. You control the fee, not us!

When looking at membership plans, look beyond the smoke and mirrors to see what support you will receive and the quality of the plan. The main advantage of incorporating a membership plan is to grow the insurance-free side of your practice. A deep discount membership plan is not really any better than a PPO. Why encourage a membership plan if you are going to shoot your own foot with the same deep discounts as the PPO? DenVantage is the plan that has increased our income while helping us to remain insurance free! Join the movement to replace PPO's with DenVantage. If you have any questions, you may call Meg directly at: 207-266-8434 or email her directly from our website at DenVantage.com. You are also welcome to call me at: 207-233-1393, or email me at davidpierdmd@gmail.com – try that with another plan!