

SUCCESS STORY

Electronic Claim Payments a 'Game Changer' for this Dental Practice

Dr. Cynthia K. Brattesani, D.D.S., sums up the days before electronic claim payments in three words.

"It was archaic," said Brattesani, who has been practicing some 36 years. "It made no sense to me to wait for the mail, open the mail, go to the bank."

When electronic funds transfer (EFT) via the ACH Network became a reality, "I jumped on it as soon as it happened. I signed up for every program I could, though back then there weren't very many as there are today," said Brattesani.

"It was a game changer on how much money was in the bank right away," said Brattesani, who practices in San Francisco. The office also uses Lassie software to automate insurance claim posting, which helps the practice run "like a well-oiled machine." Finding good team members in the city can be challenging, she said, and EFTs combined with automation frees the staff to focus on customer service. "We save over 10 hours a week, at least."

But there's one change in the claim payments landscape that Brattesani won't abide: virtual credit cards (VCCs).

"It angers us. Here we are, constructing the claim, sending all the information out, waiting to be paid for services, and then what do they do? Send a credit card," said Brattesani, who considers having to pay a VCC fee to get paid "infuriating and just not fair."

She refuses all VCCs, but Chelsea Magnante, patient coordinator, said that's a chore and a half.

"It's a pretty long process because you have to call and ask for an alternate payment," said Magnante, who estimated the process takes "at least an hour"—including time spent on hold—followed by waiting for the insurer to send an EFT.



**Dr. Cynthia K. Brattesani, D.D.S.
and Dr. Katelyn Du, D.D.S.**

Dr. Katelyn Du, D.D.S., bought the practice from Brattesani in 2020. Du has experience in taking over another dental practice where the prior owners did everything on paper for decades. Doing things electronically is not only easier, but a cost saver, as well. That's why she, too, dislikes VCCs.

"The accumulation of unnecessary costs to keep the practice running ultimately gets passed to the patient. VCCs shouldn't be one of them," said Du. "Dental health is important to overall health, and we want to keep treatment allowable."

Nacha has tools to help dental practices of all sizes start or expand acceptance of EFTs for claim payments.

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nacha.org/content/medical-and-dental-practices