

Member Engagement for Dental Plans: Three Key Steps to Take for Success

Let's be honest: There are some people that, even though they have a comprehensive dental plan, are sluggish to get to the dentist. However, there are ways dental plan providers can nudge members in the right direction and get them in the office. One strategy to consider is going beyond a touchpoint every six months and boosting member engagement overall. Not sure where to start? Consider these steps to take for bettering member engagement for dental plans.



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Step 1: Align print and digital strategies so members can stay connected to benefit offerings

When discussing member engagement for dental plans, a key question to ask is: Are your print and digital strategies aligned to encourage members to stay connected to your many benefit offerings? If not, then it's crucial to get those two strategies aligned.

If your print and digital strategies aren't cohesive, you risk member confusion and frustration. **Think about it:** If a member gets a piece of mail that directs them to go online for next steps (like exploring their benefit offerings), but the online page doesn't look like it's from the same company or even relate to the piece of mail's message, they will have to spend time figuring out exactly what is going on. Don't make members guess what's happening in your communications; make it crystal clear from the beginning that the message is intentional and accurate.



Ways to align print and digital strategies so members stay connected to benefit offerings include:

- ✓ Making sure all branding is the same for digital and print communications
- ✓ Ensuring the right information for each member is located on both forms of communication
- ✓ Making each form of communication seamlessly transition to the other
- ✓ Sending an electronic alert to drive members to the portal to view their EOB
- ✓ Creating a standard explanation of benefits template when possible (we understand there could be some possible design constraints)

Step 2: Analyze how dental insurance plans promote wellbeing

Another important step to take for success with member engagement for dental plans is to take a step back and ask yourself: How can dental insurance plans promote wellbeing? It's important to ask this question because knowing its answer will help you hone in on your member engagement strategy.

So, how exactly can dental insurance plans promote wellbeing? One way that immediately jumps out is through wellness programs. Wellness programs are typically offered through the workplace. These are programs that promote overall health, such as health screenings, flu shots, and gym membership stipends. The logic behind the wellness programs is that, if companies or insurance companies provide wellness programs that encourage a healthy lifestyle, it will reduce insurance costs for members in the long run.

And yes, dental plans can be included in a wellness program. One example is if a member receives a cleaning (or two) in the specified time period, they can receive the incentive. This could be offered through the employer, and the dental plan could provide data to support if the member participated.

So, how can all that tie to member engagement for dental plans? Insurance providers that offer dental wellness programs can utilize multichannel communications to engage members with these programs.

Examples of this type of engagement include:

- ✓ In-app push notifications reminding members to sign up for dental wellness programs
- ✓ Email campaigns explaining the benefits of wellness programs and promoting sign ups
- ✓ A post-enrollment welcome mailer that explains the wellness program the member signed up for and key benefits of it, plus an explanation of where to find information about the program online
- ✓ Utilizing the members EOBs to promote the wellness program and drive engagement

Promoting wellbeing, when done right, can boost member engagement for dental plans and help members live healthier lives; a true win-win.

Step 3: Execute on key multichannel member engagement communication strategies

When it comes to member engagement for dental plans, a critical step to do is execute on important multichannel member engagement communication strategies.



Multichannel member engagement communication strategies are ways of communicating with your members across different channels, including:

- ✓ Email
- ✓ In-app
- ✓ Mailers
- ✓ Portal messages
- ✓ Existing member communications (welcome letters, Member Guides, EOBs, etc.)
- ✓ Text notifications

So, what exactly should you think about when it comes to executing these types of communication strategies?

Here are a few key pillars to keep in mind.

Think of Member Convenience

Remember, we live in a digital-first world where people are used to things being pretty easy to navigate. As such, you want to make your multichannel member engagement communication strategies as easy and convenient as possible. One example of how to do this is, instead of just sending a welcome mailer about a member's dental plan, send them one that has a QR code at the top that easily takes them to an explanation of their benefits online. That way, they can instantly get what they want in the channel they wish, and engagement can increase.

Use Your Channels in Tandem

Multichannel communications don't have to be siloed from one another. Instead, they can be used alongside one another to drive engagement. The example above about the QR code in the welcome mailer is a great example of using channels in tandem. It combines physical mail with either a digital channel, like a website page, or in-app to drive engagement. Only using one channel leaves the potential for the most effective member engagement on the table.

Using your channels in tandem can also help drive provider inquiries to digital channels and reduce call center volumes. Instead of members calling a call center to get help, simply scanning a QR code or driving them to your app or website can increase engagement and boost response time without overwhelming staff.

Ask Members to Enroll in Their Preferred Channel Communications

When new members set up an account for their dental plan, ask them what their preferred channel communications are. No two members are the same, after all. Some may prefer emails, while others would like their communications mailed to them. Having people choose their preferred methods of communication can help boost engagement because you naturally cater to the way they wish to communicate. The key here is to incorporate the step above, which is to use your channels in tandem so engagement can increase overall.

Need Help with Member Engagement for Your Dental Plans?

Watch our most recent webinar sponsored through NADP, Optimizing Member Engagement for Dental Plans by [clicking here](#). During the webinar, we discuss how to go above and beyond in the member journey to ensure member needs are being met while simultaneously driving engagement and getting more people into the dentist chair.