Paragon Vision Sciences is pleased to provide you with this practitioner resource on "How To" conduct a patient informational seminar on Corneal Refractive Therapy with Paragon CRT®. This guide is comprised of the following:

- Step-by-step instructions on how to prepare, plan and coordinate a seminar
- Sample letter, advertisement, program outline and flier to use to promote this seminar
- Evaluation form and follow-up

Why a Seminar on Corneal Refractive Therapy?

The following phrases describe a specific demographic. What vision correction option traditionally attracts these candidates?

- Millions of potential candidates
- Private pay, fee for service – elective
- Active lifestyle
- Seeking better vision correction options
- Does not want eyeglasses or continued contact lens wear

Pre-qualify patients

Refractive Surgery? Yes, but more importantly, Corneal Refractive Therapy (CRT). Refractive surgeons and laser centers have mastered the technique of patient seminars. The goal of a patient seminar is to pre-qualify patients that fall into this category, fill a room with these candidates and en masse explain what Paragon CRT is, how it works and how they can purchase the therapy through your practice. Paragon CRT brings an exciting new modality to your practice. There is a wide patient base in which Paragon CRT can make a thrilling difference in the quality of life. Having a seminar like this reduces the chair time needed to explore this exciting option individually with interested potential candidates.

Seminar Site Selection and Scheduling

Preparing for the Seminar

Ideally the site should be set prior to sending out invitations. The response you receive will determine your budget and size of the seminar. Hold your seminar off-site, if possible, in an auditorium or hotel meeting room. If your budget does not permit an off-site meeting, consider setting up your waiting room theater style.

One advantage of having the seminar off-site gives you the room flexibility to accommodate different size groups. Food, beverage and audiovisual services an be set-up with the hotel's catering department. Room rental is frequently no charge if the hotel prepares a minimum amount of food and beverages.

Coffee and/or soft drinks and maybe snack food (generally available as packages on a Break Menu) are best for an evening time slot. We strongly urge alcoholic beverages **not** be offered.
Suggested audiovisual equipment:

- Screen and LCD projector with your computer
- Video monitor and player
- Lapel microphone for speaker
- Microphone on stand in audience for questions if room is large

Be sure the hotel will have an audiovisual person available at the time of your seminar in case there are any problems with the equipment and they have spare bulbs and back-up equipment readily available, if needed.

Schedule the seminar for a weekday evening (Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday). Avoid conflicts with secular or religious holidays and local or national events (e.g. sporting events) that may hinder attendance. In an urban area, begin your seminar at 7:00 PM. In a rural area begin a half hour earlier.

Allow 15 minutes at the start of the seminar for simple refreshments. Keep presentation to 30 to 40 minutes and allow time for questions and scheduling of appointments.

Who Should I Invite?

The best candidates for this type of correction are those with the following criteria:

- 10 – 45 year old myopes
    - Sphere < -6.00 D
    - Cylinder < -1.75 D
    - If you are just getting started with Paragon CRT, we suggest you stay with low to moderate myopes with minimal astigmatism (see Section One on patient selection)
- Previous or present soft contact lens wearers
- Have expendable income
- Have previously expressed interest in refractive options (not required)

You can select your invitees by "hand-pulling" charts, computer database search or by collecting candidate names over time. Most seminar attendees will come from in-office promotion. Had printed fliers to candidates starting a month prior to your seminar.

If you choose to do a mailing, send at least 1000 invitations to the seminar. This base number should yield 20 to 30 participants. Mail one month prior to seminar.

It is very important to include a confirmation phone number. A dedicated back office number works best, if available.

How to mail?

Depending upon the size of your staff, time constraints and the sophistication of your database, you can approach mailing two ways: your staff can do it or you can outsource it to a mailing house.

Of course, having your staff prepare a mailing is time consuming and disruptive to daily activities but may save you money. A suggestion would be to have the task done after hours or have a teenager come in after school to stuff envelopes.

With a mailing house, the task would be effortless, but would have an associated expense. Not only would a mailing house stuff, seal and send the envelopes; some can even prepare the letter/flier and address the letters. Check the yellow pages under Mailing Services. Also, you may be able to save on postage if your patients are concentrated in certain zip codes. Contact your local Post Office about presorted rates.

Other Tips

Use your On Hold Message to help promote your seminar. Adapt the samples in the section *In-Office Marketing* by adding seminar information.

Keep fliers and information on the seminar in your waiting area, exam rooms and other strategic areas of your practice.

If this is your first seminar, schedule a "mock" seminar or rehearsal with your staff and perhaps family and friends to role-play to work out any possible problem areas and smooth out rough spots prior to seminar.

Registration and Confirmations

When candidates call to respond, be sure your staff is prepared to answer basic questions without going into too many details regarding the therapy. Keep a RSVP list by the phone or on the computer to take down registrant information. Record at minimum the caller's name, address, phone number, e-mail address and how they heard about the seminar. If the caller is amiable, ask about their current refractive error. If the registrant is your patient, you will want to pull their refractive information prior to the seminar for reference.

Confirm your attendees

Once the candidate has agreed to attend, confirm their attendance with a follow-up letter or postcard indicating time, location and/or special seminar discount information. Confirmation calls can greatly reduce your "no show" rate. Your Paragon CRT Coordinator should be responsible for seeing that these calls are made. Keep calls professional, friendly and short. Confirm the seminar time, date location and directions, if needed, with a "reminder" phone message no later than one day prior to the seminar. If you have e-mail information on your patients you can use this avenue as well.

Special Seminar Offer

Also, if possible, offer a special seminar price. A percentage discount is suggested. This offer is an added incentive for patient seminar attendance and for appointment scheduling at the seminar.

The Evening of the Seminar

Arrive with your staff members at least 45 minutes prior to scheduled start to be sure all audiovisual and catering requests are complete. Be sure there is a sign at the entrance or an information counter to direct your attendees to the correct room. Check out the temperature and lighting controls for the room and be certain you and your staff know how to operate them.

Have a prepared sign-in sheet available with the key patient information already included. The attendee needs only to confirm information and sign in. Leave a blank section for potential walk-ins and guests.

Record who is in attendance

On arrival, each guest is greeted by the Paragon CRT Coordinator and requested to sign in. Guests are given Paragon CRT and practice information and invited to enjoy refreshments while waiting for the seminar to begin.

The seminar preferably opens with the Paragon CRT Coordinator welcoming guests, introducing any staff members present and reviewing what to expect for the evening. The coordinator then introduces the practitioner. If you prefer, the practitioner may handle all introductions and information.

The practitioner then gives the presentation with the Paragon CRT Coordinator running the Paragon CRT Patient Education Video when appropriate. Include a patient testimonial after the video. The practitioner or Paragon CRT Coordinator then explains the fees, fee policies and payment options. Then the practitioner answers all questions.

For speakers, professional dress is preferred. Presenters should speak clearly, not rush and be careful not to block visuals by standing in front of them when speaking.

Ideally, in closing the Paragon CRT Coordinator or practitioner asks the guests to complete a seminar evaluation, directs them to a scheduling table to sign up for their Paragon CRT evaluation or fitting appointment and offers an opportunity for more refreshments and one-to-one questions and answers.

Follow-up

Those appropriate candidates who do not sign up for Paragon CRT should be sent a thank you letter as a follow-up inviting them to call if they have any additional questions.