

RESOURCE TOOLKIT OVERVIEW

Boston Scientific is committed to partnering with you to improve patients' lives. To that end, we all recognize and acknowledge how COVID-19 has shifted healthcare for the foreseeable future. Now more than ever, it is critical for cardiovascular patients to seek necessary treatment, despite the fears of COVID-19 exposure. We hope this toolkit will serve as a beneficial resource to help your institution engage with patients and drive potential media placement to stress the importance of continued medical care.



- I. **Patient Direct Mail Templates:** Direct mail is often an effective tool to communicate with your patients, especially during this time of COVID-19 related distancing. This template is easily adaptable to your institutions key messages.



- II. **Patient Email Templates:** Many patients prefer electronic communications from their healthcare providers. This document provides flexible email templates that can be applied to your patient communication efforts.



- III. **Radio/Video Script Templates:** Reach your patients and local community with radio spots or videos. These key messages will assist in easy and adaptable personalization to your institution.



- IV. **Patient Social Post Templates:** The far reach and typical high engagement of social media cannot be underscored. Use these social post templates to effectively empower individuals to seek potentially life-saving care while helping them understand your institutional safety protocols.



- V. **Digital Ad Templates:** Digital ad copy can be used to replace any existing ad template you are currently running or sponsoring. Always feature your clinic's name and contact method.



- VI. **Website Copy:** This copy can be customized to announce your office hours, location and how you are giving appointments (in person, telephonic, video).



- VII. **Frequently Asked Patient Questions:** To help address anticipated questions that you may receive from your patients during this time, included is a FAQ featuring sourced, draft responses. As with the other materials, this can be tailored to reflect your practice's protocols.



- VIII. **What Cardiovascular Patients Need to Know About COVID-19:** We are pleased to offer you and your patients this informative resource provided by Society for Cardiovascular Angioplasty and Interventions (SCAI).



- IX. **Patient Hesitancy Insights Infographic:** This resource illustrates key findings from internal research findings. Use this information to better understand what your patients may be thinking or feeling and how you can better support their shifting healthcare concerns.



- X. **Referrer Letter:** This letter was developed to help connect you with referring physicians to let them know that you and your staff are ready to see patients.



XI. Telehealth Tips for Patients: This document can be used to help patients prepare for virtual/telehealth visits. These tips can help your patients feel more comfortable with the virtual meeting format and help them prepare to make the most out of their visit with you.



XII. Library of Cardiology Patient Advocacy Resources: To support additional patient outreach and/or to supplement your patient educational materials, here is a listing of resources from some of the leading cardiovascular patient advocacy groups (Mended Hearts, AHA, etc.).



XIII. Library of Cardiology Societal Statements: This is a collection of COVID-19 related resources published by leading cardiology professional societies. These links can provide additional sources for practice re-opening guidance, CMS information, additional messaging, and toolkits.



XIV. Manufacturing Quality Letters: Boston Scientific is relentlessly committed to providing quality devices. We want to ensure both you and your patients feel confident about the safety and sterility of our devices, particularly at a time when there are heightened concerns about the spread of coronaviruses. We are pleased to provide our manufacturing quality letter for your review and distribution with answers to commonly asked questions as it relates to COVID-19 and our medical devices.



XV. Media Pitch Email Template: This document includes a template email pitch that can be sent to reporters when you are reaching out to them to discuss the importance of patients seeking cardiovascular care even amid COVID-19 fears.



XVI. Media Outreach Guide: This guide can be used to learn how to engage with reporters to increase awareness of patient engagement in your community, and when you are training spokespeople for media interviews.



XVII. Media Talking Points: These key messages highlight patients' reluctance to visit an emergency room or hospital for life-saving care amid COVID-19 and can be used to help guide conversations with reporters during interviews.



XVIII. Media Interview Guide: This guide outlines how to effectively communicate details to reporters about your efforts to engage patients. In working with the media, you can increase awareness of your institutions commitment to empower individuals to get the critical care they need.



XIX. Advertising Guide: Advertising is a powerful and effective way to get the word out. This guide details how to do so successfully, in both print and digital formats.



XX. Social Media Channel Guide: This document includes best practices for utilizing social media channels to spread awareness to seek critical care—even during COVID-19—and what individuals can expect from a new patient experience.



PATIENT DIRECT MAIL TEMPLATES

Patients who have canceled or delayed their healthcare procedures due to COVID-19 are uncertain of when or whether to reschedule with their physicians or specialists. If your facility is ready to accommodate patients, reaching out to them with timely guidance of how to reschedule cancelled procedures is crucial for their health.

One way to effectively communicate with patients is to send direct mail.

Front

Back

Option 1

**Your Health
Still Matters.**

Don't let COVID-19 keep you from getting the care you need for existing health conditions. Heart disease remains the number one killer of Americans. Our office is open, and we are taking every precaution to ensure your safety. Please call **NUMBER** to schedule your appointment today.

Option 2

**Social Distancing
Means Nothing to
Heart Disease.**

If you are experiencing **SYMPTOMS**, please do not wait to get the care you need. Our office is open and we are taking every precaution to ensure the safety of your visit. In case of an emergency, dial 9-1-1. To schedule an appointment, please call **NUMBER** or visit our **WEBSITE**.

Option 3

**You Have
Supported Us.
Let Us Support You.**

Thank you for supporting our healthcare teams as they battle COVID-19. But heart disease remains the number one killer of Americans and we need to get back to supporting you and your health. Our office is open, and we are taking every precaution to ensure the safety of your visit. We also offer phone and virtual appointments. Please call us at **NUMBER**/visit our **WEBSITE** to schedule your appointment today.



PATIENT EMAIL TEMPLATES

Patients who have canceled or delayed their healthcare procedures due to COVID-19 are uncertain of when or whether to reschedule with their physicians or specialists. If your facility is ready to accommodate patients, reaching out to them with timely guidance of how to reschedule cancelled procedures is crucial for their health. Email is typically an effective means of communication and the following templates can assist in quickly reaching out to your patients. Be certain to adjust the email copy for your site specific protocols and follow your institution's policies on emailing patients.

Outreach to All Patients

TO: **PATIENT**
FROM: **DOCTOR**
SUBJECT: **OUTREACH**

Dear **PATIENT**,

As your **INSERT SPECIALTY** health care team, we want to thank you for your support as we navigate these unparalleled changes in healthcare. While a lot has changed, there is one thing that hasn't—our commitment to you and your well-being.

Our offices are open, and our physicians are available to see you, both in person and virtually. While we welcome seeing you over video, we want you to know about the precautions we are taking to keep you safe within our clinic as we are following the safety protocols established by the Centers for Disease Control in addition to our own stringent standards. We are:

- Performing routine deep cleaning
- Reconfigured our waiting area to conform with physical distancing
- Requiring masks to be worn by all individuals onsite
- Not allowing companions unless deemed an essential caregiver by staff

To further support these protective measures, we do require that if you have experienced any of the following symptoms, that you stay home, and we will make arrangements to have our clinicians work with you remotely.

- Fever
- Respiratory symptoms (coughing, congestion, difficulty catching a breath)
- Chills
- Loss of taste and or smell

If you are experiencing the above symptoms, please refer to the guidelines provided by **INSERT LOCAL COVID-19 TESTING RESOURCE HERE**.

Finally, we understand that you may have reservations about being in a hospital at this time. We want to assure you that we are partnering with the hospitals to provide a SAFE hospital experience for you. We feel fortunate to be your chosen healthcare providers; it is a role we take very seriously. We are, and will continue to be, here for you and together, we will address your healthcare needs in the safest possible way.

We look forward to seeing you soon,

OFFICE/DR SIGNOFF



PATIENT EMAIL TEMPLATES (CONT'D)

Initial Appointment Email

TO: **PATIENT**
FROM: **DOCTOR**
SUBJECT: **OUTREACH**

Dear **PATIENT**,

Our records show that you are due for **TYPE OF APPOINTMENT** in **DATE**. Please call our offices at **NUMBER** at your earliest convenience to set up an appointment.

We understand that you may have some concerns related to COVID-19, and we want to assure you that we are following the safety protocols established by the Centers for Disease Control in addition to our own stringent standards.

Upon confirmation of your appointment, we will send you detailed instructions to help you prepare for your visit.

We look forward to seeing you soon!

OFFICE/Dr SIGNOFF

Email on New Office Protocol/Prior to Attending Appointment

TO: **PATIENT**
FROM: **DOCTOR**
SUBJECT: **OUTREACH**

Dear **PATIENT**,

We are looking forward to seeing you on **DATE** and **TIME** for your appointment. As you prepare for your visit, we want to assure you that we are taking every precaution possible to ensure our facility is safe. Here are the things we are doing:

- Deep Cleaning
- Mask requirement of staffing
- Waiting room configuration

To help maximize our safety efforts, here are the things we need you to do:

- You will need to wear a mask while onsite; if you do not have one, one will be provided
- Only ONE adult companion is allowed
- Due to social distancing factors, making and keeping your appointment will be imperative, so please call **NUMBER** 15 minutes ahead to alert our receptionist of your arrival.

We look forward to seeing you soon,

OFFICE/Dr SIGNOFF



RADIO/VIDEO SCRIPT TEMPLATES

Provider/Clinic

Ad: 15 Seconds:

COVID-19 has changed our normal but please don't let it keep you from getting the **INSERT DISEASE STATE** care/screening you need. Our team at **INSERT INSTITUTION NAME OR TYPE**: clinics/offices/hospital/care center are ready to help you safely. Please call **INSERT NUMBER** or visit us at **WEBSITE**. As always, in case of an emergency, please dial 9-1-1. COVID-19 has changed a lot of what we do but please do not let it keep you from getting the critical care you need.

Ad: 20/30 Seconds:

COVID-19 has changed our routines, but it hasn't stopped the need for medical attention for **INSERT CONDITION**. The team at **INSERT INSTITUTION NAME** is here to help you. We're taking every precaution to keep you safe while caring for your needs. **OPTIONAL**: If you are not able to see us in person, we are also offering phone and video appointments. Please call **INSERT NUMBER** or visit us at **WEBSITE** for more information. As always, in case of an emergency, please dial 9-1-1. COVID-19 has changed a lot of what we do but please do not let it keep you from getting the critical care you need.

Hospital

60 Seconds:

Hi, I am **INSERT ADMINISTRATOR/CEO NAME, TITLE, INSTITUTION NAME** and I want to thank you all for expressing your support and gratitude for our healthcare workers in the battle against COVID-19. Our team has been amazing in addressing the unique challenges presented by this pandemic. But we also want to make sure that you are getting the care you need for non-COVID related health issues such as **INSERT CONDITION(S)**. Many serious conditions, such as these, can be treated successfully if there is not a delay in getting care. Our hospitals, clinics and emergency rooms are open and taking every precaution to ensure your visit with us is safe. We are also offering video and telephone appointments. And as always, in case of an emergency, please dial 9-1-1. COVID-19 has changed a lot of what we do but please do not let it keep you from getting the critical care you need. For more information, please visit **INSERT WEBSITE**.



PATIENT SOCIAL POST TEMPLATES

Option 1

We at **HOSPITAL NAME** are taking extreme caution when serving our patients. Don't delay seeking medical care for heart conditions. Contact us at **CONTACT INFO** to schedule an appointment.

Option 2

Don't become the collateral damage of COVID-19 by delaying seeking cardiac care for heart problems. We at **HOSPITAL NAME** are taking all precautions to support non-COVID patients. Schedule your appointment today by **CONTACT INFO**.

Option 3

When it comes to preventing heart attacks, COVID-19 fear can be fatal. Don't delay seeking medical care during a medical emergency. We at **HOSPITAL NAME** are prepared to safely serve all patients.

Option 4

We recognize patients may be nervous to seek medical care at a hospital during the COVID-19 pandemic. But we at **HOSPITAL NAME** have implemented various measures to ensure safety of all patients. Don't delay seeking medical care when needed.

Option 5

Cardiac care cannot stop, even during a pandemic. We want to assure our community that physicians and staff at **HOSPITAL NAME** are prepared to safely provide cardiac care to patients who need it.

Option 6

From telehealth video chat to in-person visit with us, we at **HOSPITAL NAME** are taking all precautions necessary to provide critical care to our patients during the COVID-19 pandemic. To schedule heart procedures, call us at **CONTACT INFO**.

Option 7

If your procedure was postponed due to COVID-19, now is a great time to reschedule it. We at **HOSPITAL NAME** are taking all safety and cleanliness precautions to provide best medical care to our patients. Don't delay seeking urgent care and schedule your follow up with us today.



DIGITAL AD TEMPLATES

Option 1

Don't let COVID19 keep you from getting the care you need.
Our office(s) is/are safe and your care team is ready to help.
CONTACT US TODAY > [link to website](#)

Option 2

The Doctor is in...
In-person, virtual, and telephone consultations are now available.
Your health matters. Set up your appointment today > [link to website](#)

Option 3

This doctor makes house calls
Virtual and telephone visits now available for just **\$XX**.
SCHEDULE TODAY ([link to website](#))





WEBSITE COPY

Header: **In-person, video and telephone visits are available!**

HOURS OF OPERATION

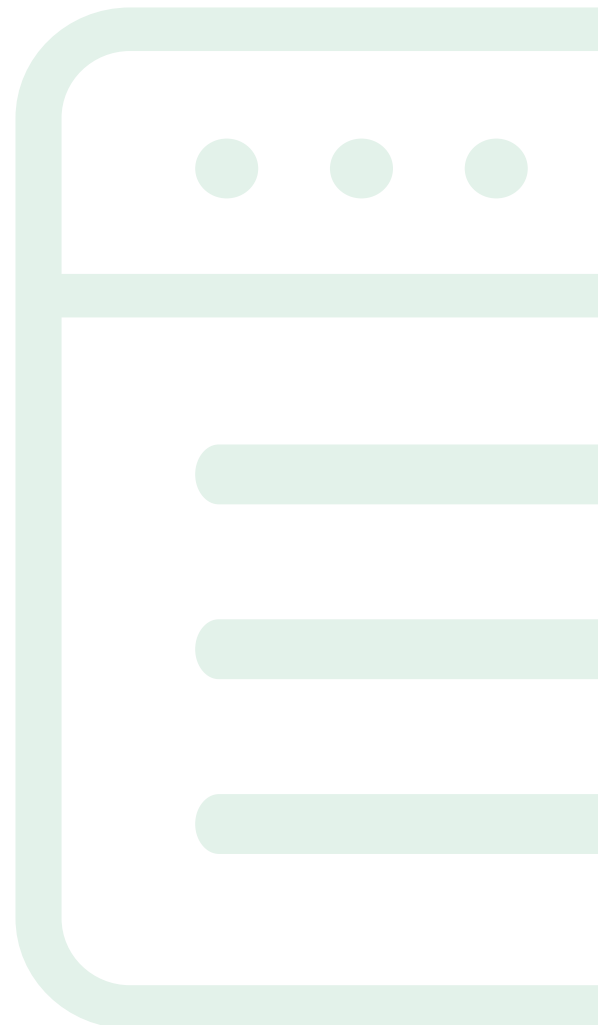
PHONE NUMBER

Body:

As your **INSERT SPECIALTY** health care team, we want to thank you for your support as we navigate these unparalleled changes in healthcare. While a lot has changed, there is one thing that hasn't: our commitment to you and your wellbeing.

Our offices are open, and our physicians are available to see you, both in person and virtually.

During these uncertain times, we know that you may have questions about your current state of health, status of your procedure and the safety of coming into our office. To help you get the answers you need, our **STAFF** are available at **NUMBER** and they are ready to address all your concerns. They can also help schedule your appointment in order to ensure you are getting the care you need.





FREQUENTLY ASKED PATIENT QUESTIONS

Facility Status and COVID-19 Infections

1. Is your site open? For what types of visits?

Insert your practice's response here

Yes, even in this time of uncertainty, our practice is a place for hope and healing—and we're delivering the care you need. We're safely treating all patients, both in person and through virtual visits, in adherence with federal and state executive orders and guidance. We welcome both new and existing patients for in-person and virtual care.

2. If the site has been closed, when do you plan to re-open? What guidance are you following to make these decisions?

Insert your practice's response here

We plan to re-open once we have ample supplies of personal protective equipment (PPE) and full support for COVID-19 testing in adherence with federal and state executive orders and guidance.

New Safety Precautions and Patient Expectations

3. How are you screening patients for COVID-19?

Insert your practice's response here

We are screening all patients for symptoms and possible COVID-19 exposure via a door screening process where you'll be asked a series of COVID-19 screening questions and take a temperature check before entering our buildings.

4. What are your new precautions to minimize risk of COVID-19 transmission?

Insert your practice's response here

When you visit, you'll notice:

- Strict limits to the number of people on campus
- Carefully monitored entrance points
- Screening of all patients for symptoms and possible COVID-19 exposure before entering our buildings
- Universal masking required for all patients, visitors and staff
- Waiting areas arranged for social distancing
- Enhanced cleaning of exam rooms and equipment after each patient
- Frequent deep cleaning of other clinic spaces

FREQUENTLY ASKED PATIENT QUESTIONS (CONT'D)



5. How should patients check in for their appointments?

Insert your practice's response here

When you arrive, our staff will welcome you at your designated entrance. They'll guide you through our door screening process, including:

- COVID-19 screening questions
- A temperature check

If your door screening goes smoothly, you'll be reminded of important clinic safety guidelines, including use of masks, social distancing and visitor policies. Then, you can head to the floor for your appointment. If any symptoms or questions come up during your door screening, you'll meet with a nurse right away for additional screening and testing for COVID if needed.

6. Are patients and visitors required to use masks?

Insert your practice's response here

We require all patients, visitors and staff to wear a face covering or mask while on our campuses to guard against COVID-19 transmission. Please bring your own face mask or covering with you.

7. How are you enabling social distancing measures within your office?

Insert your practice's response here

Our staff has taken special precautions to protect you in all waiting areas. You'll see:

- Extra supplies of hand sanitizer available to all
- Masking and social distancing guidelines posted and monitored by staff
- Seating arranged and marked to promote social distancing
- Robust cleaning and sanitizing practices
- Separate waiting areas for visitors with possible COVID-19 exposure

8. Will staff be required to take training related to these social distancing measures?

Insert your practice's response here

We take patient and staff safety seriously. We have detailed and thorough plans for patient care and protecting staff. Our healthcare staff at all locations have been trained and are prepared to care for patients and keep them safe from further infection.

9. Are you offering hand sanitizer or disinfectant wipes? Are you requiring patients to use these upon entry?

Insert your practice's response here

Extra supplies of hand sanitizer will be available to all patients, visitors, and staff throughout our offices. We are not requiring patients and visitors to use hand sanitizer upon arrival, but strongly encourage it along with frequent handwashing.

FREQUENTLY ASKED PATIENT QUESTIONS (CONT'D)



10. How are you physically separating patients with COVID-19 from those without?

Insert your practice's response here

We have completely separate designated waiting areas, offices and patient beds for visitors with possible COVID-19 exposure.

11. What PPE will staff be wearing?

Insert your practice's response here

A mask—N95 or better—and gloves.

12. What is your visitor policy?

Insert your practice's response here

Patients in the outpatient clinic may have only one individual accompany them, with consideration for special exceptions determined by patient care teams. Please leave children under age 13 in the care of someone else at home unless they are receiving care at the clinic.

Patients in hospital units and the emergency department may have only one person visit them during their hospital stay. Visitors will not be allowed if the patient has a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19.

- Exceptions may be made to allow more visitors for end-of-life care, hospitalized children, and other rare and unique circumstances.
- The visitor can come and go during approved visiting hours, but throughout the patient's stay, only one person can visit.

13. If a patient cannot have someone accompany them to a visit, can that person dial in to the visit?

Insert your practice's response here

We know that not having someone come with you can be an inconvenience and a potential source of stress. We are encouraging patients to have their care provider or loved one dial in during the visit. This can help answer questions and provide information that helps all members of your health care team.

Sources:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/principles-contact-tracing.html>

<https://www.telehealthresourcecenter.org/covid-19-resources/>

<https://health.usnews.com/conditions/articles/a-beginners-guide-to-a-virtual-doctors-visit>

<https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/telehealth-faqs-508.pdf>

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/covid-19>

FREQUENTLY ASKED PATIENT QUESTIONS (CONT'D)



14. How are you handling payment and appointment follow up?

Insert your practice's response here

We are following the Centers for Disease Control protocol in disinfecting our front desk area, including where we accept payments and co-payments. Our staff will be taking the necessary precautions set for handling payment methods, including disinfecting our credit card processors, pens, and writing surfaces.

15. Are you doing contact tracing?

Insert your practice's response here

In accordance to local guidelines and guidelines provided by the Centers for Disease Control for contact tracing, a core disease control measure employed by local and state health department personnel for decades, is a key strategy for preventing further spread of COVID-19. Should any of our patients be diagnosed with COVID-19, we will work with local health personnel to inform those who may have been exposed to the virus. We do this to ensure that those who may be in need of obtaining care can do so in a timely manner and self-isolate per established protocols.

Guidance on Telehealth Availability and Usage

16. Are telehealth services available for patients?

Insert your practice's response here

Video and phone visits can be great options for appointments before, after or in place of face-to-face care. Appointment coordinators will recommend a virtual or telephone visit if it best fits your individual needs.

17. Are all providers in the practice available via telehealth? If not, how will I know if my provider is available for telehealth?

Insert your practice's response here

All of our providers and nursing staff are available for telehealth visits. In addition to meeting with your physician, you may be scheduled to meet with our nurse practitioners.

18. How long will patients typically have to wait for a telehealth appointment?

Insert your practice's response here

The process and wait time is similar to scheduling an in-person visit. When we receive your appointment request, we will call you for scheduling. Appointments are made based on availability of your care provider and the time needed to provide you with focused care.

19. What types of services can be handled effectively via telehealth?

Insert your practice's response here

Almost any exam can be conducted via a virtual visit, but certain types of visits may be more effective via telemedicine such as new patient and follow up visits. If your treatment plan requires diagnostic testing and lab work, together, we will make the appropriate arrangements for next steps.

FREQUENTLY ASKED PATIENT QUESTIONS (CONT'D)



20. How can patients schedule a telehealth appointment?

Insert your practice's response here

Please contact our appointment scheduler as you normally would and request to set up a video visit with your provider. Following the set up of your appointment, we will provide you with detailed instructions that includes the time of your visit and detailed instructions for downloading the free, secure app we use for video visits.

If preferable, this visit can also be held over a phone call.

21. How long is a telehealth appointment and do patients need to do anything to prepare?

Insert your practice's response here

We allocate the same amount of time needed to address your needs whether in-person or via video visit and/or phone call.

It is important to prepare for this visit the same as if you were coming in to see us.

To maximize the effectiveness of your visit, please do the following:

- Fill out any paperwork or make sure what we have on file is up to date.
- Check with your insurance company to ensure coverage for your visit.
- Write down any questions or points you want to raise with your provider. Include symptoms, recent monitoring such as blood pressure or glucose levels and list of current medications. Keep your pen and paper nearby for new notes.
- Test your equipment by ensuring your phone sound is on and that your camera has access to the app you have downloaded.
- Plan where you want your visit to take place. This may be best in a private, quiet setting to minimize interruptions during your visit.
- Consider having someone else join you. It might be helpful to have a family member sit on the call with you to help take notes or to raise other concerns with the provider if you forget something.
- Minimize distractions so that you can give your provider your undivided attention. Shut off notifications on your cell phone and shut down apps that might create distractions or noise.

22. Once an appointment is scheduled, what will happen next? How do I know next steps for connecting with my provider at the time of the telehealth appointment?

Insert your practice's response here

Upon confirmation of your appointment, we will provide you with detailed instructions that includes the time of your visit and detailed instructions for downloading the free, secure app we use for video visits.

FREQUENTLY ASKED PATIENT QUESTIONS (CONT'D)



23. What digital platform is used for telehealth appointments? Will I need to download any software beforehand?

Insert your practice's response here

In order to ensure the privacy of your visit, we utilize **SYSTEM**, an encrypted video platform that works with both Android and Apple platforms as well as with your home computer. This service is like a phone call, but more secure and interactive. Once your appointment has been scheduled, we will send you detailed instructions on how to download and prepare for your virtual appointment.

24. How are telehealth appointments billed?

Insert your practice's response here

Due to the impact of COVID19, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has broadened access to Medicare telehealth services so that beneficiaries can receive a wider range of services from their doctors without having to travel to a healthcare facility. Many private insurers have also expanded what they'll cover related to telehealth. If you have any questions, please contact your insurance provider or contact our business office as we may be able to provide you with information.

Contact Us with Questions or Concerns

25. What are the various channels for getting in touch?

Insert your practice's response here

For any question regarding your care, please contact us at **INSERT NUMBER**. The prompts will guide you to the options for contacting our schedulers, nurse line and business office. You can also visit our website at **INSERT WEBSITE**. We are also on Facebook and Twitter **INSERT SOCIAL HANDLES**.

26. If patients' portals are an option, how can patients sign up for an account?

Please visit **INSERT LINK TO PATIENT PORTAL** to set up your account. Here you will be able to keep track of past appointments, view test results and keep track of future events. You can also use this portal to send private and secure messages to the staff who will then manage your inquiries as appropriate.

27. How long will it take to get a response?

Insert your practice's response here

Your health is our primary focus and therefore, we will contact you immediately if there is anything we need to discuss regarding the immediacy of your care. For questions about appointments, please contact us at **INSERT NUMBER** to speak with one of our schedulers. For inquiries submitted through our website, we try our best to respond to all patients within 24 hours for non-emergent responses.



FACT SHEET:

What Cardiovascular Disease Patients Need to Know About COVID-19

What we know:

1. Infection with the SARS-CoV-2, or novel coronavirus, can present with or without symptoms. People can transmit the virus even though they themselves have no symptoms. This is why social distancing measures are so important.
2. Most patients that develop the coronavirus disease, or COVID-19, have mild symptoms, while approximately 20% of people will require hospitalization.
3. The risk factors for becoming more ill with this infection include advanced age (more than 65 years old), diabetes, hypertension, and established cardiovascular or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.
4. Based on early studies, about 10% of patients with pre-existing cardiovascular disease (CVD) who contract COVID-19 will die, compared with only 1% of patients who are otherwise healthy. Increased risk has also been seen in people with high blood pressure (hypertension) and coronary artery disease (CAD), though it is not clear why?
5. Patients who currently have, or previously have had, cardiomyopathy (weakened heart muscle) appear to be at risk for abrupt worsening of the cardiomyopathy and/or return of it with SARS-CoV-2 infection.
6. The chance of death and/or hospitalization with this infection increases with age but it can impact adults at any age. Given the inability to recognize asymptomatic carriers, it would be wise to treat everyone as though they have the virus.
7. The most common presentation of COVID-19 is fever and cough (80%). However, about 10-30% of patients may present with cardiac problems with or without the pulmonary involvement. The **primary mechanisms** by which COVID-19 appears to impact the heart are:
 - a. Direct viral toxicity to the heart leading to a weakened heart muscle (acute congestive heart failure and/or cardiogenic shock)

- b. The negative impact of the bodies hyperimmune response on the heart (so-called cytokine storm)
- c. Induction of a supply-demand mismatch from the lack of oxygen that the virus is causing in the lungs as well as the marked increases in metabolic demand (increases in heart rate) such that the heart itself is not getting enough oxygen
- d. The impact of the stress of the infection causing a stress-induced cardiomyopathy (weakening of the heart muscle)
- e. Induction of electrical disturbances (arrhythmias)

8. Cardiac presentations in patients with COVID-19 include:

- a. Some COVID-19 patients appear to be having a heart attack as assessed by an electrocardiogram. Their electrocardiograms mimic a type of heart attack called ST segment elevation myocardial infarction (STEMI) which normally is caused by a blocked coronary artery. Instead, in these patients either due to the virus infecting the heart directly or the body's immune response there is marked inflammation of the heart muscle or the sac around the heart (pericardium), called myocarditis or myopericarditis (inflammation of both the heart and the pericardium). The electrocardiograms in these patients show changes suggestive of a major heart attack, and blood tests reveal elevated levels of troponin, a cardiac enzyme that is released when heart muscle is damaged. Deciphering between these is challenging as the treatment of myocarditis differs greatly (mainly supportive) from that of an abruptly occluded coronary artery (usually treated with placement of a stent or clot-busting medications).
- b. Weakening of the heart muscle abruptly which can lead to the heart being unable to pump effectively. This in turn leads to the buildup of fluid on the lungs (pulmonary edema) which can make the often concomitant COVID-19 pulmonary issues even harder to treat and/or diagnose. This abrupt deterioration of the heart's ability to pump results in a condition called acute systolic heart failure which in the most extreme of cases can lead to the inability to maintain a blood pressure adequate enough to perfuse the organs of the body, a condition called cardiogenic shock. The treatment for this condition is through the use of certain medications and/or devices to support the heart until it recovers.
- c. A weakened and/or inflamed heart muscle can result in electrical disturbances of the heart called arrhythmias. These can manifest by having too slow or too fast or a heartbeat leading to passing out, palpitations and or chest pain. Many of the drugs that are being used to treat COVID-19 may actually precipitate these arrhythmias, especially if you are already taking medications which may alter the hearts natural electrical system, specifically the QT interval. **You should not take medications such as hydroxychloroquine (plaquenil) or azithromycin (which have no documented benefit in COVID-19) without your physicians being aware** of this given the potential for drug side effects and drug-drug interactions.

Recommendations:

1. Perform **proper hand washing** with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
2. Adhere to **social distancing** and try to ‘shelter-in’ to limit exposure. Limiting face-to-face contact with others is the best way to reduce the spread of coronavirus disease.
3. **Wear a face covering out in public**, if possible. If you cannot obtain a face covering consider making one at home: [this is the CDC guidance](#) regarding non-medical face coverings and there are several excellent examples on YouTube as well.
4. **Patients with known heart disease should avoid close contact with children ages 18 and under**, because although children rarely develop serious illness from COVID-19, they may be asymptomatic carriers who can transmit disease to vulnerable family members. There are estimates that as many as 40-50% of those with Coronavirus may be asymptomatic.
5. If you have cardiac disease and/or high blood pressure, you may be on a class of medications called ACE inhibitors (drugs ending in the suffix -pril such as ramipril, lisinopril etc.) or ARBs (drugs ending in the suffix -artan such as losartan, irbesartan etc). There is a theoretical concern that these medications may increase your susceptibility to the virus however we have no data to suggest this actually occurs. As of today, there is insufficient evidence of either harm or benefit of ACE inhibitors/ARBs. The American College of Cardiology, American Heart Association, and Heart Failure Society of America therefore [recommend](#) **not to stop the use of ACE inhibitors or ARBs in patients already taking them.**
6. In addition to these recommendations, it remains vitally important to exercise (outdoors when possible while keeping safe distance from others), [get enough sleep](#), **manage stress**, and eat a **balanced diet**.
7. One of the unfortunate issues of the COVID-19 pandemic is the fact that it may be hard for patients to see their doctor for their regular cardiac care. Healthcare providers across the nation are trying to limit outpatient visits to prevent the transmission of the virus in the waiting room or to/from staff. Many physicians are performing telemedicine where patients can have a ‘virtual’ visit. For those unable to do virtual visits, many offices are offering telephone visits as well. Available at-home devices like a heart rate monitor, pulse oximeters and blood pressure cuffs can greatly assist healthcare providers in assessing patients current cardiovascular health as they provide concrete numbers by which cardiologists can make recommendations. All of these items are available at the local pharmacy or online. **Contact your doctor’s office immediately with any questions or concerns regarding your regular cardiac care.**
8. Patients who are experiencing symptoms should always **seek immediate medical attention.**

UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON OUR PATIENTS

Patients are nervous but want to complete planned procedures; seeking reassurance and clear direction from HCPs and facilities.

240 patients who had a scheduled procedure delayed or canceled due to COVID-19 were surveyed in May 2020 to better understand emotional impact, conditions for revisiting HCPs, expected timing and valued information sources.



GENERAL SENTIMENT



66%

are nervous or very nervous about visiting their HCP

76%

are nervous or very nervous about visiting a hospital or surgery center

74%

agreed/strongly agreed that they would have the procedure done soon if the hospital and doctor would allow

FREQUENCY & METHOD OF INTERACTION

95%

say method of their interactions have changed

85%

are interacting with physician less frequently than before COVID-19



48%

would prefer a telehealth visit by video to discuss COVID-19 impact on their health condition, while

31%

would prefer a phone call

ASSURANCES NEEDED TO RESCHEDULE

94%

believe their own physician is their most trusted source of healthcare information

36%

believe that financial assistance would help reassure them to complete their procedure



90%+

looking for reassurance that HCP office or hospital is clean and safe, and precautions are in place (i.e., PPE for all staff, social distancing, minimized wait times and separation of COVID-19 positive patients)

TIMING AROUND RESCHEDULING

90%

plan to reschedule or already have rescheduled their procedures

70%

were unclear on next steps to reschedule their procedure



Of those planning to reschedule,

77%

plan to do so within 6 months

98%

within 12 months



DIRECT MAILER – REFERRER LETTER

INSERT LOGO/LETTERHEAD HERE

Dear **REFERRER**,

We hope your practice has navigated the past few months safely and wanted to thank you for the care your team delivered during these difficult times. We are reaching out directly to share that **INSERT SPECIALTY** is seeing patients for **INSERT CONDITIONS**. We have made changes to ensure the safety of our patients and remain committed to providing the care our community needs.

Our offices are open, and our physicians are available to see patients, both in person and virtually. While we welcome telehealth visits, we are taking precautions to keep patients safe within our clinic by following the safety protocols established by the Centers for Disease Control in addition to our own stringent standards. We are:

- Performing routine deep cleaning
- Reconfigured our waiting area to conform with physical distancing
- Requiring masks to be worn by all individuals onsite
- Not allowing companions unless deemed an essential caregiver by staff

If you have any questions about our treatment approach or services we provide, our **TEAM** can be reached at **NUMBER**. We would be happy to discuss your referral needs in any level of detail.

Like you, we feel fortunate to be healthcare providers; it is a role we take very seriously. We are here for you and your patients and look forward to connecting soon.

Sincerely,

OFFICE/Dr SIGNOFF



TELEHEALTH TIPS FOR PATIENTS

Video and phone visits can be great options for appointments before, after or in place of face-to-face care. They allow you to connect directly with your provider without traveling or putting yourself or others at risk. This is especially important as we work together to reduce the impact of COVID-19 on our communities and healthcare providers.

Tip #1 – Determine if your provider offers telehealth, and if it is suitable for your medical concern.

Many providers and nursing staff are available for telehealth visits and scheduling is handled by the office or clinic directly. Not all appointments are suitable for telehealth and your provider will make the decision based on your individual health situation.

Tip #2 – Don't be afraid of technology! Telehealth apps have been designed specifically for patients.

After your appointment is scheduled, detailed instructions will be provided that include the time of your visit and how to download the free, secure application used to connect. When it is time for your appointment, simply follow the instructions to be connected directly to your provider. Any questions – just ask!

Tip #3 – Prepare for this visit the same as if you were coming in to see your provider in-person.

To make the most of your appointment, please do the following:

1. Fill out any paperwork or make sure what we have on file is up to date.
2. Check with your insurance company to ensure coverage for your visit.
3. Write down any questions or points you want to raise with your provider. Include symptoms, recent monitoring such as blood pressure or glucose levels and list of current medications. Keep your pen and paper nearby for new notes.
4. Test your equipment by ensuring your phone sound is on and that your camera has access to the app you have downloaded.
5. Plan where you want your visit to take place. This may be best in a private, quiet setting to minimize interruptions during your visit.
6. Consider having someone else join you. It might be helpful to have a family member sit on the call with you to help take notes or to raise other concerns with the provider if you forget something.
7. Minimize distractions so that you can give your provider your undivided attention. Shut off notifications on your cell phone and shut down apps that might create distractions or noise.

Telehealth may be different from the way you usually communicate with your healthcare provider, but it can be an easy-to-use, effective alternative.

If you have any additional questions about how telehealth appointments work or what type of appointments should be completed in-person, reach out to your provider directly at **PHONE NUMBER**.

LIBRARY OF PATIENT ADVOCACY RESOURCES



To support your patient outreach and/or to supplement your patient educational materials, here is a listing of resources from some of the leading cardiovascular patient advocacy groups.

Mended Hearts

We know that during this time of upheaval you may be experiencing a higher level of stress than normal. We know that some of you may also be feeling overwhelmed with the news and with being isolated. We, at The Mended Hearts, Inc., understand the importance of finding new ways to provide support and education in this time of crisis. We have been offering the gift of hope and support to heart patients and their families across the lifespan for almost 70 years, and we will continue to work at improving the quality of life for those we serve.

We wanted to share a few resources that are trustworthy and informative for you and your families. Please check back often as we will continue to update this page with the most up-to-date information from our partner organizations, as well as new support resources.

Please click [HERE](#) to find out what Mended Hearts and Mended *Little* Hearts are doing to protect our members and the communities we serve.

CardioSmart

If Your Heart Procedure Is Delayed

COVID-19, the disease caused by the new coronavirus, has put much of life as we know it on hold. For many people, including those with heart disease or other conditions, the virus also has delayed some tests and procedures.

As the number of COVID-19 cases begins to drop in communities, hospitals and clinics are starting to resume non-urgent testing and procedures. But it's not business as usual. They are reopening in ways to protect you and the people who will care for you.

While you wait, watch for any signs that your condition is getting worse. If your symptoms change, call your health care team right away. This information could affect the decision to postpone a test or procedure.

Talk to your health care professional if you have concerns.

Infographic to use with patients: <https://www.cardiosmart.org/~media/Images/Infographics/Coronavirus-and-Your-Heart-Coping-With-Postponed-Procedures.ashx>

American Heart Association

Coronavirus (COVID-19) If you need current, science-based information about the COVID-19 pandemic, we're here available to help via live chat or call our Customer Service at 1-800-242-8721 (LIVE CHAT Featured)

5 reasons hospitals are safe for heart, stroke emergencies—even in the pandemic

Although COVID-19 has changed the world, it hasn't changed the fact that hospitals are the safest place to be if there's a heart attack, stroke or other medical emergency. <https://www.heart.org/en/health-topics/dont-die-of-doubt>

LIBRARY OF SOCIETAL STATEMENTS AND RESOURCES



Safe Reintroduction of Cardiovascular Services from North American Society Leadership:

NEW – June 8, 2020 Publication Date

Presidents from 15 North American professional societies offer guidance on the safe reintroduction of cardiovascular services during the COVID-19 pandemic. Authors include HRS Immediate Past-President, Andrea M. Russo, MD, FHRS and HRS 2nd Vice President, Andrew D. Krahn, MD, FHRS.

<https://caic-acci.org/covid-19-resources/>

American College of Cardiology (ACC)

The COVID-19 pandemic has and will continue to take its toll on clinicians and the health care system. Each day brings new discoveries—provoking more unanswered questions and posing unprecedented challenges.

To support the health care community through this time, ACC has created a **FREE** weekly virtual meeting—*Summer COVID-19 Education Series*. This weekly series, **occurring each Thursday starting at Noon (ET)**, is designed to provide the health care community with actionable insights and solutions that will address key clinical and operational concerns and challenges now and into the future.

Cardiovascular Research Foundation (CRF)

CRF is committed to serving the needs of the cardiovascular community during this challenging time. As part of these efforts, TCTMD has put together several educational resources for healthcare professionals around the world, including: free access to TCTMD, COVID-19 Hub, educational webcasts, and patient resources.

<https://www.crf.org/covid-19-resources>

Society for Cardiovascular Angiography and Interventions (SCAI)

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to ravage the nation with over one million confirmed cases in the United States. Although the curve appears to have flattened, the impact of this pandemic on our cardiac patients is becoming increasingly apparent. We are now learning that the fear of exposure to COVID-19 has resulted in patients avoiding hospitals and clinics, even when they have significant and potentially life-threatening cardiac symptoms. In an effort to reserve resources for COVID-19 patients, elective cardiovascular procedures were delayed, creating another layer of risk for the patients who otherwise would have been treated. Throughout the country, plans for reinstating health care are being developed, and as we resume clinical cardiovascular care delivery in a new era, we must do so safely for our patients and health care workers.

<http://www.scai.org/covid-19-resources>



Online Resources

American Hospital Association (AHA)

- [Updates and Resources on Novel Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)

AMA Resource Center for Physicians

- [COVID-19: Recommendations for Pursuing Liability Protections Through State Action](#)

The American College of Surgeons

- [Information for Surgeons](#)
- [Guidance for Triage of Non-Emergent Surgical Procedures](#)
- [ACS Surgeon Well-Being Index](#), a free resource to Fellows, Associate Fellows and resident surgeons in the United States and Canada, and much more
- [Joint Statement: Roadmap for Resuming Elective Surgery after COVID-19 Pandemic](#)
- [Local Resumption of Elective Surgery Guidance](#)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

- [CMS Letter to Clinicians Summarizing CMS Actions](#)
- [CMS Recommendations on Adult Elective Surgeries, Non-Essential Medical, Surgical and Dental Procedures During COVID-19 Response](#)
- [CMS Recommendations on Non-Emergent, Elective Medical Services and Treatment](#)
- [CMS Partner Toolkit](#), including:
 - Emergency Declaration Health Care Providers Fact Sheet (PDF)
 - General information and updates
 - Waivers
 - Guidance for health care providers and facilities, for labs and for PACE organizations
 - Billing and coding guidance, and more

FDA Press Announcements

- [FDA Guidance for Conducting Clinical Trials](#)
- [FDA Allows Expanded use of Devices to Monitor Patients' Vital Signs Remotely](#)

National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute

Public Health Agency of Canada

The U.S. Government, [coronavirus.gov](https://www.coronavirus.gov)

U.S. Food & Drug Administration

World Health Organization

Your State Public Health Website

MANUFACTURING QUALITY LETTER FROM BOSTON SCIENTIFIC TO CUSTOMER



June 17, 2020

Dear Valued Customer,

We hope you are doing well under the circumstances. We recognize you are likely receiving different and/or more detailed questions from patients as a result of COVID-19 concerns.

Should you receive any questions about the potential for virus transmission through the use of Boston Scientific medical devices, below please find a letter you can share with your patients.

We developed this letter after recently surveying U.S. patients who had a surgical or medical procedure canceled or delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic to better understand what information they were seeking as they looked to reschedule postponed procedures. More than one-half (54%) of survey respondents were interested in communications from manufacturers of their devices. Notably, patients were seeking assurances about the safety of the medical device(s) to be used in their procedure, particularly around virus transmission.

We hope the below letter will be useful to you in addressing patient concerns. Please let your local sales representative or our customer service team know if you have additional questions.

Thank you for your commitment to advancing patient care.

Kind regards,
Your Boston Scientific team

MANUFACTURING QUALITY LETTER FROM BOSTON SCIENTIFIC TO CUSTOMER (CONT'D)



Dear Patient,

We care deeply about your health and safety and want to ensure that you feel confident about the safety and sterility of our devices, particularly at a time when there are heightened concerns about the spread of coronaviruses. To that end, below please find answers to commonly asked questions as it relates to COVID-19 and our medical devices.

With COVID-19, how are you keeping your work environment safe?

In addition to our normal cleanroom manufacturing standards – which reduce contamination risk and control environmental factors like temperature and humidity – we have changed the way our global workforce operates, including prioritizing on-site presence for employees who make our medical devices. We have also added more thorough and more frequent cleaning measures, increased distance between employees at their workstations, instituted daily on-site temperature screenings and required all on-site employees to wear face masks.

Can COVID-19 be transmitted on a medical device?

There is no evidence that COVID-19, which is spread from person to person via respiratory droplets, could be transmitted via a medical device. In addition to knowing the virus has poor survivability on most surfaces, it's important to know that our devices that are implanted or come in contact with patients also go through a comprehensive sterilization process after manufacturing. This process is overseen by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and is completed before a device is packaged and shipped to healthcare centers around the world.

You may rest assured that our innovative medical devices continue to be held to the highest quality and production standards which enable us to help millions of people around the world live healthier lives.

Kind regards,
Your Boston Scientific team



MEDIA PITCH EMAIL TEMPLATE

SUBJECT: Interview Opportunity: Leaders at **INSTITUTION NAME** urge heart patients to seek care

OR (if a patient story is available)

Interview Opportunity: Local heart patient speaks about importance of seeking care despite COVID-19

REPORTER NAME,

A recent survey conducted by the Society for Cardiovascular Angiography and Interventions found that most Americans' fear of contracting COVID-19 would stop them from going to the hospital during a medical emergency.¹ Further, nearly 80% of patients surveyed largely described themselves as "nervous" or "very nervous" about in-person visits with a cardiologist in today's COVID-19 environment despite the fact that heart disease remains the number one killer of Americans today.²

How long we will continue to feel the effects of COVID-19 is uncertain, but the need to address signs and symptoms of heart attacks or strokes is vitally important today. **INSTITUTION NAME** wants to patients to know they are taking every precaution possible to ensure their facility is safe and that they have significant measures in place to mitigate the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Please let me know if I can help facilitate an interview with **DR. NAME/HOSPITAL ADMINISTRATOR NAME** who can talk more about the safety protocols **INSTITUTION NAME** has put in place and the important steps individuals should take when symptoms of a heart attack or stroke arise. **ADD IF PATIENT STORY IS AVAILABLE:** Additionally, I am happy to put you in touch with **NAME OF PATIENT** who sought care despite the risk of contracting the virus and is now speaking out to raise awareness about the important of getting treatment for serious heart conditions as soon as symptoms.

Best,

NAME AND CONTACT INFORMATION

1. SCAI Consumer Survey, May 2020.

2. Boston Scientific Corporation, Patient Hesitancy Insights Survey, May 2020.



MEDIA OUTREACH GUIDE

Below are some tips for contacting reporters who may be interested in writing about the steps you are taking to ensure patient safety during COVID-19.

When to Reach Out to Reporters

- When you are ready to share information about the measures your institution has implemented to mitigate the risk of spreading COVID-19 to patients who are seeking care at your facility.
 - It is important to ensure you have a knowledgeable spokesperson who can speak confidently about the changes your institution has implemented and about the signs and symptoms of heart disease that patients should be mindful of.
 - Media are often most interested in a story when you can put them in contact with local patients who can make the story come alive by providing interesting or unique perspectives. Please consult with your privacy team about obtaining patient consent before sharing the patient's name with the media.

How to Contact Reporters

- Make a list of media contacts at your local print and online newspapers and TV and radio stations and update it periodically.
 - Include such information as the reporter's beat (i.e., topics he/she typically covers). Medical, health and science editors/reporters and feature editors/reporters are typically most interested in healthcare stories.
 - If you cannot reach the editor or reporter, call the general number and ask for the assignment editor who will direct you to the best contact for the story angle.
- The best way to identify local reporters is to follow the news. Watch local TV, listen to the radio and read the local newspaper to identify the reporters who cover the kind of medical stories or community most relevant to your practice and your patients.
- Do online research. Nearly all newspapers, television and radio stations have a website with general contact information.



MEDIA OUTREACH GUIDE (CONT'D)

Pitch Email

- A pitch email is targeted to a specific media contact and offers news, or a story idea tailored to the reporter's interests, media outlet and its audience.

Additional Tips

- Call the reporter within a day of sending the pitch email to gauge their interest level.
- Email the information to a reporter—don't send an attachment unless the reporter has requested it.
- Be persistent, but polite. If a reporter declines your story, ask them if it's okay for you to stay in touch in case anything changes.
- Consider linking your message to your hospital website or other credible, related resources.





MEDIA TALKING POINTS

Social Distancing Means Nothing to Heart Disease

Below are some current stats and facts that can be worked into your spokesperson's interview/dialogue with media and others. It is important to schedule time with your spokesperson, to review the interview guidelines as well as the approved talking points for your center.

External market research shows patients are afraid to see their healthcare providers face-to-face for fear of contracting COVID-19. Prescriptive and personalized patient communication may help allay fear and promote access to care

Situational Overview Messages (problem statement):

- Most Americans report fear of contracting COVID-19 would stop them from going to the hospital during a medical emergency.¹
- Cardiac care cannot be ignored, even during COVID-19 and fear of visiting a hospital can be fatal
 - Hospitals nationwide have seen up to a **60% reduction** in admissions for heart attacks.¹
 - Hospitals performed 38% fewer life-saving procedures to reopen a blocked cardiac artery after a heart attack in March 2020 than in previous months.¹
 - More than 50% of Americans said they were more afraid of contracting COVID-19 than having a heart attack.¹
- Despite the fact heart disease is still the number one killer of Americans, nearly 80% of patients surveyed largely described themselves as “nervous” or “very nervous” about in-person visits in today's COVID-19 environment.²

Opportunity Overview Messages (the importance):

How long we will continue to feel the effects of COVID-19 is uncertain, but the need to address signs and symptoms of heart attacks or strokes is vitally important today. Our center is committed to empowering individuals to seek care for their cardiovascular issues. We acknowledge the seriousness of today's healthcare challenges and have significant measures in place to mitigate the dangers of COVID-19. Additionally, we are delivering transparency around the new patient experience and what patients can expect when returning to our center.



MEDIA TALKING POINTS (CONT'D)

Disease State Overview Messages

Coronary Artery Disease

If people are feeling more light-headed, short of breath or fatigued than normal, and are over a certain age, these could be signs of coronary artery disease (CAD). This condition could also present no symptoms, making it even more important for these individuals to talk with their doctor. CAD patients can live healthy lives, but it starts by getting informed about their condition and taking steps to get on the right path to feeling better.

Severe Aortic Stenosis

Severe aortic stenosis is an age-related, progressive disease. In the earlier stages, many people don't experience symptoms. As the severity increases, the most frequent symptoms include shortness of breath, chest pain, pressure, or tightness, feeling light-headed or dizzy, and fatigue with activity. Severe aortic stenosis is a life-threatening condition. It's important for individuals to talk with their doctor to discuss symptoms of and treatments for severe aortic stenosis.

1. SCAI Consumer Survey, May 2020.
2. Boston Scientific Corporation, Patient Hesitancy Insights Survey, May 2020.



MEDIA INTERVIEW GUIDE

Media interviews are usually quick, which means there is a short window of time to deliver information. Below you will find helpful ideas to ensure your spokesperson gets your message across when speaking with the media about the need for patients in your community to re-engage with you for their cardiovascular care.

Delivering Your Message

- Be proactive
 - Know what you want to accomplish in the interview and lead the conversation. Don't wait for the reporter to guide you through your story. Deliver your messages early and often. Use bridges to get back to the points you want to make.
- Use flags
 - Phrases such as "What's most important..." and "The key thing is..." and "There are three critical factors..." signal to the audience that you're about to say something important.
- Build bridges
 - Building bridges is one of the most important interview techniques. Often a reporter will ask you a question that may not allow you to dive right into your message. Don't just answer his or her question; find a way to go beyond the answer.

* Please note – **NOTHING** is off the record.

Ways to Bridge

- **ADDRESS** the immediate question (without echoing negative language)
 - "Not at all..."
 - "On the contrary..."
 - "I wouldn't phrase it that way..."
 - "That hasn't been my/our experience..."
- **BRIDGE** to a key message
 - "...but what I can tell you is..."
 - "...the important issue here is..."
 - "...the point I want to get across is..."
 - "...the most important thing to note is..."
 - "...the answer to the question I think you're asking is..."
- **DELIVER** the key message
 - Bridging can also be used to provide additional information
 - "You're absolutely right to say that, but there's another aspect to this that people may not realize..."



ADVERTISING GUIDE (PRINT & DIGITAL)

Patients who have canceled or delayed their healthcare procedures due to COVID-19 are uncertain of when or whether to reschedule with their physicians or specialists. If your facility is ready to accommodate patients, reaching out to them with timely guidance of how to reschedule cancelled procedures is crucial for their health.

One way to effectively communicate with patients is to use advertisements, both in digital and print formats

Benefits of Advertising and When to Do It

- Supplements and boosts organic efforts to drive action and generate additional awareness.
- If you're unfamiliar with this practice, leverage media planners and buyers to pull together the appropriate plan for your advertising goals

Print Ad Buy Considerations

- Determine which print medium would have the best reach for your message: newspaper, magazine, or trade publications
- Consider circulation and impressions: How many people is the publication distributed to and how many view the publication.
 - This allows you to calculate your CPM (cost per thousand) and how you can demonstrate ROI
 - Local vs. community vs. regional vs. national publication – what makes the most sense
- Review editorial calendars: publications should have editorial calendars published to show what topics will be covered so you can align your message with the appropriate content, maximizing effectiveness and relevance.
- Determine appropriate ad classifications up front (is space sold by column inch, predetermined ad sizes, etc.).
 - Remnant ad buys: always ask if there is discounted space for ad space that has not sold.
- Negotiate rates from the rate card – often (especially for newspaper advertising) this is a possibility.
- Once ad space is purchased, ensure you know proper specs and request proof samples from publication when the ad has run.



ADVERTISING GUIDE (PRINT & DIGITAL) (CONT'D)

Digital Ad Buy Considerations

- Determine your organizational goals/metrics
 - Determine what your objectives are for digital advertising, align your organizational goals to your strategy, how they will be measured, and what ROI looks like for your business.
- Determine personas/target market
 - Think of age, gender, locations, demographics, etc.
- Consider buyer journey details
 - Awareness, consideration, decision – different content, landing pages, and ad messaging will be used depending on who is being targeted and where they are in the buyer journey
- Determine campaign goals
 - How much do you want to spend? Where are you sending them (landing pages)? How will you be tracking ROI (analytics, trackable links, etc.)?
- Determine SEO strategy
 - As traffic increases, so will SEO – optimizing websites and landing pages with a keyword strategy will increase organic/free traffic alongside paid efforts
- Determine channel(s) for advertising
 - Display/banner ads (Which ad network will you use for ad space?), SEM (Google Keywords), and paid social (LinkedIn, Facebook, etc.)
- Display/banner ads
 - Determine which AD Networks that you will use for AD space, (e.g., Google Ads, BuySellAds, Medianet, etc.)
 - Determine which banner ad sizes* you will utilize.
- Determine ad types and messaging:
 - What type of ads will you use (video, still banners, flash banners, etc.)? What will the ads say? What are the (compelling) CTAs? A/B testing ads/landing pages, etc.)
- Follow the method of implement, monitor, measure, adjust
 - Implement campaigns – once all details are determined it's go time. Continuously monitor activity and measure results (CTR, CPA, CPL, CPC, CPM). Adjust campaigns/ads accordingly.
- Determine what happens next:
 - What is the plan for the leads? Will you be re-targeting visitors who come and leave without



taking action?

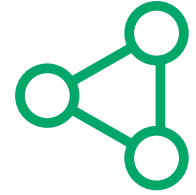
ADVERTISING GUIDE (PRINT & DIGITAL) (CONT'D)

Top-performing ad sizes:

- 300 x 250 – Medium rectangle
- 336 x 280 – Large rectangle
- 728 x 90 – Leaderboard
- 250 x 250 - Square
- 300 x 600 – Half page
- 320 x 100 – Large mobile banner

Broadcast Ad Buy Considerations

- Radio stations provide direct access to key markets—specific to your target audiences. The station from which you are purchasing media should be able to provide a media kit with access to their key demographics, audience insights, and programming schedules. Make sure you are considering the radio station format (type of programming, style of announcers) as that format will determine the audience the station appeals to, along with stations that might be specific to your demographic (Spanish-speaking, hip-hop, news, etc.). Some common descriptors are:
 - Top 40
 - All talk
 - Progressive rock
 - Oldies
 - Classical
 - Adult contemporary
 - Hip hop
 - Easy listening
- Length of spot (:15, :30, :60)
- Frequency of the ad broadcast (how many times will it run) and dayparts in which your ad will run
 - Dayparts are usually broken up as follows:
 - AM Drive Time: 6 a.m.–10 a.m. (most listeners, and receptive listeners)
 - Midday: 10 a.m.–3 p.m. (loyal listeners that you can easily build awareness with)
 - PM Drive Time: 3 p.m.–7 p.m.
 - Evening: 7 p.m.–midnight
 - Late Night: midnight–6 a.m.
 - Morning and evening drive times are most expensive, but this may not be the ideal time for your audiences
- Production on radio spots:
 - Consider VO talent and need for background music, sound effects, etc



SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNEL GUIDE

Social media can be a powerful tool for getting the word out about the importance of having patients re-engage with you for their cardiovascular care. Whether it's to share important COVID-19 updates or to inform people how to schedule an appointment—social media provides a direct connection to your target audiences.

Determine Your Organizational Goals/Metrics

Determine what your objectives are for social media, align your organizational goals to your strategy, how they will be measured, and what ROI looks like for your business.

Determine Personas/Target Market

Think of age, gender, locations, demographics, etc.

Determine Appropriate Platforms Based on Targets.

Generally:

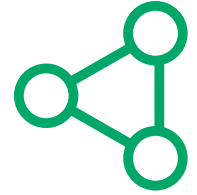
- Facebook/Instagram focus is patients/consumers
- Twitter/LinkedIn focus is physician/professionals

Determine and Obtain Appropriate Social Handles/Page Names

- Keep the names simple with relevant keywords. A consistent name across all channels is highly recommended and beneficial, but not necessary.
- Twitter handles are generally shorter, 15-character limit—using acronyms, if needed:
 - Example: @BostonSci
- Facebook handles are known as a “vanity URL:”
 - Facebook.com/YourBusinessUsername
 - Keep them short and focus on relevant keywords
- LinkedIn may be spelled out and designed as a “showcase page” but must be created by and tied to the main company page
- Instagram are limited to 30 characters; when setting up an account, set up as a business account

Determine Social Graphics and Bio for Each Platform

- Twitter: Profile photo, cover photo, bio
- Facebook: Profile photo, cover photo, bio, about section
- LinkedIn: Profile photo, cover photo, bio, about section
- Instagram: Profile photo, brief about section



SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNEL GUIDE (CONT'D)

Develop a Follower Acquisition Strategy

- Consider how you will make people aware of your new social media channels
- You can share information about the social channels in other communication avenues such as emails, website, newsletters, etc. and invite audience to follow your social channels for relevant updates
- Leverage social advertising to share your message and social page with relevant audiences

“Follower acquisition” is one of the objectives available within paid social media platforms. More information on advertising below.

Determine Competitor Research/Social Listening Strategy

- Set up a social listening strategy to keep an eye on industry trends, news, and what competitors are doing and saying to identify topics relevant to your audience
- You may use tools like Awario, Buzzsumo, Social Searcher, etc.
- Determine keywords that are most relevant to your organization: services offered, competitors, etc.

Create a Campaign Calendar

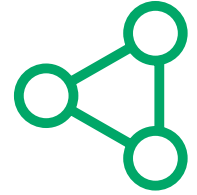
- Determine all relevant events, product launches, etc. over the upcoming 6-months (minimum) that you may create content around

Create Repository of Content

- Cadence is highly important in social media. Determine and create a minimum of 4 posts for each month (one per week) over a 6-month period.
- Determine voice/tone. Creative and engaging yet consistent messaging and visuals should be used.
- Leverage images, videos, GIFs, and other visual assets to make content more appealing to audience
- Use timely news and trends to share updates, such as awareness days/months
- Consider a repository of “evergreen” content to share as needed

Determine an Automation Platform

- Automation is convenient for social media. Utilize a social automation/management platform such as Hootsuite, Sprout Social, Pardot, Hubspot, etc.
- Upload and schedule out the 6-months’ worth of content to automatically post to your social platforms at the times determined



SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNEL GUIDE (CONT'D)

Continue Creating Content

- Continue to expand your content calendar and create content for > 6 months to ensure content is continually posting
- Do not forget to monitor your channels, responds to comments/messages, and keep an eye on social listening to make adjustments if necessary. It's best to respond to a comment within 24–48 hours.
- Reshare/retweet and amplify voices of physicians, organizations, or advocates relevant for your audience

Determine Social Advertising Strategy

- Once your social channels are up-and-running, you may begin social advertising.
- Depending on the platform, advertising will be unique related to cost and options. You will need to determine which platform and type of ad on each platform will be most effective based on your target market and goals.
- Determine your organizational goals/metrics: determine what your objectives are for digital advertising, align your organizational goals to your strategy, how they will be measured, and what ROI looks like for your business.
- Determine personas/target market: think of age, gender, locations, demographics, etc.
- Consider buyer journey details:
 - Awareness, consideration, decision—different content, landing pages, and ad messaging will be used depending on who is being targeted and where they are in the buyer journey.
- Determine campaign goals: how much do you want to spend? Where are you sending them (landing pages)? How will you be tracking ROI (analytics, trackable links, etc.)?
- Determine search engine optimization (SEO) strategy: as traffic increases, so will SEO; optimizing websites and landing pages with a keyword strategy will increase organic/free traffic alongside paid efforts.
- Determine ad types and messaging: what type of ads will you use (native posts/promoted posts [ads that look like social posts in consumers feed], video, banners, etc.)? What will the ads say? What are the (compelling) CTAs? A/B testing ads/landing pages, etc.
- Follow the method of implement, monitor, measure, and adjust: implement campaigns; once all details are determined it's go-time. Continuously monitor activity and measure results (CTR, CPA, CPL, CPC, CPM*). Adjust campaigns/ads accordingly.
- Determine what happens next: what is the plan for the leads? Will you be re-targeting?

*Measurement acronyms:

- Click-through rate (CTR)
- Cost per acquisition of customer (CPA)
- Cost per lead (CPL)
- Cost per click (CPC)
- Cost per 1,000 impressions (CPM)