**POLICY/PROTOCOL RELAYING FINDINGS OF DIAGNOSTIC TESTS**

**TO PATIENTS IN ADVANCE OF PHYSICIAN’S**

**REVIEW/COMMENTING ON NECESSITY OF**

**CARE**

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**From:** Jerry Orloff  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 28, 2014 3:48 PM  
**To:** Clinical

It is very important for all technical staff to be sensitive to patient concerns and to help our patients have a pleasant experience at each visit to one of our offices.

It is not uncommon for a patient to ask questions, such as:

1.       “*How did my OCT test (or any other test) turn out*?”

2.       “*Do you think that I will need another injection today*?”

It is of the utmost importance that your answer to questions like the two noted above be something very close to the following:

1.       “*That’s an excellent question, Ma’am/Sir.  When you see Dr. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, I am sure that he/she will review your test results in detail.”*

2.       “*Once Dr. Vaishnav/Dr. Ganiban has the opportunity to perform your examination, I’m certain that he will let you know if he believes another injection is necessary*.”

The reason that this email is being sent is that one patient recently left our office, went back to their referring physician and according to this physician, stated that while our doctor stated that everything appeared stable, the technician, after having performed an OCT stated that it “looked funny.”  This mixed message caused the patient a great deal of concern.  They ultimately drove to their family eye doctor’s office and explained this to the doctor who called us.  The patient was initially given a follow up appointment with Dr. Ganiban upon his return, but after the patient stated this, the referring doctor requested an immediate evaluation with Dr. Vaishnav.

One other circumstance involved a patient who asked a technician if they thought that our doctor would recommend an intravitreal injection.  According to our doctor, the patient stated that our technician stated that they probably would not need one.  This caused our physician to have to have a detailed discussion with the patient, explaining the difference between the technician’s opinion and his findings.

Both of these circumstance could potentially have been avoided if the advice above had been followed.

Going forward, please exercise great caution with regard to *independently*\* providing treatment advice or diagnostic test interpretation.  Doing so could result in unintended perceptions or outcomes.

It is frequently a part of the duties of many technical staff members to help explain the results of a test or a proposed treatment once one of our physicians has examined the patient and developed his or her findings and care plan.  In such cases our physician may instruct you to relay this information or provide a more detailed explanation.  There are other circumstances in which our physicians may direct that certain tests or explanations be given as part of your duties if certain criteria are met (i.e. hearing tests or explanation of premium lens implants to cataract patients).  This is perfectly acceptable.