

BUSINESS ADVICE: BUILDING YOUR LOW VISION PRACTICE

GROWTH

SIX QUICK WINS

There is a growing need for low vision services due to the ageing population, and in some areas there is also now funding for practices to provide low vision services. This can develop into a useful stream of income. Here are six ideas to help you grow your low vision business.

1. Think about setting up a window display that highlights the help you can offer people with low vision. Make your display Big, Bold and Bright to really raise the issue of low vision locally.
2. Communication is key to low vision work. Keep a thick black felt tip pen to hand. It is advised that you give out written guidance with any low vision equipment. While large print pre-prepared notes are ideal, hand written notes in a thick black pen can be accessed by a greater proportion people with low vision than those written in biro.
3. Research lamps and light bulbs. Increasing the power of light bulbs can make a person's home safer. Good task lighting can transform someone's ability to complete a task such as reading instructions on a packet or recipe. Keeping a small range of suitable lights in stock can provide an extra income stream for the practice too. If you don't have space, large print flyers with recommendations of where to source better lighting, online and locally, can be a way to provide help.
4. It is important to stock a range of hand magnifiers, stand magnifiers and telescope magnifiers as well as glare shields and tint demo lenses. Go to the Resources section to find out more about what ABDO recommends that you stock.
5. Every practice needs to consider electronic vision enhancement systems. Some handheld/pocket products are coming down in price and may be suitable to keep in stock. For more expensive equipment, ensure that you hold large print catalogues or use your computer screen/tablet to demonstrate what is on offer. Arrange with manufacturers to hold a demonstration event every year where you can invite patients with low vision into the practice. This can be a chance to offer a chat over coffee and cake and involve local support groups as well as giving you a way to showcase the more expensive and large-scale equipment that you can't keep in practice all the time.
6. Supporting people with low vision goes beyond magnifiers. Keep information leaflets in the practice on lighting, technology and group support, local and national. If you don't have any, ask a team member to compile a folder of contacts and resources. You could type up a large print sheet of phone numbers for your local societies and eye clinic liaison officer. Large print leaflets about eye conditions, benefits, housing, leisure, shopping and technology are available from RNIB. .