

## Adding Coaching To Your Practice...What You Need To Know

Counseling and coaching are two areas of professional expertise that can enhance the value of your healthcare practice but when considering whether to add in these components, there are certain steps that should be followed.

Remember that your practice has been built upon the integrity and value you provide to your patients. They have come to trust your professionalism and your ethics. Any therapy or counseling segment added on to your practice should live up to these standards or you could wind up losing patients instead of increasing your roster.

Given that, here are some steps to consider when adding a coach or counselor to your staff:

1. **Licensing:** To practice psychology, licenses are needed through the licensing board. Before adding a therapist/coach to your practice, research what is needed legally by the practice and make sure your future employee has received the proper licensing credentials.
2. **Marketing:** Through your website, in-office brochures and social media sites take advantage of the internet and all necessary forms of print media to advertise that your practice has added another component
3. **Vision/mission:** Coaching and therapy help patients achieve life goals and add to the theme of wellness that your practice is known for. How do you envision a counselor helping your clients to further achieve their goals? How will it enhance and complement your practice?
4. **Hours/availability:** Is there room for your therapist/counselor to work in-house, or will they do their work primarily from an out-of-office location?
5. **Gauge your patients' response:** Monitor your patients' reactions to the therapist to make sure they are receiving the wellness care that you had envisioned for them.
6. **Review Liability Coverage:** When adding on another professional you will also need to add them to your liability policy. It may be time to check into a group policy at the time you decide to grow.

No matter what you call it – therapy, counseling or coaching – your goal is to enhance the lives of your patients by providing another avenue from which they can benefit. Research all facets of adding this component to your practice to make sure it will offer the necessary value to both your practice and your patients.

