

By Cynthia Matossian, MD



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What's earned here, stays here

It's our practice administrator's job to ensure that our income isn't subject to theft or fraud. He shares his advice.

A practice that does not ensure its own security is inviting its own foreclosure. Yes, we are physicians first, but neglecting to protect our daily income, disregarding people's propensity to rationalize theft — "This doctor is rich!" — and otherwise ignoring the complexity of human nature is naïve and foolish. The point: While you could

the practice. I will let him tell you about our security measures.

RECONCILE, RECONCILE, RECONCILE

Before I came here, I held the same position at a Manhattan-based practice. By reconciling every day, we caught a long-time employee issuing \$1,500 in refunds to her credit cards. She paid us back the next day, so we didn't prosecute. It pained me because I had enjoyed a friendly professional relationship with her.

At Matossian Eye we reconcile every day. Dr. Matossian has written extensively about front-desk training in this space. At the end of the day, our front-desk staff must balance to the penny. Our billing department then verifies the total the next business day. We also have our front-desk staff cross-trained and often rotate them through our other practice sites.

HOW TO HIRE

Before I was hired, this practice ran a credit check on me.

Security must start at the top. When a practice hires a new administrator, it must do a stringent check. That includes criminal and credit. Both must be pristine. I don't think it pays to do a credit check on everybody, because certain pay grades aren't going to have 800+ credit scores.

But red flags can flap all over a resume. Be leery if you see or hear about:

- Overlapping dates on employment
- Inconsistent track records
- Downsizing. If the prospective employee wasn't asked to move to another spot or he 'downsized' on his own, that generally spells 'uncooperative' to me.

We call all references, all of which must be businesses. I ask about attendance, trustworthiness, character, the ability to work with patients and to complete tasks in a timely manner — all while paying attention to detail.

The person is then ranked on a scale of one to five. Below a four?

Not good enough. **OM**



not run your practice without your employees, it takes just one to run it into the ground.

This is why our practice administrator, Brad Botelho, also has responsibilities not unlike a police detective. While ensuring that our practice runs smoothly every day, he also safeguards that all monies earned by this practice stay in