

# Central Scheduling

## Lessons Learned Series

### *What really constitutes your incoming calls?*

In one study we performed for a central scheduling department, we observed 194 calls and discovered only 61% of the calls resulted in an appointment being made, changed or cancelled! What constituted the other calls? Some of the more common reasons are listed below.

#### **Reasons for No Appointments completed for an incoming call:**

Patient told to do something prior to appointment being able to set = 36%

- Verify the test/procedure w/the ordering MD
- Obtain insurance information/authorization/etc.
- Obtain personal/health information re: the patient

Transfer Callers to another department to complete the appt. = 24%

Caller confirming an appointment time = 13%

Caller confirming prep instructions = 8%

How many of your incoming calls result in a completed appointment? In this situation, the incoming call volume eventually becomes inflated since at minimum 36% of the 1<sup>st</sup> time callers have to call the department again to set an appointment. Of course, this department also incurred greater than a 20% abandonment rate. Historically, management struggled with the issue of adding resources which it never did while never really knowing what the staff was experiencing in poorly designed system/information requirements and poor outside department cooperation.