CLAIMS:

1. A system for managing a patient of a medical practice, the system comprising:

patient identification means,
a first database comprising patient-specific information,
a second database comprising practitioner-specific information,
a third database comprising appointment information,
a processor-based device in operable connection with the patient identification means and each of the first, second and third databases,
patient-viewable or patient-audible output means, and
patient-usable data input means

wherein the system is configured to:

(i) allow to a patient to confirm via the patient-usable data input means a preference for a practitioner or a practitioner characteristic, the preference having been previously stored in the first database, or
allow a patient to enter via the patient-usable data input means a preference for a practitioner or a preference for a practitioner characteristic, the preference having been previously stored in the second database,
and
(ii) output via the patient-viewable or patient-audible output means a proposed appointment time with a practitioner confirmed at (i), or a preferred practitioner or a practitioner having a preferred characteristic entered at (i), the proposed appointment time being identified by reference to appointment information having previously been stored in the third database.

2. The system of claim 1 wherein the patient identification means is configured to allow identification of the patient without the need for patient input.

3. The system of claim 1 or claim 2 wherein the patient identification means is capable of reading information from medical practice-issued identification means or third party-issued identification means.

4. The system of claim any one of claims 1 to 3 wherein the patient identification means is capable of reading information from a personal electronic device of the patient.

5. The system of any one of claims 1 to 4 wherein the information obtained from the patient identification means is transmitted to the processor-based based device, the processor based-device interrogating the patient database to retrieve patient-specific information.

6. The system of any one of claims 1 to 5 wherein the patient-viewable output means displays general and/or patient-specific information.

7. The system of claim 5 or claim 6 wherein the patient-specific information and/or general information relates to an appointment time, an appointment location, a practitioner identity, a practitioner characteristic, a patient preference, a fee, a suggested product or service, or a health alert.

8. The system of claim 5 or claim 6 wherein the patient-specific information relates to a patient name, a patient contact detail, or a patient health insurance detail,.

9. The system of any one of claims 1 to 8 wherein the patient-usable data input means, and wherein the patient-viewable output means is configured to display a question and the patient-usable data input means is configured to receive a response by the patient.

10. The system of claim 9 wherein the question is selected from a group of existing questions based on the patient identity and/or patient-specific information of the database.

11. The system of any one of claims 1 to 10 wherein the patient-usable input means and patient-viewable output means are configured to allow the patient to set a follow up appointment during or after a consultation.

12. The system of any one of claims 1 to 1 1 further comprising means for reading information from a document related to an ancillary medical or paramedical service.

13. The system of any one of claims 1 to 12 wherein the patient identification means is a configured as a kiosk located in a reception or entry of a medical practice, the kiosk comprising visual display means.

14. The system of any one of claims 1 to 13 comprising payment means.

15. The system of claim 14 when appended to claim 13 wherein the payment means in on, or proximal to the kiosk.

16. The system of claim 14 or claim 15 configured so as to receive a prepayment via the payment means.

17. The system of claim 16 configured so as to (i) store the prepayment electronically, (ii) allow a practitioner to enter a consultation charge, and (iii) calculating a total charge based on the amount of the stored prepayment and the consultation charge.

18. The system of any one of claims 14 to 17 configured so as to allow a practitioner to reverse, rebate or otherwise return the prepayment to the patient.

19. The system of any one of claims 1 to 18 comprising (i) printing means configured to issue an appointment document to the patient, and/or (ii) data transmission means configured to electronically transmit appointment information to a patient computer or a patient personal electronic device.

20. A method for managing a patient of a medical practice, the method comprising the steps of:

providing the system of any one of claims 1 to 19, and

instructing or allowing a patient to utilise the patient identification means.

21. Media comprising processor-executable instructions configured to operate the system of any one of claims 1 to 19, or the method of claim 20.

22. An electronic kiosk comprising patient identification means, the kiosk operable within the system of any one of claims 1 to 19, or the method of claim 20.