



# Employed vs Owning: Comparing Options for DPC

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# Learning Objectives

1. Analyze the key differences between being an employed physician and owning a Direct Primary Care (DPC) practice, with a focus on how each model impacts patient care and practice sustainability.
2. Explore the benefits and challenges of transitioning from an employed position to owning a DPC practice, informed by the speaker's personal experience, and how this shift can enhance patient-provider relationships.
3. Evaluate the financial, operational, and personal considerations involved in choosing between employment and practice ownership within the DPC model, and how each option influences the quality of care patients receive.



## INTRO

- Paths for Direct Primary Care Physician
- Owner
- Employed
- Differences:
  - Autonomy
  - Risk
  - Learning Curve
  - Income Potential
  - Work-life balance



# My DPC Journey

- Employed in 2-physician owner DPC clinic
- 2-year contract
- Contract extension negotiations become termination
- Open SparksMD Family Medicine
  - 1 Physician solo practice, Sole Owner
- 2.5 years, full panel, expansion vs closing panel?



## Employed DPC Experience

- Pros:
  - No overhead/risk
  - Salary stability?
  - Focus on patient care
  - Mentorship and time to learn
- Cons:
  - Limits to autonomy
  - Less say in growth/branding
  - Mismatch in vision/values



# Owning a DPC

- Pros:
  - Full control: hours, pricing, services, technology, office snacks
  - Brand control
  - Income potential, equity
- Cons:
  - Business risk/startup cost
  - Marketing, management, operational skills
  - Stress of ownership
  - So many hats to wear



## Comparison

Topic	Employed	Owner
Autonomy	✅ Limited	✅ Full
Risk	✅ Low	🚨 High
Learning curve	📘 Guided	🔥 Trial by fire
Income potential	💰 Fixed	📈 Variable
Work-life balance	👤 Depends	🔪 Unpredictable



## What I Wish I Knew...

- Timeline to sustainability
- Marketing never stops
- When to hire?
- Managing mental load/ multiple hats



## Keys to Success

- Know your personality and goals
- Vet the employer / owners
- Have a clear mission and boundaries
- Community resources



# How to Decide Which Path Is Right for You

- Do you want to run a business or focus on patient care?
- Are you risk tolerant?
- Timeline? Moonlighting vs savings vs startup loans?
- Prefer creative control?
- Prefer structure?
- Prior experiences?
  
- ***What is your why?***



## Takeaway

- Both paths honor the same mission: ***patient-first care!***
- Choose the one that aligns with your strengths and season of life



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*When playing as a slideshow, this slide will display live content*

## Social Q&A for Employed vs Owning: Comparing Options for Direct Primary Care



# QUESTIONS?

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