



Practice at the Top of your License

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Living Your Best Life: Practice to the TOP of your License

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Learning Objectives

1. Encourage Physicians to enter Private Practice to utilize all of their skills.
2. Educate employed physician on different areas of expertise they can branch out into.
3. Promote DPC as a way to enhance both physician and patient satisfaction by providing in house services.



Any attempt at reforming the current health care system should be focused on the Quadruple Aim:

- *lower cost*
- *improve patient experience*
- *improve health outcomes*
- *and improve clinician experience.*



Practicing at the Top of Your License

- You are a physician operating at the highest level of training and certification
 - Maximizing knowledge, skills, and expertise for optimal patient care
 - Utilizing every aspect of your training
 - Not referring out of office for procedures that you are trained in
 - Not referring out of office for medical cases that you should be educated on
- Delegating less complex tasks to lower-trained team members for efficiency
- Improving quality of care and patient outcomes



You CAN do this as an Employed Physician

- Difficult, but POSSIBLE
 - Complex patients need TIME, attention and ACCESS
 - Procedures take TIME, ACCURATE BILLING
- BOUNDARY SETTING, Ask for what you want:
 - Procedure days
 - Extended visits for specialty or complex patients
 - Accept pay differential for better job satisfaction
 - QUIT if the employer you work for does not value your skill set
- **What have you given up that you miss?**



What does this look like?

- SELF REFLECTION
 - Decide what you want your day to look like
 - Even seasoned physicians can change course
 - What do you need to have job and personal satisfaction
 - If you have given up a skill set that you want to use, go back to school
 - OMT, PROCEDURES, AESTHETICS
- Remember you have done amazingly difficult things that most people would never attempt!
 - YOU CAN DO HARD THINGS



DIRECT PRIMARY CARE

Promoting and training physicians to open doctor's offices based on memberships rather than insurance or bureaucrats.

DOCTOR PATIENT RELATIONSHIP

"Nothing is more personal, more private, and more important than the relationship between a doctor and their patient.

Healthcare costs involve 1/6th of the American economy.

Bureaucracies and corporate interests have encroached on the sanctity of this relationship for multiple generations."

_Doc4PatientCare



PERSONAL JOURNEY:

- Took every management opportunity offered in prior jobs, CHANGED OFTEN
- Lead Physician in multiple offices
- Active in community projects, ACOFP, FOMA, POMA, Health Policy Group
- Slowly Researched DPC for 7 years, Crash course Dec 2022 to open 2/1/23

BENEFITS:

- 2 year into DPC: job satisfaction, patient satisfaction—ACCESS, AFFORDABILITY, CARE
- Fulfillment in medicine, marriage, motherhood
- Consistent daily exercise
- Re-learned how to cook



Become your own boss? Without an MBA?

YES

- PODCASTS are your friend. EntreMD, BootstrapMD, MyDPCSTORY
- Before 2000 Most physicians were Owners/Entrepreneurs
- The rise in regulations convinced many of us that we could not keep up with administrative burdens (TRUE)
- Convinced that we would be “happier” as employees and JUST practice medicine, private clinics were absorbed by hospitals
- Over the past 2 decades physician leadership and autonomy has declined
- Physician suicide is up
- We were not meant to just be cogs in the system



Why autonomy matters

Breakdown of Physician Suicide Data

- The physician suicide rate is estimated at **40 per 100,000**.
- With about **985,000 active physicians**: 300-400 **physician suicides per year**
- Physicians are **1.5 to 3 times** more likely to die by suicide than the general population.

Comparison to General Population

- In the **general U.S. population**, the suicide rate is around **17 per 100,000**.
- In the US, you can call or text the [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](https://www.988lifeline.org) on 988, chat on [988lifeline.org](https://www.988lifeline.org), or [text HOME](https://www.988lifeline.org) to 741741 to connect with a crisis counselor.



What is DIRECT PRIMARY CARE FOR YOU

- **FINANCIAL: A DIRECT CONTRACT BETWEEN THE PATIENT AND THE PHYSICIAN**
 - MEMBERSHIP: monthly fee paid directly to physician
 - Simplified billing, pt knows all cost up front
 - Comprehensive
- **INDEPENDENT OF INSURANCE CONTRACTS**
- **FOSTERS A STRONG PATIENT:PHYSICIAN RELATIONSHIP**
 - Increased accessibility, continuity of care, and increased time with physician
- **CAN INCLUDE ANY SERVICES YOU WANT**
- **CAN BE TAILORED TO YOUR SCHEDULE AND SKILLS**



WHAT IS DPC for PATIENTS:

- **What is Direct Primary Care (DPC)?**
- A membership-based care model where patients pay a monthly fee directly to the physician.
- Focuses on personalized, comprehensive care
- No need for insurance billing
- Promotes a stronger physician-patient RELATIONSHIP
 - increased accessibility and time



BENEFITS FOR PATIENTS

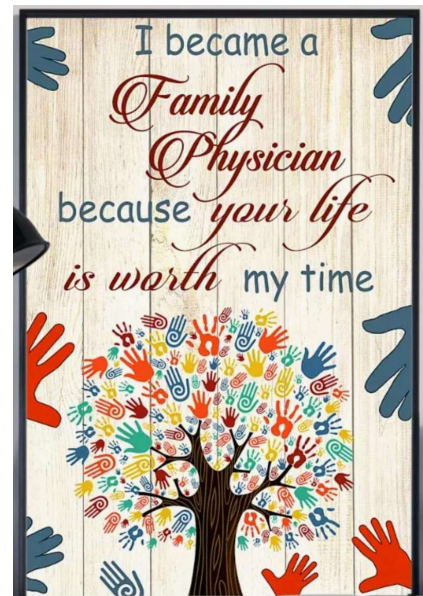
- **Affordable & Transparent Costs:** Monthly membership fees cover most primary care services with no hidden charges.
- **Enhanced Access:** Patients enjoy same-day or next-day appointments, longer visits, and access via phone, text, or email.
- **Preventive Care Focus:** More time for wellness, chronic disease management, and personalized health planning. Assistance with finding cost effective care.
- **Less Referrals**
- **Wider scope of practice**
- **Procedures at one location:** Osteopathic Manipulation, skin procedures, preventative care (GYN, Men's Health)



BENEFITS FOR PHYSICIAN

- **Reduced Administrative Burden:** No insurance billing means less paperwork and more time for patient care.
- **Improved Work-Life Balance:** Smaller patient panels (~300-600 pts) allow for more meaningful interactions.
- **Increased Professional Satisfaction:** Greater autonomy to provide care as you want
 - **Collaboration with you patient**

Practice to highest level of medical training



EXAMPLES OF COST SAVINGS WITH DIRECT PRIMARY CARE (DPC):

- **Lower Out-of-Pocket Costs:**
 - Monthly DPC memberships typically range from \$50–\$150, covering unlimited visits, preventive care, and many in-office procedures.
 - Avoids co-pays, deductibles, and other out-of-pocket costs associated with traditional insurance-based primary care.
 - Example: A patient with a chronic condition needing frequent visits may save hundreds annually compared to insurance co-pays and deductibles.
- **Avoiding Unnecessary Specialist Visits:**
 - Longer appointments and accessible care help resolve many issues in-house, reducing the need for referrals



QUICK FINANCIALS

PHYSICIAN:

- Compensation can be similar, provided the structure is done right.
- (\$80 per patient x 400 patients = \$384k/year)
- DEDUCT OVERHEAD = NET INCOME

FIRST 1-2 YEARS COULD RESULT IN A LOSS

- Most break even, slight positive

VALUE BENEFIT IN TIME AND AUTONOMY

PATIENT SAVING:

Discounted Medications and Labs:

- DPC practices can negotiate wholesale prices for medications and lab tests.
- Example: A patient PAYS \$36 for CBC, CMP, Lipid panel through DPC, instead of \$300-400 with insurance.
- TSH \$10- \$12 vs \$124 LAB insurance COST
- VIT D \$16- \$19 vs \$225



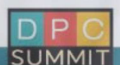
Practice to TOP OF YOUR TRAINING: Specialization and Expertise?

- You cannot become an expert in everything
 - (Yet as FM, we try!)
- Pick what you love.
- Your passion can be General and Community medicine
- You are doing enough by providing general services without adding a specialty
- Your expertise in medicine with your CURRENT DEGREE and training is ENOUGH
 - Do NOT need extra certificates in Lifestyle Medicine, Diabetes, Longevity
 - With your Osteopathic Medical Degree, you are ENOUGH



Adept at Procedures?

- ▶ Offer procedures you are comfortable with at the start, then grow your skills:
 - ▶ Osteopathic Manipulative Therapy
 - ▶ Joint injections, trigger points
 - ▶ Regenerative Med with PRP/Prolotherapy
 - ▶ GYN/OB care : IUD, colposcopy, deliveries
 - ▶ Podiatric care
 - ▶ Dermatology
 - ▶ Foreign body removal
 - ▶ Urgent care procedures: sutures, punch biopsy



- Take a Procedural medicine course or sign up for workshops (ACOFPP & DPC Summit)
- Youtube phlebotomy and IV refreshers (ACOFPP)
- Podiatry: Get a giant adjustable nail clipper (Amazon)
- Pediatrics: Ear Lavage for small beads in the ear



I Dislike Procedures, what can I add?

- **Fill Healthcare Gaps:**
 - Offer services in areas with long wait times for specialists
 - Areas that generally go untreated
- Allergy testing
- **Specialize in women's health:**
 - endometriosis, menopause therapies, pelvic pain
- **Psychiatric Assessments:**
 - ADHD assessments and treatment
 - Alcohol withdrawal, substance abuse programs
- Develop expertise in rashes, don't refer
- Tick-borne illnesses, and Lyme-associated diseases
- Endocrine focus: CGM, insulin pumps

Specialized Physical Exams

- Can offer one off appointments:
 - EHE or executive physicals
 - CDL (Commercial Drivers License)
 - Sports Med exams, work physicals
 - Aviation/Pilot Exams (FAA Certification)
 - Osteopathic Manipulative Treatments



You ARE an Expert!

- Like to teach?
 - Take on a student: High school, college, medical school, resident
 - Identify yourself as an expert and teach at local school, libraries
 - Apply to lecture at upcoming conventions
 - Some are volunteer, but most are paid positions



Business Strategies

Set dream hours without apologizing.

- Want to work just 4 days, or 3 full 2 half days– that’s great
- Make the numbers work

Planning for growth

- Implementing technology for efficient EMR and self-scheduling
- The right technology can take the place of an additional employee
- You don’t have to use the free version just because it is Free

Delegating tasks to optimize personal strengths and preferences

- Virtual assistant vs in office staff



Build the Dream Life: Tips

- You can serve a lot of patients while earning a good living
 - High cost, low volume
 - High volume, lower cost
- Do not apologize for your prices:
 - ADD A REGISTRATION FEE. Can waive it for a “discount” option
- Be consistent in your marketing
 - Put yourself out on social media regularly
 - Have fun
- Be confident that the skills you bring to the table are enough
- Start. Just start. You will never be 100% ready



What is a VA (Virtual Assistant)?

Medical Virtual Assistant (VMA)

A **remote professional** who supports healthcare providers with **administrative and clinical tasks**, improving efficiency and patient care.

Key Responsibilities

Administrative Tasks:

- Scheduling, EHR management, billing & insurance
- Patient communication & record-keeping

Clinical Support (if qualified):

- Patient intake, telehealth assistance
- Medication reminders, follow-ups, patient education

Other Services:

- Marketing, customer support, research

Benefits of a Medical Virtual Assistant

- ✓ **Increases Efficiency** – Frees up staff for patient care
- ✓ **Cost-Effective** – Reduces hiring expenses
- ✓ **Enhances Patient Experience** – Provides timely support
- ✓ **Flexible & Scalable** – Adapts to clinic needs
- ✓ **Specialized Expertise** – Telehealth, billing, EHR



1. Organizations & Communities

• **DPC Frontier** – A comprehensive resource with a legal map, FAQs, and startup guides.

• **Direct Primary Care Alliance (DPCA)** – A membership organization offering networking, conferences, and business resources.

• <https://d4pcfoundation.com/> (Doctors for Patient Care)

• **ACOFP and American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP)** – Offers DPC toolkits and advocacy resources. Co-sponsors Yearly Conference JULY 2026 New Orleans.

• **Physician on FIRE DPC Guide** – Financial independence insights tailored to DPC physicians.

2. Books & Guides

• **"Startup DPC: How to Start and Grow Your Direct Primary Care Practice"** – By Dr. Phil Boucher (Practical startup tips).

• **"The Direct Primary Care Doctor's Startup Manual"** – By Dr. Chris Larson (Step-by-step guide).

• **"The Patient-Centered Payoff: Driving Practice Success Through Patient Engagement"** – By Stephen C. Schimpff, MD.



Live Content Slide

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

Social Q&A for Practicing to the Top of Your License, DPC Model

