

PRACTICE PITFALLS



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PRACTICE WOES

- Selecting options for a “perfect” practice may elude you for years. However trying to get it correct can be challenging, but not daunting.
- **Who has a “perfect” practice ?**
- If you have one just take a nap, visit the exhibitors or finish texting.
- If you do not have one you might want to listen.

Practice PitFalls

We can fall into the following pits:

- **Personnel**
- **Partners/Associates**
- **Contracts**
- **Leases**
- **Ancillary Services**

Personnel Woes

Getting the Correct Manager

- I am practicing in a 6 member group and the manager decides to leave (married one of the physicians). A series of calls ensues and a recommendation is presented by another valuable manager in town. The candidate interviews well. She is hired based on this recommendation. **However....**

Manager Woes

- As it turns out, the new manager worked well with the valuable manager-in-town but could not handle any of the billing, staffing or simple practice issues on her own. To make matters worse.....
 - She drank!!
 - Missed Mondays and Fridays on a regular basis.

How do you avoid this?

Manager Woes

- Get your recommendations from many sources
- See how the candidate handles billing issues by asking questions
- Have them spend the day with the staff and get feedback from your trusted staff
- Get the work history from the previous job

Physician Extender Woes

You can fall into **2** types of Pits

- Need an extender and you do not know how to get one
- Have a physician extender that is not working out

Physician Extender Woes

- To learn how to **ADD VALUE TO YOUR PRACTICE**, see our valuable **RESOURCE** on **"Adding Value by Adding a PA/NP to Your Practice"**
- If you have an extender that is not working out
 - Be certain you have an escape clause in the contract (usually 30 day notice agreed on by both parties) **and say Good Bye.**
 - Best to pay for the 30 days and cut your losses.

Medical Assistant Woes

I have just hired an MA with great credentials, and great recommendations. She works well for 90 days.

- She begins to miss days from work.
- Vital signs are not accurate.
- Phone messages are not returned to the patient.
- I am beginning to think she is incompetent.

Medical Assistant Woes

Time to take the stick out!

- If this is past 90 days you will need to get documentation of the infractions.
- Get the job description out of the handbook- **you do have one?!?**
- Counsel the MA and then have a 30 day to show improvement.

If not capable –Adios Amiga!

- If less than 90 days **Let her go, Let her go!!!**

Picking a Practice or Clinical Job

- Be certain the practice situation fits your needs
- Often female rheumatologists are so happy to receive a job offer, they jump to accept.
- However the situation may not be prudent for them or their family's needs

Review the Practice's clinical requirements carefully

Picking a Practice Woes

Where will you be practicing?

Are there outreach clinics? How many?

Do the associates share the travelling?

After hour phone calls or emails...

Who takes them?

Is there a patient portal that emails you directly?

Does the clinic stay open till 6 pm?

Are there Saturday hours?

Do they do hospital consults?

Practice Woes

- Remember you are in a position of great leverage- use it!
Everyone is looking for a rheumatologist!
- Review the entire practice situation and see if the time constraints will fit your family's needs.
- If not, ask for flexible or part time hours.
- Let them know that

1 female **part-time** rheumatologist = **1** male **full-time** rheumatologist



Contract Woes

- Read your contract carefully.
- Get a lawyer to review it as well.
- Look at the termination clause **with a magnifying glass**
- See if you have outs..... if the situation is not really great for you.
- Look for non-compete clauses and if they are honored where you reside



Clinic Building Woes

- Do I Lease or Buy my space?
- Lease for 3 years or 5 years?
- Are there automatic annual increases?
- Who carries the insurance for the building and what does it cover?

Burning buildings anyone?

- We had one and had to hold clinic while reconstructing the building.

Gotta rain money to live!



Ancillary Services

- Infusions?
- DEXA?
- Ultrasound?
- Clinical Trials?

Can I afford to do any or none of the above?

Infusion Woes

- **Get a competent nurse**
- **Get competent billing**
- **Get infusible medications with a proper discount**
- **Get a feasible physical set-up**

DEXA Woes

- Who actually still has one?
- If you do,

Can you still get something for your trouble?

Ultrasound Woes

- Can you do them yourself?
- Can you get a practice model to get this done that is both fiscally stable and reasonable for you?
- Can I lease the Ultrasound machine with terms to get rid of it if needed ?
- Is reimbursement still OK in your area on this procedure?

Clinical Trial Woes

- Can I actually do them?
- **Do not try this at work** without getting
 - the space,
 - clinical coordinator,
 - knowledge for Good practice Principles
 - and any certification required by the study sponsor
 - and start up funds to do this.

Other Woes.....

- When joining a practice **THINK INSURANCE** and not just health insurance for yourself or the patient
- Do you have a **disability policy** for yourself?
- Does the practice have a **life insurance** for partners that get sick and die?
- Is there **overhead policy** for a down-turn in revenue from associate non-productivity, death, or building woes?

Sharing other Practice Pitfalls

- Remember just because you fell in a pit does not mean everyone needs to follow you in.....



- Share and Share some more.....
for FALLS prevention and help CLIMBING out of the pit!!!