Practice Management in Gastroenterology

Things your Alma Mater Never Taught You

Craig Render
Lots of Decisions

- Academic vs. Private
- Hospital based vs. Office Endoscopy
- Group or Solo
- Full Time vs Part Time
- Partners -- Practice Culture
MY BACKGROUND

• Kelowna, B.C.
• Home town : Ottawa
• Training: Med School Queen’s 1980
• I.M. and GI Calgary 1982-88
• 2 years travelling during training 1980-88
• 27 years in practice in Kelowna
• Last 10 years work ½ time for $
• Married 2 children, wife F.P.
MY BACKGROUND

• 27 years in Kelowna
• Partners 2 – 6
• GI, Hepatology, Nutrition, Standard and Therapeutic Endoscopy including ERCP
• RCPS Examiner/CAG Education Committee
• NWT Locum 2-4 weeks a year
• New Medical School / No Full Time I.M. Residents
Kelowna Practice

• 1-2/yr GI Residents or IM residents for 2 - 6 week electives

• Work week rotation ...call, scope time, office time ....no fixed day
Disclosures

• I AM NOT AN ACCOUNTANT OR FINANCIAL ADVISOR OR LAWYER

• SEEK PROFESSIONAL HELP AS NEEDED
Job hunting

• Location .... Are you flexible ?
• Is there a need ?
• Extra Skills
  - ERCP / EUS
  – NUTRITION
  – I.B.D.
• JOINING AN ESTABLISHED GROUP
  – G.I. / INTERNAL MEDICINE
• ESTABLISHED ENDOSCOPY ? Surgeons / I.M.
Practice Consideration

• Solo vs. Group Office
• Pure GI group vs. Internal Medicine / Surgeons
• Physician Managed vs. Clinic Organization
• Academic vs. Limited Exposure to Trainees, Medical Students
• On CALL AND EVENING RESPONSIBILITIES
• Holiday Coverage
• Relationship Surgeons and ICU doctors
Taking over an established Practice

- Cost? Rent / Lease hold improvements
  - Computerization / EMR
  - Contracts / Leases
  - Goodwill $$ .... No competition clause

- Compatibility of other Physicians / Staff
  - $$$
  - Patient care
  - Coverage
  - Nurse Practitioner
Keys to Establishing a Practice

• Ability
• Availability
• Affable .... Patients, endoscopy team, colleagues
• Affordable
Legal Issues

• Contracts
• Partnership agreements
• Leases
• Incorporation
• Provincial College Regulations
E.M.R.

• ALREADY ESTABLISHED
• PAPER
• OFF SITE ACCESS
• COMPATIBILITY WITH OUTPATIENT LABS, RADIOLOGY, INPATIENT RECORDS
• BILLING
• EASE OF USE
• COSTS .. HARDWARE / SOFTWARE / SUPPORT
Billing

• Learn your Billing and Diagnostic Codes
• Learn your Billing Rules
• Chase down the refusals
• PRIVATE Billings
• WHO DOES YOUR BILLING !!!
• COMPUTER FINANCIAL BOOKEEPING
  – Personal or Incorporation QuickBooks
  – Investment Income Quicken
Keeping it fresh
Avoiding Burn Out

• Learn new Endoscopy Skills
  – Training Courses / ASGE Learning Centre
  – Endoscopy Courses
    • EVL
    • W.E.C. ..... Unsedated Colonoscopy
    • Sitting
    • NG ENDOSCOPY ...unsedated

• WORK LIFE BALANCE
Keeping it fresh

• Teaching .... Students / Family Physicians
• Committee work
  – HOSPITAL
  – MEDICAL ASSOCIATIONS
  – C.A.G. / CASL ---- Education Committee
• ROYAL COLLEGE EXAMINER
• VOLUNTEER .... Overseas
• Conference Organizer
CLINICAL TRIALS

• BENEFITS - Education on new therapeutic
• $$
• Costs ..... Research Nurse
• Paper work
• Insurance
• Is this study clinically relevant or just a marketing tool post-release?
IMPORTANT ISSUES

• INSURANCE
  – Overhead
  – Disability .... Short term / long term
  – Malpractice .... CMPA
Financial Issues

- Control Overhead
- Investment Education
- Investment - Financial Advisors
  - MD Management  MD Financial Services
- Private Investment advice
ENDOSCOPY UNIT

• INPATIENT
• HOSPITAL OR HEALTH AUTHORITY BASED
• PRIVATE CLINIC
• STAFFING
• EFFICIENCY
• LEVEL OF INTERVENTION
• INFECTION CONTROL
PRIVATE ENDOSCOPY CLINIC

• IS THERE A NEED (Yours vs. Patient)?
• IS THERE DEMAND FOR THIS?

• COSTS .... COST RECOVERY
• SHARED RESOURCE .... BUSINESS PARTNERSHIP
• SAFETY ISSUES .... MAINTAINING QUALITY
C.M.E.

- Reading
- Conferences
- RCPS Examination Board
- Clinical Trials

- Keeping upto date
  - Changes in 25 years
  - Interventional Pharmacologic New Disease
Keeping it fresh

- Teaching .... Students / Family Physicians
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Things to Consider

• Financial
  • $250,000 – 500,000 Private Practice
    – U.S. Average $340,000
  ▪ Incorporation .... Provincial
    » Tax Deferral
      • Marginal Tax Rate 50% vs 22%
    » Delay till most debts paid off
    » Family Trusts
  ▪ COSTS
    • Start up
    • Annual Costs ...Legal / Accounting
Employer Status

- Wages / salary
- Holiday time
- Benefits - health / family leave ... co-payment
- Employment law .... hiring
- Employee deductions E.I. / WCB /CPP /TAX
WORK LIFE BALANCE

• Time off .... Family time
  • Travel
  • Other interests

• Easier with shared staff and overhead expenses