



FINDING THE HOSPITALIST JOB THAT'S RIGHT FOR YOU

An Insider's Guide for Physicians in Residency Programs



As part of **Eagle Hospital Physicians' (EHP) Eagle Institute for Hospital Medicine** for new recruits to our hospitalist program, our physician leadership team sat down recently to talk about hospitalist career opportunities for physicians in residency programs. Here are highlights.

THE BENEFITS OF A HOSPITALIST CAREER

Q *Why should residents consider a career as a hospitalist?*

Dr. McCormick: It's one of the fastest growing fields in medicine. Twenty years ago, "hospitalist" was a new concept. Today, physicians who work as inpatient primary care doctors are embedded in the fiber of modern medical care.

Q *So demand is high?*

Dr. Gates: Absolutely. There are more than 44,000 hospitalists working in about 72% of U.S. hospitals. And as hospitals face greater pressure than ever to improve performance in areas such as average length of stay and preventable readmissions, the need for hospitalists is increasing. And not only for inpatient primary care doctors.

Q *Are you referring to the growing "-ist" trend?*

Dr. Gates: Yes. Laborists, for example, are obstetrician/gynecologist physicians who work full-time in a hospital, delivering babies, rather than seeing patients in an office setting like a traditional OB/GYN. Subspecialties in neurology, orthopedics, and general surgery are other areas in which the hospitalist model is applied beyond the role of inpatient primary physician care.

Q *How do hospitalist schedules compare with other physicians?*

Dr. Johnston: The typical hospitalist works seven days on, seven days off. It's an attractive lifestyle for many, particularly physicians who want to practice medicine as an employee, without having to deal with the business side of running an outpatient practice.

Q *What about pay?*

Dr. McCormick: You have the opportunity to start your career near the top of the heap in terms of salary without having to spend 10 years or more building a private practice.

Q *Any other high-level benefits?*

Dr. Johnston: Many hospitalists appreciate the challenge of dealing solely with patients who are really sick, who really need your help. When I began my hospitalist career, this was one of the most rewarding things personally and professionally. But of course, the job isn't for everyone.

Q *Can residents transition pretty easily into a hospitalist career?*

Dr. Johnston: It's a natural fit. The transition is usually a smooth one because of the similarities of hospitalist training to internal medicine training.

FINDING THE RIGHT HOSPITALIST PROGRAM

Q *How can residents determine if a hospitalist position is right for them? What should they look for?*

Dr. McCormick: The first thing is professional satisfaction. What's the pace of the assignment? Is it all floor work, or do you get to work in the ICU? Is there good teamwork in the hospital environment? What patient load will you be expected to carry? Will you have support from qualified mid-level staff—nurse practitioners and physician assistants?

The second is compensation. What is your opportunity for advancement? Are you paid based on productivity? Are quality bonuses offered?

Location is key, too. What interests you about a particular opportunity? Is it a place you've always wanted to visit, or a place where you already have roots? You will be more appealing to recruiters if you have a specific reason for choosing a particular location. Family ties or other connections to a place indicate a good fit to the culture and a stronger likelihood of staying put.

Q *What about structure? Is it better to work for an in-house hospitalist program, or one that is run by a hospitalist management group?*

Dr. Gates: There are many fine in-house hospitalist programs in hospitals across the country. But we often hear physicians say that working for a hospitalist group, especially one that is led by physicians, is the better way to go.

Q *Why?*

Dr. Johnston: You're backed by a team of physicians who support you and understand your challenges—what it's like, for example, to be in the ER at three in the morning overloaded with patients and the admissions team is moving slowly. The value of having such a support network is reflected in the professional satisfaction scores of our physicians and the low turnover rate in the hospitals where they work.

Q What are other advantages of going to work for a hospitalist group?

Dr. McCormick: Economies of scale. Interviewing with one firm can open the door to a range of opportunities in multiple locations that might appeal to you. There is also the opportunity to tap into innovations such as telemedicine, analytics, coding and other new technologies that hospitalist groups offer to support their physician teams

Q What about training?

Dr. Gates: A good hospitalist group offers intensive training and orientation in details of their program—billing coding, hand-off policies, patient procedures, regulatory compliance, co-management expectations and more, so you can be at ease and knowledgeable on day one.

Q Do hospitalist firms provide support for the interview process?

Dr. McCormick: We do. We accompany physicians through the interview process from the moment they arrive at the airport. We provide background to candidates regarding the hospital team's history and qualifications. We help acquaint them with the administration and the community that might be their new home. And we provide feedback when the interview is over. It helps relieve anxiety for residents, who might be interviewing for the first time.

MAKING THE CUT

Q What do hospitalists groups look for when they hire?

Dr. Johnston: We pay close attention to a candidate's verbal and non-verbal communication skills, because being a good communicator is key to being a good hospitalist. The candidate must be able to express himself or herself clearly, succinctly, in plain, everyday language that patients and their families can understand.

Q How important is the resume?

Dr. Gates: We would wager that no one has been hired as a hospitalist based on his or her C.V. It should be clean and straightforward, simply recapping your education and experience. Don't spend pages on your publication history.

Q What about references?

Dr. McCormick: At EHP, we look closely at them. They can reveal a lot about a candidate. We also look to see if the candidate has connections with other physicians who are involved in our program. It's a quick reference point to know if someone will be a good fit to our company's collaborative philosophy and team culture, though it is by no means a deal-breaker if you like us and we like you.

**MEET THE PARTICIPANTS IN THIS EAGLE INSTITUTE FOR HOSPITAL MEDICINE CONVERSATION
EAGLE HOSPITAL PHYSICIANS' (EHP) PHYSICIAN LEADERSHIP TEAM**



DR. TALBOT "MAC" MCCORMICK, MD
President and Chief Executive Officer

Dr. Mac practiced internal medicine for 20 years and served in a number of executive-level positions before joining EHP in 2003. He graduated with a degree in Chemistry from Baylor University, Magna Cum Laude and received his Medical Doctorate from Emory University.



DAVID GATES, M.D., PH.D., FACP
Chief Medical Officer

With experience in clinical hospital medicine and Emergency Medicine, Dr. Gates joined EHP in 2010. He received his Bachelor's Degree from Arizona State University, his Doctorate of Philosophy in Cellular and Molecular Biology from USC, and his Medical Degree from the University of Juarez.



JOHN D. JOHNSTON, M.D.
Senior VP of Practice Development

Dr. Johnston worked as a hospitalist before joining EHP 10 years ago. A Board-Certified internist, he received his Bachelor's Degree from Georgia Southern University in Statesboro, GA, and his Medical Doctorate from Mercer University School of Medicine in Macon, GA.

At Eagle Hospital Physicians (EHP), we recruit residents to join hospitalist programs that we manage. As part of our recruitment process, we've created **Eagle Institute for Hospital Medicine**, which guides your residents through the process. If your residents are considering starting their career as a hospitalist, we hope this brochure helps your residents choose a rewarding path that best suits their skills and abilities.



ABOUT EHP

EHP is a pioneer in the hospitalist industry, providing hospitalist practice management services since 1998 to hospitals across the U.S. Just as we help residents run their careers more effectively through our physician recruitment and support services, we also help hospital leaders run their facilities more effectively through our turnkey hospitalist practice management programs and through the Clinical Performance Management (CPM) services we offer to in-house hospitalist programs.

For More Information, Visit

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A Physician-Led Hospitalist Company
Established in 1998

5901-C Peachtree Dunwoody Road, Suite 350, Atlanta, GA 30328

Phone: 678.441.8512 • Fax: 678.441.8561 • Email: cindy.fiorito@eglhpc.com

www.eaglehospitalphysicians.com