



2 NEW PHYSICIANS HIT THE GROUND RUNNING WITH DOCTORCARE

When you're starting a new practice, knowledge and expertise is the best medicine.

For primary care physicians starting out in family practice, the learning curve is steep. Not only do they need to master the art of patient care, they must also learn how to run a health care business – and grasp the nuances of practice workflow, billing and other management details that aren't taught in medical school.

Here are the stories of two doctors who recently started on their career paths as family physicians – and how DoctorCare helped them navigate it, master the details – and set up successful practices through their FHOCare program.



STUDY 1: DR. SOFIA NASTIS

- ♥♥ Medical degree and residency from Western University, completed June 2017
- ♥♥ Went from graduating straight into opening her practice in August 2017
- ♥♥ Replaced a member in a FHO group

“ The people at DoctorCare are genuinely interested in helping me navigate my transition and learn to optimize things like billing, EMR and understanding MOH reports. They know my main priority is taking care of my patients, so they work hard to simplify the business side of medicine. ”

CHALLENGE: Opening and running a practice isn't something you learn in medical school

In May 2017, Dr. Sofia Nastis was finishing medical school and gearing up to practice family medicine, when she decided to replace a retiring doctor that was giving up his FHO spot. Not only did she have to ramp up her knowledge quickly and learn how to set up a new practice, grow it, and run it efficiently from the start – but she had to get through all the legalities of replacing the previous doctor in the FHO group. Because other members of the FHO group she was joining were already DoctorCare clients, they recommended she use the service as the most efficient route to success.

SOLUTION: Start smart with expert help for FHO group transition and governance

Dr. Nastis started talking to DoctorCare before she was even officially licensed to practice family medicine. It was a smart way to round out her knowledge before jumping in. For example, she had taken the OMA seminar on billing, but for any additional billing knowledge, she was on her own – for someone new to a complex process like a FHO, it can be overwhelming without support.

“I had heard about services like FHOcare that could help optimize office and billing practices,” she says. “But I wasn't sure what kind of support it would be or how much it would cost. DoctorCare was extremely transparent about their approach with their FHOcare program, and have been nothing but supportive. Getting connected with our group's FHOcare regional manager was easy, and because of his familiarity with my colleagues, getting me up to speed was very streamlined.”



STUDY 2: DR. DELNA PRESS

- ♥♥ Medical degree from University of Toronto; residency at Women's College Hospital
- ♥♥ Initially did locums and walk-in clinic work for 14 months
- ♥♥ Joined a FHO group and started her own practice November 2015

“ A big part of my challenge was that I just didn't know what I didn't know. I needed guidance around rostering, access bonus, preventative care bonus tracking, etc., and DoctorCare helped me with all those things. ”

CHALLENGE: When you have a new practice, there's so much to learn

When Dr. Delna Press joined a FHO group, she didn't take over from another doctor – she built her own practice from the ground up which can be extremely difficult to do. The group recommended she use DoctorCare to properly get up to speed by figuring out her ideal roster size, understanding her financials, and billing efficiently to maximize revenues.

“A big part of my challenge was that I just didn't know what I didn't know,” she says. “I needed guidance around rostering, access bonus, preventative care bonus tracking, etc., and DoctorCare helped me with all those things.” Initially, Dr. Press had some hesitation but noted that “after seeing their reports, I had zero reservations.”

SOLUTION: Learn how to efficiently manage a new practice

Dr. Press' practice is in a location where patients are prone to being transient, so she had a low access bonus in her first year. It was partly because her practice was still growing, but also because she wasn't aware of the need to track outside use.

To assist and guide Dr. Press, DoctorCare created a FHOcare report listing her top 20 rostered patients that had the highest outside use, and provided recommendations on how to address these patients and improve her access bonus. One recommendation was showing the doctor how to use her EMR to see when and how often outside use was happening, then to tackle the issue with proven strategies. The result? She now gets close to 100% of her access bonus.

Smooth FHO transition from doctor to doctor

DoctorCare helped add Dr. Nastis to the FHO group quickly and efficiently, ensuring correct MOH documentation and filing to avoid any costly delays. All the paperwork for both the departing physician and Dr. Nastis was completed by DoctorCare – all each doctor had to do was review and sign the completed documents, and follow DoctorCare’s summary of next steps.

DoctorCare also helped with the FHO group’s governance. Following the FHO governance rules, DoctorCare had group members agree to accept Dr. Nastis. Then DoctorCare walked Dr. Nastis through the FHO group responsibilities and processes that were spelt out in the governance (e.g. after hours requirements, outside use implications, etc.).

Setting the doctor up for billing efficiency

DoctorCare helped Dr. Nastis set processes on how to go about her day and grow her practice. Her FHOCare regional manager guided her on the billing and financial implications of who to enrol in her roster, how to obtain key MOH patient forms, key steps to complete with each patient before rostering, and more.

“My top challenges in starting a practice included navigating billing and optimizing my EMR for surveillance of Out of Basket coding,” she says. “From day one, if I had a question, DoctorCare promptly answered my emails and provided me with resources on optimizing my billing practices. I’ve improved my use of my EMR to identify Out of Basket codes: DoctorCare embedded specific searches in my EMR charts to identify patients with diagnoses that prompt me to bill appropriately for special premium codes.”

DoctorCare also provided a one-on-one billing seminar on typical codes and errors. By having this information early in her career, Dr. Nastis’ practice is set up for long-term efficiency, freeing up her time to focus more on patient care.

“The people at DoctorCare are genuinely interested in helping me navigate my transition and learn to optimize things like billing, EMR and understanding MOH reports,” she says. “They know my main priority is taking care of my patients, so they work hard to simplify the business side of medicine – while also keeping in mind best billing practices and optimization of elements like preventative care bonuses and special premiums.”

RESULT: An efficient practice that enables a real focus on patient care

Today, regular check-ins with Dr. Nastis includes feedback on her roster, financials and recommendations on what to do next to meet her practice goals. DoctorCare is gradually introducing her to additional billing concepts and best practices that are appropriate to address as her practice grows.

Next, DoctorCare will start holding quarterly FHOCare optimization sessions with the doctor to help her regularly maximize revenue, identify missed/potential billing opportunities, improve practice workflows and ensuring alignment with MOH priorities to make patient care a priority.

“No new grad is immune to the challenges of transitioning to practice,” says Dr. Nastis. “I feel lucky to have the team at DoctorCare to guide me through this process. I don’t know why all new doctors just don’t join DoctorCare right away!”

Smart roster management for healthy practice growth

DoctorCare outlined the importance of maintaining her roster to ensure it grows in a healthy way as on-going roster management and maintenance is vital for a young doctor who is looking to grow her patient roster. DoctorCare’s FHOCare report helps to monitor changes in a doctor’s roster that can occur for a variety of reasons and suggests actions to minimize loss.

Maximizing revenue with more accurate billing

DoctorCare identified codes that would help Dr. Press optimize her day-to-day billing and provide better care to her patients – including educating her on billing codes with incentives – and showed her EMR enhancements to maximize Out of Basket billing. Keeping a close eye on critical elements like these are key to building a healthy, growing practice. The FHOCare program provides quarterly reports with top priorities, an outside use summary, high-need patient analysis, Out of Basket analysis, other bonus potential, and more.

RESULT: A well-managed primary care practice backed with expert support

A year after starting with the FHOCare program, Dr. Press has hit every target DoctorCare set at her optimization sessions. She understands the FHOCare report, is comfortable interpreting the data, and is quick to act on recommendations. She is now at the stage where she brings unique challenges to her DoctorCare regional manager for deeper analysis and expert advice.

“The quarterly FHOCare report has the perfect amount of detail for me and it is easy to understand,” she says. “Everything about DoctorCare and their FHOCare program has impressed me! The support is amazing, and I know I can rely on DoctorCare for any questions I may have.”



For more information on how DoctorCare can help improve your practice, visit www.doctorcare.ca/fhocare.

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