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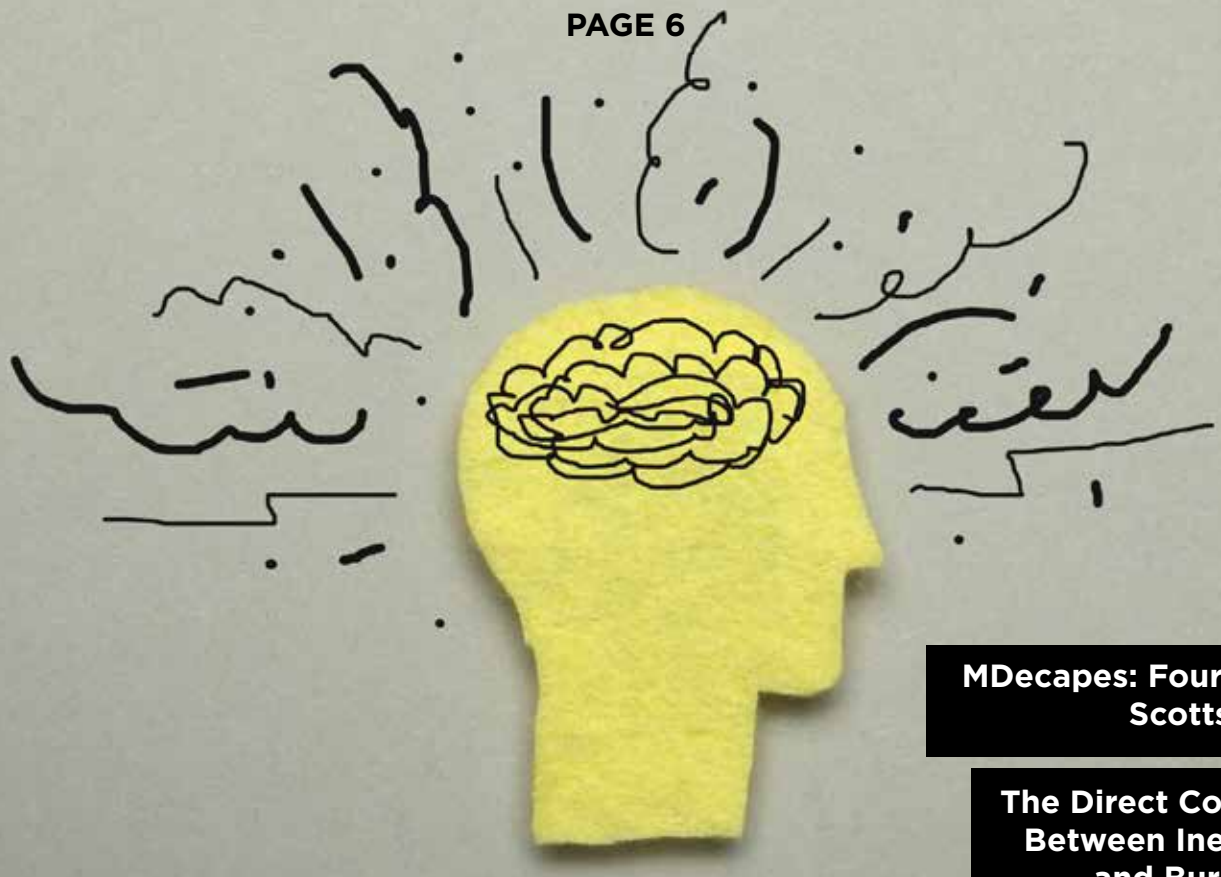
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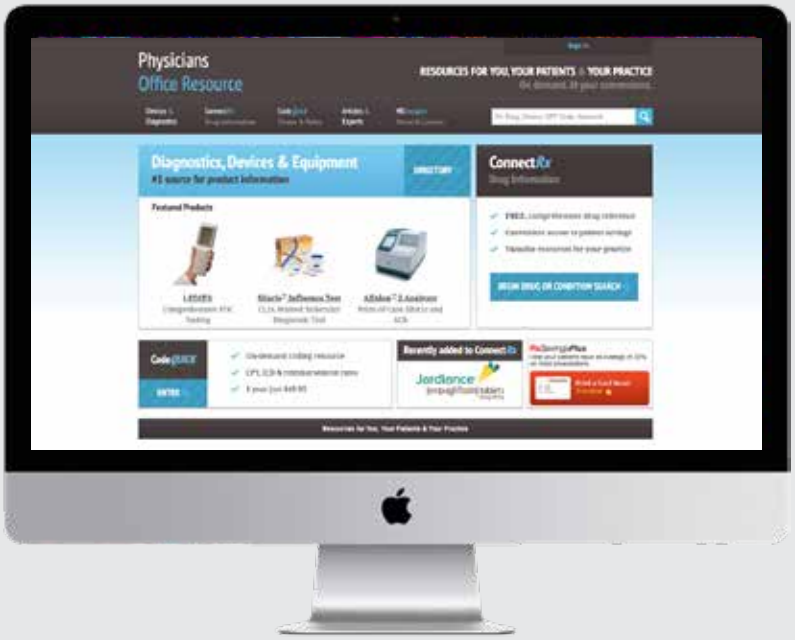
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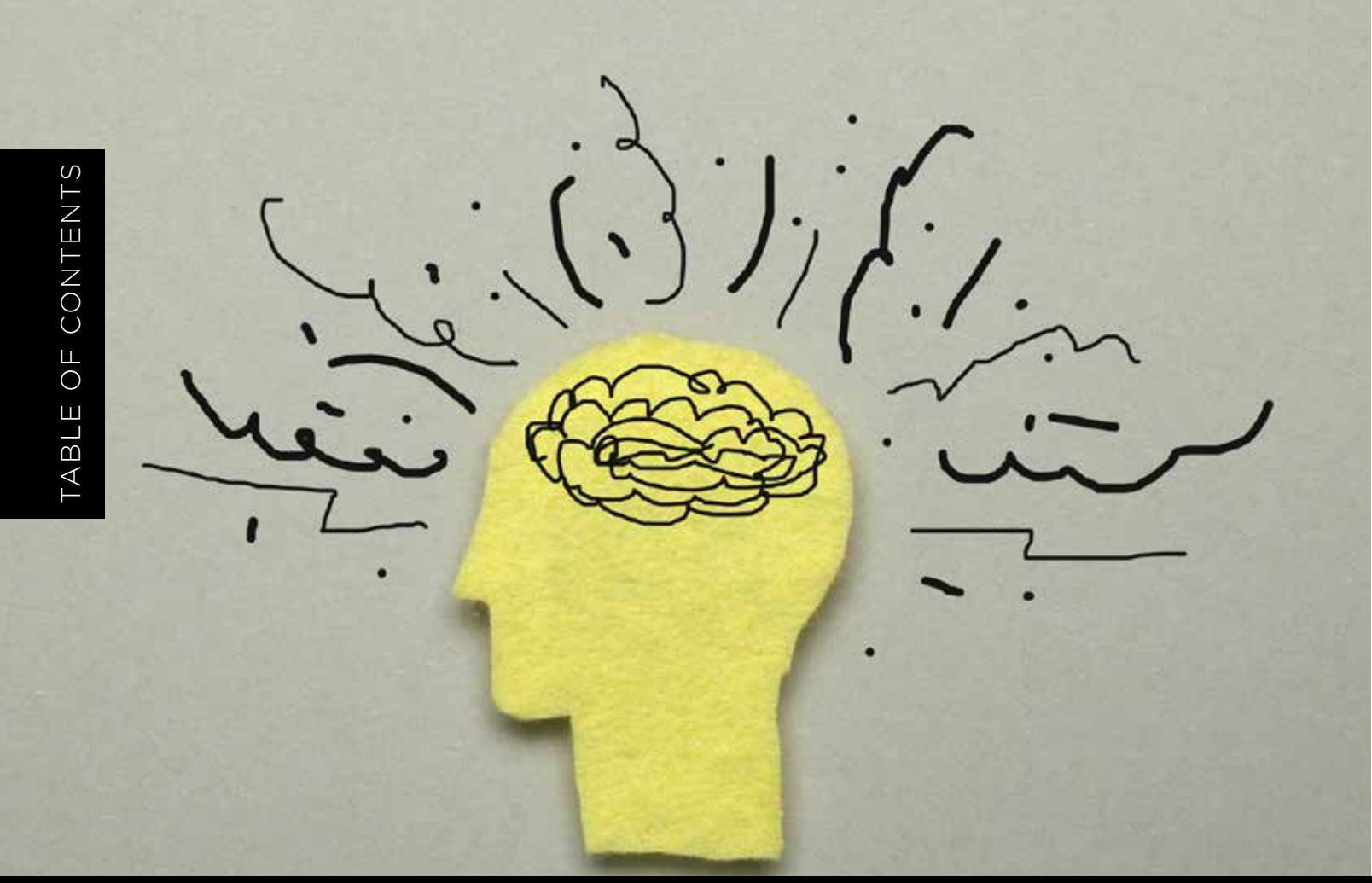
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Patient Anxiety: Creating a better Environment to Heal

BY: DYLAN CHADWICK

When a patient visits their physician, they're prone to feeling a little anxious. Diagnoses and treatment plans, loaded with obtuse medical jargon, can put ones mind in a tailspin and set one's heart a-flutter. Not exactly prime condition to take medical advice. Wary physicians should consider the implications of a patient's anxiety when dispensing information, in order to ensure they're communicating clearly and effectively, and in a way that will benefit the patient long after they've left the exam room. Here's some tips on how physicians can key into those feelings, work within them, and help patients feel less anxious in the process.

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Patient Anxiety:

Creating a Better Environment to Heal

BY DYLAN CHADWICK

When asked to describe anxiety, I often defer to the description I'd give my college therapist. Anxiety fits somewhere between "simple worry" and "full-blown panic." I'd compare it to the dull, but consistent bellowing of a gaggle of monkeys let loose to tromp around the recesses of my brain. Everyone experiences anxiety in some fashion, whether responding to an overwhelming work schedule, an impending deadline or even as a generalized disorder. Physicians certainly aren't strangers to anxiety-provoking work either, especially those who work in emergency capacities.

But while the individual and observable symptoms of anxiety vary from person to person, the overall obstacles it presents are quite uniform. Anxiety and stress are animal instincts, ones which protect us in dangerous situations and motivate us to seek equilibrium and control when we are losing it. However, anxiety can also be an impediment to relationships, an all-encompassing, slippery paralysis that crowds out our ability to think rationally, to make positive judgments and to hear what we most need to hear while in its throes: sound counsel.

When a patient visits their physician, they're prone to feeling a little anxious. Diagnoses and treatment plans, loaded with obtuse medical jargon, can put ones mind in a tailspin and set one's heart a-flutter. Not exactly prime condition to take medical advice. Wary physicians should consider the implications of a patient's anxiety when dispensing information, in order to ensure they're communicating clearly and effectively, and in a way that will benefit the patient long after they've left the exam room. Here's some tips on how physicians can key into those feelings, work within them, and help patients feel less anxious in the process.

Open the Floor

Effective physicians will work to create an atmosphere in which patients can verbalize their concerns, questions and anxieties, and will work to address those before even moving into a treatment discussion. In an office visit, a patient has many more thoughts going through their minds than what's on the surface. In these experiences, physicians should open the floor to patients, ensuring them that their questions and concerns are not only valid, but an integral part of treatment. Some patients may not feel comfortable articulating their inner concerns, and in these circumstances, a warm invitation to do so will carry much weight. A willing and listening ear can also calm the nerves of an argumentative patient. Ultimately, when a patient comes to a physician's office, they're bombarded with information that can be both frightening and confusing. Creating a scenario in which they're given clearance to air out their fears not only helps them manage and regulate their emotions, but also helps the physician tailor treatment specific to their needs in the long run.

It also goes without saying that there truly is no patient concern that is "wrong" or unimportant. Uncertainty is an unpleasant feature of many medical experiences, but a physician who will set the tone with warmth and an open mind will help alleviate anxiety's burden.

A Room of One's Own

A medical practice can be stressful environment, especially when dealing with a pandemic. Patients are surrounded by foreign looking equipment, strange sterile smells, and often the intermittent bustle of physicians, nurses and other specialists conducting serious and time-sensitive work. Environmental distractions can exacerbate a patient's anxiety, leaving them feeling cagey and alone and in a strange environment outside of their normal comfort zone and preference. It's beneficial for physicians to help control that environment, and create the most quiet, and private place possible so as to dispense medical information in as clear a manner as possible. Besides ensuring that information isn't misconstrued, it helps quell the rampant anxiety provoking factors present in a high-energy workplace, putting fretting patients at ease.

Words Unspoken

Often it's not just the words one uses, but the body language that accompanies the delivery of those words. It's important for physicians to remember how their nonverbal body cues will affect a patient's understanding and emotional processing of the information. Simple things like smiling and maintaining a calm and collected voice and speaking in soft, yet audible tones, can quell the alarming feelings potentially welling up inside a patient's mind. There's really no deep and nuggety magical formula for it. Physician's should simply be nice and relaxed with patients, clear and controlled in their delivery. It lends an air of stability to the proceedings and will help manage the expectations of the room.

Silence Isn't Always a Bad Thing

We all hate uncomfortable silences and will often seek to avoid them at all costs. They don't always indicate that a conversation is going poorly though. In fact, when given such high levels of sensitive information, many patients need some time to process and digest the lofty information they've just been given. A well-placed section of "breathing time" is often an indication that new and useful information is being processed. When a physician is hasty to "force" conversation in these instances, they can come off as rude and insensitive. Furthermore, patients may not want to speak at all. While it's important to always open the floor, physicians must also respect an anxious patient's desire to simply listen and absorb information.

Choices Empower Patients

Anxiety makes people feel powerless to their emotions or the circumstance at hand. When confronted with a serious health issue, many patients resort to dread and anxiety because they don't feel equipped to deal with the problem. Physicians should be sure to outline multiple choices (where applicable) for treatment options. When a patient knows they have choices and options for their treatment, they feel empowered and capable to deal with the problem, and also feel that their physicians are on their "team." It's also important to remember that even though a physician knows all the nuances and options of a treatment regimen, a patient may not, or may have a significantly limited understanding of it. Let them know that they have options in how they choose to be treated, and aren't being forced into something without having an opportunity to weigh out the pros and cons.

Enlist the Aid of Family or Trusted Friends

There are those circumstances when patient anxiety is extreme and a patient needs someone there to help them on a more intimate emotional level. It's not uncommon for patients to enlist the aid of a spouse or trusted family member to help them receive their treatment options and have said family member accompany them on their visit. In these circumstances, a level-head and an extra set of ears can ensure they the patient gets the most out of their treatment. Healthcare is a joint effort with patients and their families, and some family members need only to be taught how they can participate. In all circumstances, especially ones which involve rigorous or disruptive treatment, it's crucial to get family members on board because when patients feel that they have a team of supporters backing them, they no longer feel alone in their problem. Furthermore, family members can help the patient with alternative perspectives or simply just comforting words that a physician simply cannot.

Physicians are trained to diagnose and treat every level of medical problem and ailment in the known universe. However, beyond medical diagnoses, an understanding of patient anxiety, and the emotional/logical stranglehold it can wreak on its victims, will improve a physician's ability to dispense information clearly and concisely, as well as tending to the emotional healing of a patient.

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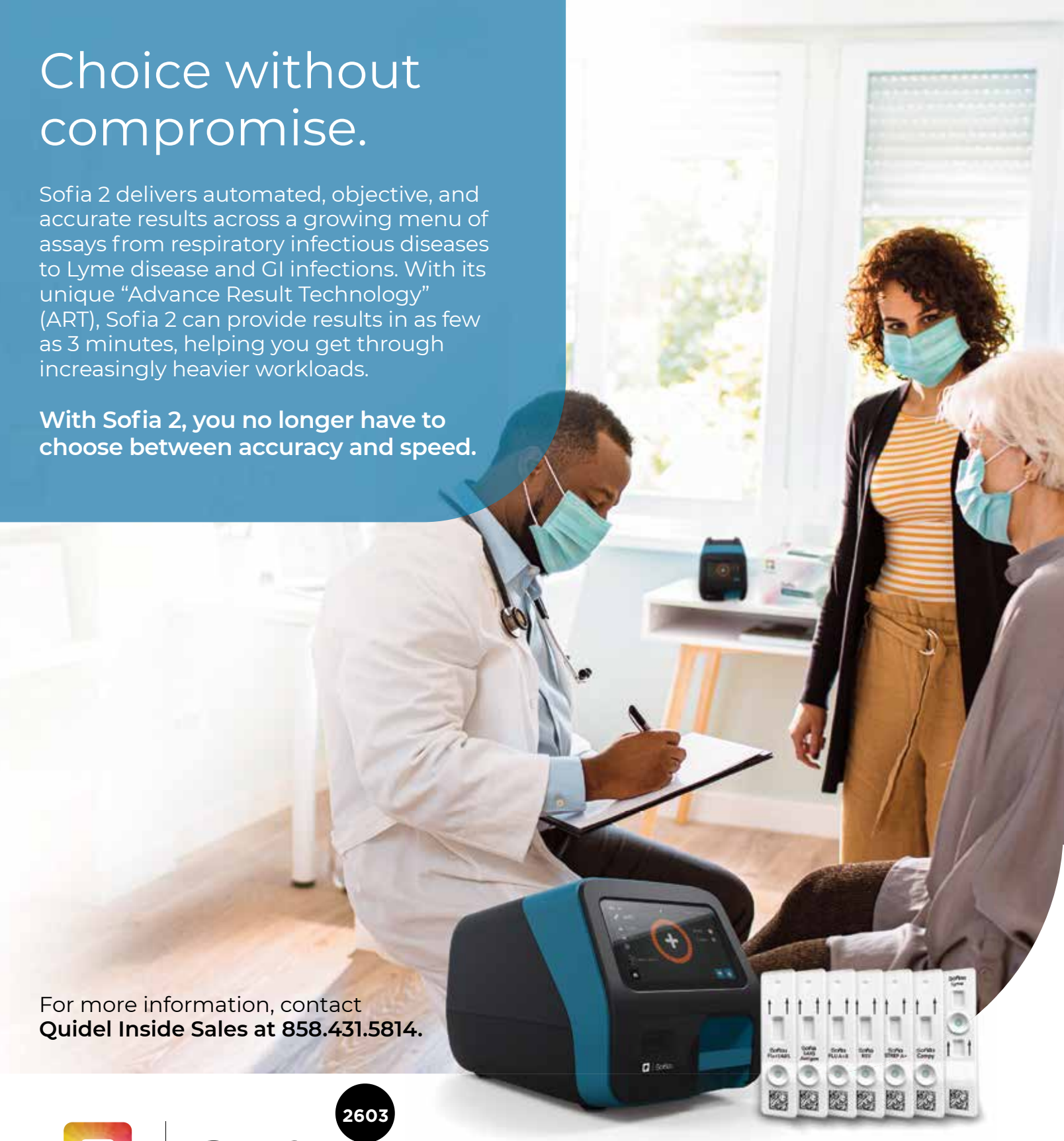
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THERE IS A DIRECT CONNECTION BETWEEN INEFFICIENCY AND BURNOUT

BY PAUL DECHANT, MD, MBA AND DIANE W. SHANNON, MD

An excerpt from Preventing Physician Burnout: Curing the Chaos and Returning Joy to the Practice of Medicine.

Mark Linzer's research identified workplace chaos as one of the key predictors of physician stress, burnout, and intention to leave. A recent analysis of the data showed that physicians in clinics with chaotic work environments had significantly more stress and burnout and a higher likelihood of leaving the practice within two years. These clinics also had significantly more missed opportunities to provide preventative services and had significantly higher rates of medical errors.

Our experience and that of many of the physicians we interviewed confirmed the importance of workplace chaos in the development of burnout. Diane identified workplace chaos as the most important factor in the burnout that led her to leave clinical practice. Craig Albanese, MD, MBA, senior vice president and chief

operating officer at New York-Presbyterian/Morgan Stanley Children's Hospital and Sloane Hospital for Women, pointed to the chaos and unstable work environment as the driver of his increasing interest in taking on administrative roles. He sensed that "there's got to be a better way." According to John Toussaint, MD, CEO of the ThedaCare Center for Healthcare Value, the workplace prior to implementing a Lean transformation at ThedaCare was replete with inefficiencies. "Physicians, nurses, and administrators and everybody else were all running around like chickens with their heads cut off because all the processes were chaos. There was no standard work. You did it one way on Monday, another way on Tuesday, and a third way on Wednesday. There was no predictability."

Toussaint told us that he and other leaders hypothesized that if they created predictability through standard work, the organization could focus on defect identification and problem-solving at the source. This approach, they believed, would lead to a more stable environment for caregivers and for patients. He described an informal study he did early in the organization's Lean journey. He shadowed a nurse for a week with a stopwatch. The results? Three and a half hours of an eight-hour shift were spent searching for supplies. "It was the same for physicians in the office. What they needed was not in the room when they needed it. They didn't have the information they needed to make decisions. Process after process was so fundamentally broken; it's understandable why people were very stressed out."

In an interview, James P. Womack, PhD, founder and senior advisor to the Lean Enterprise Institute, described a conversation he had with several residents after delivering a presentation at a prestigious academic hospital. He asked the trainees, "What have you learned about medicine?" One said, "Nothing works, so I've learned how to do work-arounds." The fundamental flaw with work-arounds is that they don't fix the underlying error-prone and inefficient processes. These work-arounds can make practice feel a bit like a revolving door. As Gene Lindsey, formerly at Atrius Health, put it, "It became obvious to me that some things were beyond our ability to change as individual providers. We saw the same problems every day, and just because you solved them one day didn't mean they wouldn't come back, because the solutions were work-arounds. They didn't solve the real problems."

Lindsey told us that at one institution in which he practiced for many years, two awards were given annually to recognize clinicians for stellar patient care. "It occurred to me that they should have been called 'Band-Aid awards,' because the system was so dysfunctional it required heroic efforts to provide care." He noted that such efforts cost the physicians in "personal time and a cascade of other losses." The physicians were willing to make the effort, but the dysfunctional system was the root cause of these sacrifices. He said, "It's perverse not to recognize that a lot of their effort was wasted human effort."

Why are practice environments so chaotic and inefficient? In a setting in which errors can have devastating consequences that can be fatal, why are so many workflows inconsistent and unreliable? The simple answer is that the current practice environments were not consciously designed to be efficient and reliable. They developed over time, as multiple improvement initiatives (or external mandates or the personal preference of individual clinicians) changed workflows. The cumulative changes occurred without a careful assessment of the collective impact. The result is the chaos in which most physicians practice every day in both the hospital and office settings. As Robert Wachter of University of California, San Francisco, described it to us, "We have created jobs that are undoable. We have not given a moment's thought to rethinking the world in which physicians provide care."

A common source of chaos in the clinical workplace is the inefficiency of both administrative and care processes. Physicians perform highly technical work that involves significant quality and safety risks. When physicians express fear that they will inadvertently harm a patient, this anxiety is often reflective of a chaotic workplace. Physicians know what to do, but the disorganized, dysfunctional, unpredictable practice environment in which they work makes it difficult, if not impossible, to do the right thing consistently. Attempting to predict and avoid medical errors in such an environment requires a high degree of vigilance, which is unsustainable in the long term.

According to James Hereford, COO of Stanford University Medical Center, this level of vigilance increases the risk of burnout. "The primary contributing factor to burnout is lack of thoughtful processes and support that avoids hero-level work." We asked Hereford to explain what these processes and support would look like. He told us, "Every ambulatory clinic should have a well-codified prepare-for-visit process. But walk into almost any ambulatory clinic and look for that process, and it is non-existent. Instead, the physician shows up at the appointed time and tries to do his or her best with the summary information in the medical record while trying to engage with the patient. Little wonder it's a stressful encounter. At the end of the visit, there's no well-codified process for the patient exit, follow-up, documentation, or coding. We just expect physicians to function well anyway. It's ridiculous when you say it out loud." Wayne Sotile has seen a direct connection between inefficiency and burnout. He told us that the primary complaint of the physicians and nurses he's worked with is inefficiencies in the work setting.

Lindsey described it this way: "If you step back and look at [burnout symptoms] and get beyond feeling like it is happening because you're a deficient human being, you realize that these things are happening because you're functioning in a system that is inhumane and not designed for anyone's psychological or emotional survival."

Paul DeChant and Diane W. Shannon are authors of Preventing Physician Burnout: Curing the Chaos and Returning Joy to the Practice of Medicine.



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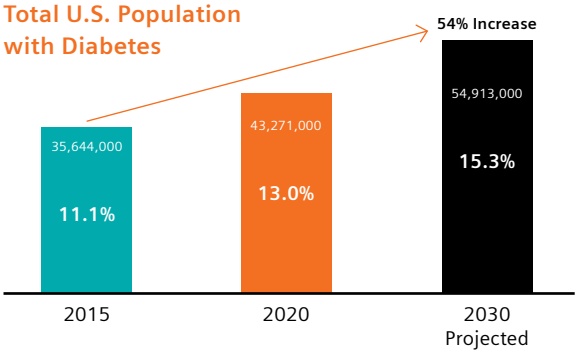


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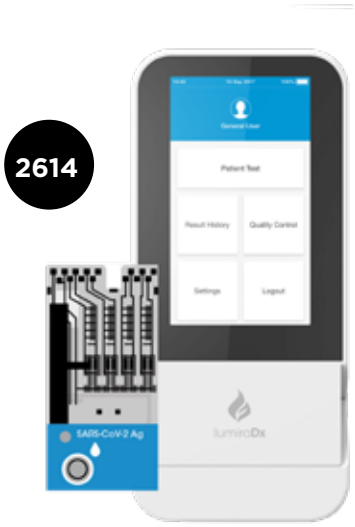
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Siemens Healthineers DCA Vantage® and CLINITEK Status® family of analyzers provide hemoglobin A1c (HbA1c) and albumin-to-creatinine ratio (ACR) testing at the point of care. Meet quality measures for A1c control and kidney disease check in minutes with CLIA-waived HbA1c testing and ACR[1] ratio. Improve patient experience and overall outcome by providing actionable results in minutes.

1. Moderately complex on the DCA Vantage Analyzer. CLIA-waived on the CLINITEK Status+ Analyzer.

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NOVA PRIMARY BLOOD GLUCOSE REFERENCE ANALYZER

From Nova Biomedical

The U.S. FDA has cleared Nova Primary as a blood glucose reference analyzer that fills the need for a new reference analyzer to replace the YSI STAT PLUS 2300 (YSI, Inc., Yellow Springs, OH). Manufacturers of blood glucose measuring devices and clinical diabetes researchers have relied on the YSI 2300 as a reference and correlation analyzer. However, YSI, Inc. no longer supports the analyzer, and its discontinuation has left a critical industry void. With today's FDA clearance, Nova Primary from Nova Biomedical is now available in the U.S. and worldwide.

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2627

SOFIA® 2 FLUORESCENT IMMUNOASSAY ANALYZER AND RAPID DIAGNOSTIC TEST KITS

From Quidel

Sofia® 2 Fluorescent Immunoassay Analyzer and Rapid Diagnostic Test Kits Sofia 2 takes rapid testing to a new level. Proven lateral-flow technology and advanced fluorescent chemistry are all integrated into this small benchtop analyzer which can be used in any point-of-care setting. Sofia 2 kits are easy to use and adaptable to any healthcare setting. Excellent performance, objectivity, quality control, LIS capabilities, and an expanding test menu make Sofia 2 the perfect solution for the physician's office laboratory.

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ACUCY INFLUENZA A&B TEST

From Sekisui Diagnostics

The Acucy™ Influenza A&B Test is for the rapid, qualitative detection of influenza A and B viral nucleoprotein antigens from both nasal and nasopharyngeal swabs. Utilizing the Acucy™ Reader in either the point-of-care or laboratory setting, workflow flexibility is achieved with both Read Now and Walk Away features. The combination provides clinicians with standardized and definitive result interpretation.

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2629

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Stronger Clinical Performance Takes Lateral Flow Testing To The Next Level. Providing superior rapid results at the point-of-care. Fast, easy, cost effective so you can test and treat in one visit.

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- Results in 10 minutes
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CELL-DYN EMERALD 22 HEMATOLOGY ANALYZER

From Abbott

The CELL-DYN Emerald 22 is a full performance 5-part hematology analyzer for smaller clinical laboratories seeking productivity in smaller spaces.

Benefits:
- Compact Design - To conserve valuable workspace.
- Small and Powerful - Includes a numeric keypad entry, reagent tray, and integrated color touchscreen monitor.
- Easy and Automated - Barcoded reagents and touch-free scheduled daily maintenance, startup and shutdown.
- Online product training - Self-pace training available 24x7 on the Abbott's Hematology Academy.

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MICROS HEMATOLOGY ANALYZER WITH 3-PART DIFFERENTIAL PLUS THE LITEDM

From HORIBA Medical

Is it viral or bacterial? A CBC with 3-part differential can provide the clues to help distinguish between viral and bacterial infections before you decide to treat. The Micros 60 Hematology analyzer provides a CBC with 3-part Diff result in less than 60 seconds using only 10 µL of sample. Connect to the Lite^{DM} Patient Data Management System for an affordable way to consolidate patient results to one report.

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TURN SMALL PLACES INTO SMART SPACES

From Abbott

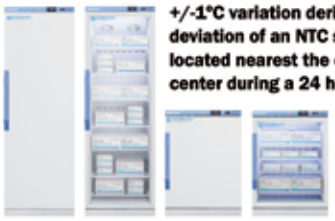
With reduced budgets, shrinking laboratory space and staffing challenges, many laboratories need a solution that lets them work smarter with less. The CELL-DYN Emerald 22 AL is a full performance, automated optical 5-part differential analyzer that delivers smarter results for small to midsize clinical laboratories.
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- Walkaway Functionality
- Ease Of Use
- Smart Safety Features

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- **Digital display of the min/max temperature in Celsius or Fahrenheit**
- **Password protected control parameters beyond setpoitn**
- **Optimized forced air cooling for excellent stability & uniformity with rapid recovery**
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- **Factory installed lock conveniently located towards the top of each unit**
- **Adjustable shelving can be spaced in ½" intervals for flexible storage**



Pharma-Vac Refrigerators

Accucold	Capacity	Height	Width	Depth	Door	PRICE
ARS1PV	1 cu.ft.	21.5"	17.5"	19.5"	White	$936.00
ARG1PV	1 cu.ft.	21.5"	17.5"	20"	Glass	$949.00
ARS3PV	3 cu.ft.	33.75"	18.5"	19"	White	$1,089.00
ARG3PV	3 cu.ft.	33.75"	18.5"	19.5"	Glass	$1,102.00
ARS6PV	6 cu.ft.	32.5"	23.5"	24.5"	White	$1,235.00
ARG6PV	6 cu.ft.	32.5"	23.5"	25"	Glass	$1,266.00
ARS8PV	8 cu.ft.	50"	23.38"	24.5"	White	$1,654.00
ARG8PV	8 cu.ft.	50"	23.38"	25"	Glass	$1,667.00
ARS12PV	12 cu.ft.	61.75"	23.38"	24.5"	White	$2,139.00
ARG12PV	12 cu.ft.	61.75"	23.38"	25"	Glass	$2,152.00
ARS15PV	15 cu.ft.	72"	23.5"	24.5"	White	$2,321.00
ARG15PV	15 cu.ft.	72"	23.5"	25"	Glass	$2,334.00

models with data loggers are available

Pharma-Lab Refrigerators

Accucold	Capacity	Height	Width	Depth	Door	PRICE
ARS23ML	23 cu.ft.	83.75	27.5	31	(1) Stainless	$2,789.00
ARG23ML	23 cu.ft.	83.75	27.5	31	(1) Glass	$3,114.00
ARS49ML	49 cu.ft.	83.75	55.25	31	(2) Stainless	$4,674.00
ARG49ML	49 cu.ft.	83.75	55.25	31	(2) Glass	$5,031.00

Pharma-Lab Freezers

Accucold	Capacity	Height	Width	Depth	Door	PRICE
AFS23ML	23 cu.ft.	83.75	27.5	31	(1) Stainless	$3,205.00
AFS49ML	49 cu.ft.	83.75	55.25	31	(2) Stainless	$5,194.00

Choosing the Right Sized Unit

Below are a few handy steps for determining the ideal Accucold refrigerator size for your clinic:

1 Estimate the maximum number of doses of publicly-provided vaccine and privately purchased vaccine that will be in your refrigerator.

Refrigerator: Add the number of doses on hand (current inventory) from your last order form.

Public Vaccine _____

Private Vaccine + _____

Total doses = _____

Multiply (max inventory) x 1.25

Maximum doses = _____

2 Match your maximum doses with the minimum cubic feet needed to safely store your vaccine

Max. Doses	Minimum Cubic Ft.
2,000+ doses	may need more than one refrigerator
1000-2000	40 cu.ft
900-1000	36 cu.ft
801-900	21-23 cu.ft
701-800	17-19.5 cu.ft
400-700	11-16.7 cu.ft
100-399	4.9-6.1 cu.ft

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2634

MD6300 MICRO SPIROMETER
FULL FUNCTION LOW COST SPIROMETER

From Mirco Direct

The Micro Spirometer is the newest offering in the Micro Direct spirometer line. Specifically designed for situations where low cost, precision spirometry measurements are required, the Micro Spirometer is lightweight and portable making it suitable for the physician office. The Micro Spirometer features a large color touch screen that is icon driven. The Micro Spirometer is supplied with Device Studio. A PC software for producing printouts of tests results or for creating PDF reports for attachment to the patients' EMR file.

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MD6000 ALPHA SPIROMETER
THE FUTURE OF DESKTOP SPIROMETRY

From Micro Direct

The Alpha features a highly accurate, extremely stable Fleisch pneumotrach and meets the latest 2019 ATS/ERS standardization of spirometry ensuring testing meets the most up-to-date guidelines. Performing a test is very easy using the large icon driven touch screen. A test quality grading system and live testing prompts give you confidence and peace of mind when performing the test. Reports are printed instantly using the fast, integrated printer or obtain an 8.5" x 11" printout via Device Studio software that is included with the Alpha.

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2635



2636

MD6800 PNEUMOTRAC SPIROMETER
A POWERFUL SOLUTION FOR PC-BASED SPIROMETRY

From Micro Direct

The Pneumotrac connects to your PC by USB and captures reliable tests results immediately using the Spirotrac 6 software. These results can be printed or shared easily with compatible EMR systems. The Pneumotrac features a highly accurate, extremely stable Fleisch pneumotrach and meets the latest 2019 ATS/ERS standardization of spirometry ensuring testing meets the most up-to-date guidelines. Real-time curves and new animated incentives encourage maximal patient performance and obtain prompt quality feedback using the latest test session/session acceptability, usability and repeatability criteria.

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SYNDROMIC TESTING



2637

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From bioMérieux

The BIOFIRE® FILMARRAY® TORCH is a fully integrated, random, and continuous-access system designed to meet your laboratory's syndromic infectious disease testing needs. The benchtop footprint of the BIOFIRE TORCH saves precious lab space, and its scalability meets high throughput demands. BIOFIRE® FILMARRAY® Link Software automatically uploads patient results. Fully compatible with all BIOFIRE® FILMARRAY® Panels intended for use in CLIA-moderate settings, the BIOFIRE TORCH helps you maximize efficiency and productivity.

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TOXICOLOGY

TOXICOLOGY SCREENING SIMPLIFIED ABBOTT'S IMMTOX 270 BENCHTOP ANALYZER NOW WITH 14 ASSAYS CLIA CATEGORIZED AS MODERATE COMPLEXITY

From Abbott

The ImmTox270 benchtop analyzer offers comprehensive toxicology screening solutions for physician offices, treatment centers and independent laboratories.

Broad test menu with over 20 assays to choose from including 14 that are now available as moderately complex.

With complete laboratory solutions from consultation to licensure, and compliance the Abbott Clinical Laboratory Solutions team has you covered.

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2639

TOXICOLOGY URINE DRUG SCREENING REAGENTS

From Abbott

Prescription drug misuse and illicit drug abuse is a growing public health challenge in this country. Building a test profile that covers highly misused drugs has never been so vital. With over 20 relevant assays to choose from Abbott's suite of Immunalysis reagents allows you to easily screen for relevant substances. Our complete line of assays, calibrators, and controls enables you to implement an efficient drug screening program in office.

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LOW TO MID VOLUME



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MID VOLUME



CELL-DYN **RUBY**

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TOXICOLOGY



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URINALYSIS



2646

COMPREHENSIVE IN-OFFICE DIABETES TESTING WITH THE DCA VANTAGE® AND CLINITEK STATUS®+ ANALYZERS

From Siemens Healthineers

Siemens Healthineers DCA Vantage® and CLINITEK Status® family of analyzers provide hemoglobin A1c (HbA1c) and albumin-to-creatinine ratio (ACR) testing at the point of care. Meet quality measures for A1c control and kidney disease check in minutes with CLIA-waived HbA1c testing and ACR[1] ratio. Improve patient experience and overall outcome by providing actionable results in minutes.

1. Moderately complex on the DCA Vantage Analyzer. CLIA-waived on the CLINITEK Status+ Analyzer.

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- **Reimburses using 6 CPT codes, National Average = $750 - $1000 per test**
- Each test is processed into a fully-finished, clinically actionable report
- Easy to understand biomarkers facilitate more informed medical interventions, such as biofeedback

2 ANS Testing

(can be combined with SUDOMOTOR into 1 full system)

2648

- Takes less than 10 minutes to perform, software provides verbal cues
- Tests for autonomic balance, vascular health, physical/mental stress, peripheral nerve health and other critical hidden risk factors
- **Reimburses $170/test using 3 CPT codes**
- Provides a 1 page summary up to a full 24 page comprehensive report

3 SudoMotor Testing

2649

(can be combined with ANS into 1 full system)

- Takes 3 minutes to analyze a patients' hands and feet
- Provides a 1 page summary report
- Assesses peripheral nerve health (c-fiber function) and asymmetry between each hand and foot
- **Reimburses $130/test (national average)**



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WHY NO ONE RESPONDS TO "WHY DID YOU WANT TO BECOME A DOCTOR?" WITH ANYTHING STARTING WITH "THE SALARY —"

BY MIRIAM SWEENEY





Money is one of the most influential things in our lives that is simultaneously most difficult to talk about. And the medical field is no exception. In my unique situation, I've had the opportunity to talk with an abnormally high number of doctors-to-be about their finances.

It started when I began to edit friends' personal statements with them before their applications to medical school. Editing one friend's statement led to editing their friend's statement, and soon enough, I had a small seasonal editing side gig on my hands.

As I worked with premeds to articulate why they wanted to go to medical school, it surprised me how infrequently people would tell me that one of their motivations for going to medical school was financial. When talking with bright young people who are midway through their undergraduate degrees and sincerely contemplating the next decade of their lives and stating (not only with a straight face, but with excessive volunteer and shadowing hours and effort to get great grades) that they think that going back to school and staying in it for years to come is actually a fantastic idea, very few talked me about how much money they hope to make.

In fact, as part of my personal statement editing process, I'll ask everyone why they want to go to med school. I never let them give me just one simple answer. I encouraged everyone I worked with to brainstorm a list of responses in the style of "there are no wrong answers here." Of course, I didn't tell them they needed or even should include all the reasons in their personal statement, but I wanted to see their minds were open and they were willing to be honest with themselves. And not one of the dozens of students who I worked with ever mentioned compensation until after I prodded them and indicated that money and lifestyle are also valid reasons for enormous career decisions. Once prompted, everyone would chuckle, loosen up a bit, and agree that they wanted to be compensated well for hard work in their career.

But we don't talk about this. We don't talk about how much money we make or how much money we wish we made. Or, if we do, perhaps we fear being lumped together with money-hungry ladder climbing go-getters who want nothing more than to increase their salary and die someday on a king-sized bed built of hundred dollar bills. No one wants to be lumped into a category with that guy.

But that stigma is keeping us from conversations that could potentially truly benefit us and help us in continuing our education of how to navigate the world as professionals, providers, family members, members of various communities, and adults in general.

When exploring the need for a physician personal finance education platform, I had as many conversations with medical students, residents, and early-in-their-attending-years physicians as I could. I want to know the same thing from all of them: I wanted to better understand their experience and relationship with money and how those have shaped their decisions and experiences in relation to their careers. In a field as demanding and highly intellectual as medicine, I was surprised by the enormous variety I found when people talked through their relationship with money. Some people I talked to were extremely debt-tolerant, going into more debt than strictly necessary to ensure that their undergraduate medical school and residency experiences were not just livable, but top-notch. Others had been raised in families where they were taught that maintaining a monthly

balance on their credit cards would improve their credit scores (in case you fall into this category, know that it doesn't). Still others would readily confess (and sometimes proudly brandish) their utter and complete ignorance to all things financial — whether we were discussing simple monthly budgets or complex investing and retirement plans — and wave to me in the direction of a significant other, a cousin, or, in many cases, a tired and caring member of their physician faculty who had somehow earned himself or herself the reputation for being the go-to money person on staff for generations of medical students, residents, and attending physicians.

In stages as demanding and vertical as medical school and residency, it is a blessing, I'm sure, to have someone in your life who is willing to take on the mental load of finances. In fact, in my informal research, I discovered it was more common than not for a medical student's partner to be not just in charge of household finances, but the primary go to person for matters of their own educational debt and repayment. In other words, we find ourselves with a system that is not only so demanding and rigorous that it's leading to increasingly poor health outcomes for its own people, but that it leaves individuals so flabbergasted as to how to navigate its financial implications that those individuals are left to resort to the patient research of their loved ones to understand their own options for how to pay for their medical education.

Such a system, combined with the trend of not talking about finance, also creates an uncomfortable inequality between professionals. According to recent statistics, 25% of medical students graduate without debt from medical school. That means that if you as a medical student are looking to your peers for an example of what a suitable, sustainable lifestyle is like for yourself, then a quarter of the time, you may be looking at someone who is not dealing with the mental load and pressure of debt in the way you are dealing with it. Even something as simple as seeing your friends take vacations or make arguably unnecessary purchases may create subliminal pressure for you to also indulge in things that appear to be affordable for a fellow medical student, whether or not you have determined that they are personally affordable for you.

This tendency to avoid discussing personal finances has also led to extreme oversimplification from a systemic perspective. I was again surprised in my conversations with medical students and residents to hear how generally unhelpful many of their interactions with their financial aid offices at their respective institutions have been. One person recounted being told (for the entirety of a lecture, mind you, that was advertised as designed to help them to make a plan for budgeting on a limited residence budget) that their financial situation was their fault because their generation was likely to be buying fancy coffee daily instead of brewing their own. Such oversimplification and condescension was, I'm sorry to say, much more common than one would hope in these conversations with medical students, residents, and attending physicians. Such an experience, even this one in its extreme, produces droplets of shame that are bound to fester and prevent otherwise productive conversations, whether formal or spontaneous, from happening in the first place. It could prevent an individual physician from learning something about money management or investing that could change their lives – and, by extension, the lives of their patients and families – for the better.

For most people, it is unthinkable to get through a full medical education without any debt. And that's not necessarily a bad thing; modern society allows for investments of time and money into the promise of future value, and the existence of student loans is one of the things helping to ensure that we have the best providers being trained and not just the providers who happen to come from families who can afford to make them doctors. But if we don't reevaluate our own relationship with money and openly revisit the stigma of talking about money and one another, I'm afraid that we will create a stagnant environment where needed change – whether that change is needed on administrative levels to ensure the sustainability and financial viability of healthcare organizations, or needed on individual levels to sustain and promote good mental health for hard-working physicians– is entirely inaccessible.

You can start today. If you have a solid knowledge of personal finance, complete with a robust retirement and investing plan and debt payoff strategies, then bring up something you've learned or heard recently about personal finance with your colleagues. If they see you're willing to discuss finances, they may also be willing to open up.

Conversely, if you don't feel confident in your own understanding of your options and personal finances — or even if you just recognize that there's no way to know what you don't know — then make a plan to learn something. There are plenty of podcasts and Youtubers who discuss personal finance at length, and some of us even focus specifically on physician personal finance. If you want a bite sized, free way to start that educational experience, I would love to hear if the app that my team and I built in response to those dozens of conversations I had scratches that itch for you.

What is perhaps most important is remembering that money is just a tool. If we treat it like a tool and not like a prize to be won on one end of the spectrum or an unknown, unfeeling god to fear on the other, then we'll be more likely to be personally in control of our money. We'll be more able to be a source of positive change where changes are needed to make the world safer, healthier, and more prone to thrive.

1. *MedSchoolInsiders: https://medschoolinsiders.com/premed/the-real-cost-of-medical-school/#:~:text=Approximately%2012%25%20graduate%20with%20%24300%2C000,just%20a%20few%20years%20ago.*

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2650



FOUR SEASONS SCOTTSDALE

FINDING GOLD IN THE COPPER STATE

THE PERFECT PLACE FOR FAMILIES, GOLFERS, COUPLES, AND FRIEND GETAWAYS

BY JEN HELMLE

MDescapes

Heading to the Four Seasons Scottsdale at Troon North I was excited to see what Arizona had to offer. I was beyond overjoyed to find out it is better than I could have expected. Located about 35 minutes from Phoenix Sky Harbor Airport it only announces itself with a simple sign on a stone wall. But once inside the walls be prepared to be treated to majestic landscape and mountains of the Sonoran Desert and first-class luxury and service synonymous with Four Seasons. This resort is the perfect place for families, golfers, couples, friend getaways. You have access to the nearby cities of Scottsdale and Phoenix, prime level golf at Troon North and numerous outdoor adventures awaits you. If you are just coming to relax, then you are covered too. Any reason you can think of to come here is good enough. I'm starting to think of some already to return.

The FS Scottsdale at Troon North has 210 beautifully decorated and appointed guest rooms located in 25 separate casitas buildings spread throughout the property. I would like to note that this property is dog friendly, even at the pool, and I loved seeing all the four-legged friends around the grounds of the resort. The Southwestern style adobe casitas are connected from the lobby in the main building by paths lined with the most beautiful landscaping of desert cactuses, flowering shrubs, pottery, bushes and trees. You will see cottontail bunnies hopping around as you walk around. At night chimineas lit with mesquite glow and light your way to or from your room. Twenty-two of the accommodations are suites that range from one to three bedrooms, some with outdoor showers, fire features and plunge pools. There are 44 residential units located on the property as well. All rooms feature fireplaces (I loved the roadrunner sculptures above the mantle), luxury bath amenities, plush robes, deep soaking tubs, large walk-in closets, lounge/ living areas, dry bars and amazing views from terraces or balconies. The interior design of the casitas is contemporary southwestern with muted calming colors of the desert when it is blooming. The outside of the casitas is meant to blend in with the surrounding Sonoran Desert. I learned when I was there that there are strict building codes for structures, both in height and color choices so they do not compete with the natural surroundings but blend in as if they have always been there. There is 24- hour in-room dining available with tons of options for all of your meals, snacks and even cocktail and mocktail pitchers. We can all guess what I'll be ordering. And after you have eaten all of your room service, you can browse the in-room fitness and wellness options like yoga and peloton bike rentals and in room massage, makeup and hair styling. Nothing like looking your best to stay in your room in your plush robe. I love this idea.

If you like to get your fitness or adventure goals reached outside your room, then your head is going to spin. With the amazing weather available in Arizona being outside most of the year is a given. The problem is you need to move into the resort to get to do all of the options available to you. The resort itself offers guided walks and a private trail to Pinnacle Peak Park for hiking, which is a must when you are there. Pinnacle Peak offers a 360-degree view of North Scottsdale and amazing hiking with saguaro



cactus and tons of desert vegetation and wildlife with massive granite boulders surrounding you from every angle. I was lucky enough it had rained for a day or so before I got there, and the mountain was exploding with color. If you are an advanced hiker, then fear not. The Sonoran Desert covers more than 100,000 square miles in Arizona, California and Mexico. Luckily you have access to some of this amazing terrain. The nearby Tonto National Forest has over 1,000 miles of hiking trails for you to explore. Pinnacle Peak is just one trail of the McDowell Sonoran Preserve which offers beginner to advanced hiking, horseback riding, mountain biking and more. You can find a booklet for you to take about the Scottsdale area trails at the hotel and it highlights and maps out everything you need to know to take in this scenery on the ground. The concierge and staff are also extremely knowledgeable and can direct you. Like to look at the terrain sitting down or standing still? FS Scottsdale has partnered with REI to create out of this world custom experiences. You can create your own full or half day adventures such as desert Jeep or ATV tours, hot air balloon rides, paddleboarding on Saguaro Lake, helicopter to the Grand Canyon or Sedona for a day or take it all in with an airplane or helicopter tour customized to your desires. All these exclusive experiences can be tailored to your interests by the concierge team to meet your every wish. Even though I can't even play miniature golf I know Scottsdale has some of the best golf available for the avid golfer. FS Scottsdale has partnered with the Troon North Golf Club and guests at the resort have the privilege of access to the world-class Pinnacle and Monument courses designed by Tom Weiskopf. These courses are integrated into the desert terrain and guests say the experience of golfing these courses is very unique. The resort provides transportation to Troon North daily for their golf guests. Now for everyone like me who is a resort dweller (aka not highly adventurous) don't despair! You can keep busy (or not) all day long and not even have to leave this beautiful oasis. FS Scottsdale at Troon North has something for every age and every visitor. For families there is the Kids for All Seasons program for ages 5-12 open daily to enchant



their youngest guests. There is a family game room, daily crafts, swimming, game room and excursions to keep kids entertained and engaged. In every room and in the lobby are calendars of the ever-changing weekly activities offered throughout the resort from cocktail tasting, astronomy gazing, afternoon tea, scavenger hunts for kids, meditation and fitness classes and live music. Special shout out to the champagne and daiquiri tasting. For the racquet pros there are two tennis courts and four pickleball courts open daily for private lessons and personal play. These courts are designed to keep cool, reduce stress on the body and have state-of-the-art Pro-Bounce technology. If you want to get your feet wet and escape the heat in the summer months, the pool is open year-round, heated and waiting for you! The bi-level area offers an adult only pool on the first level and a very large free form second level kid and adult pool, baby pool and large hot tub area. There are small private cabanas, luxury ones with televisions and amenities, available to shield you from the sun and offer some extra privacy. There is pool side service for both levels with food, beverage and towels. Sunscreen, hydration packs, water and aloe are available to all guests. The views are spectacular with the mountains and boulders looming above. If serious self-care is in the cards for you then make your way to the two boutiques for some retail therapy and check into the spa. The spa at FS Scottsdale is on the bottom level and hosts a fully equipped fitness center with state-of-the-art cardio and weights. There is also a studio room that hosts classes such as tai chi, Tabata, spin and yoga. The spa itself has men's and women's locker rooms, dry and steam saunas and lovely relaxation rooms. They offer many services such as facials, body treatments and massages utilizing the indigenous plants and minerals of the region to bring new life to your body and soul. I was lucky enough to experience the nopal massage by Silvia which incorporated warm prickly pear cactus gel using the actual cactus paddles which are high in antioxidants, vitamins, soothing properties and moisturization. My skin literally felt like butter for two days. There is also a salon for hair care and nail pampering. I would like to thank Ellie at the front desk for telling me to clap and stomp if I see a rattlesnake to scare it away versus the screaming and passing out which I was planning on doing if I saw one. I'm always learning something new.

You will not go hungry while staying at FS Scottsdale. In fact, do anything you can to make yourself as hungry as possible so you can eat at all of the enticing options. Proof is the FS Scottsdale's open all day and night American cantina serving a menu of comfort food classics with modern updates and some Southwest flair. You can see the smoker outside slowly cooking up a chef's special or menu item. It offers inside and outside dining. Televisions inside and out on the covered patio lets you watch a favorite team or golf match in a relaxed jovial atmosphere. A perfect way to start your day is with a latte or dare I say a mimosa? The chilaquiles were so good I had them two days in a row. Manny our amazing server insisted I get the eggs scrambled and add the shredded smoked chicken. He was correct. My husband went wild over the johnny cake benedict one morning and the short rib skillet another. For lunch you cannot go wrong with the lobster roll, the red pepper hummus, tortilla soup and green and grains goodness bowl was also a hit. If you are having a drink the spicy-prickly bikini rita was out of this world. There are many bourbons and bourbon cocktails to match the comfort food menu and seasonal cocktails as well. If you are spending your day lounging at the pool, then Saguaro Blossom is the food destination for you. Located on the upper level of the pool



area, there is a bar with televisions, shaded tables, firepit seating as well as your pool chair. You do not need to lift a finger. Serving lunch, light fare and beverages daily until 5 you can sit back and sip a cocktail, read a book, feed the kids and let the day pass by. Standouts on the menu which had just changed were the hummus with green goddess pesto and the tuna poke nachos. They were utterly remarkable. The spicy margarita with cucumber (my own concoction) was also perfect. There is a kid's menu and make sure they don't miss the icicle tricycle to grab a sweet frozen treat. Many thanks to Adrain and Sabrina at the pool for their top-notch service. If you are looking for light evening fare, you must head up to the lobby and grab a seat at Onyx bar and lounge. Offering inside seating at the gorgeous sandstone influenced bar or outside on the terrace with the sun setting on Pinnacle Peak you will be pleased. Onyx serves small plates and craft cocktails daily from 5pm. Tea service is also offered some afternoons, just check your weekly calendar of events. Jeff made me a French 75 with pea powder gin (I had never heard of it) which came out the loveliest shade of lavender I have ever seen. It was also delicious. Menu highlights while I was there were the shrimp cocktail with mezcal cocktail sauce, patatas bravas, lobster tostada and the bistec con fritas (steak and fries for short). If you want to put on something nice and treat yourself to a very special and unforgettable dining experience, make a reservation at Talavera and prepare to be talking about this dinner for a long time. Located past Onyx lounge, Talavera is a modern Spanish steakhouse with Latin influence and a menu that makes you want to come back the next night. There is indoor and outdoor seating but if you can sit outdoors definitely grab a table. Being able to sit on the terrace, sip a champagne or cocktail with Troon Mountain to your left and Pinnacle Peak to your right, you feel like you are in the most exclusive place in the world. The sky was literally purple after the most beautiful sunset, and you could see Venus shining brightly below the moon. Pure magic. Speaking of pure magic, the food! I'm sure you will be sharing your menu choices with people who could care less for a long time. My last dining experience this amazing was Miss River and Chemin a la Mer at the FS NOLA. The standouts we were lucky enough to try were the ensalada with pickled stone fruits, Spanish grilled octopus, head on prawns, Talavera signature paella, bone-in ribeye, roasted honey carrots with lentils and sauteed baby spinach and kale. Yes, I did have room for dessert (I have no idea how) and the glazed agave berries with almonds and the toasted marshmallow ice cream were enough to put me right to bed after a much-needed walk on the path back to the casita. I would like to thank the most wonderful Catherine for her exceptional service, knowledge and warmth. She was part of what made the dinner so exceptional.

I feel so lucky to have been able to stay at this majestic place in the Sonoran Desert. You really feel like you are transported to a different world when you are there. Whether you are exploring the nearby city life, outdoor adventuring or just recharging please consider the Four Seasons at Troon North. You will not be disappointed. Although the state slogan is "The Grand Canyon State" the Arizona state motto is "Ditat Deus" which means "God Enriches". You will be enriched in these captivating surroundings. Thank you, Kim Cole, for another experience that has made my view bigger and better. May you all travel somewhere that is always adding to your horizons.



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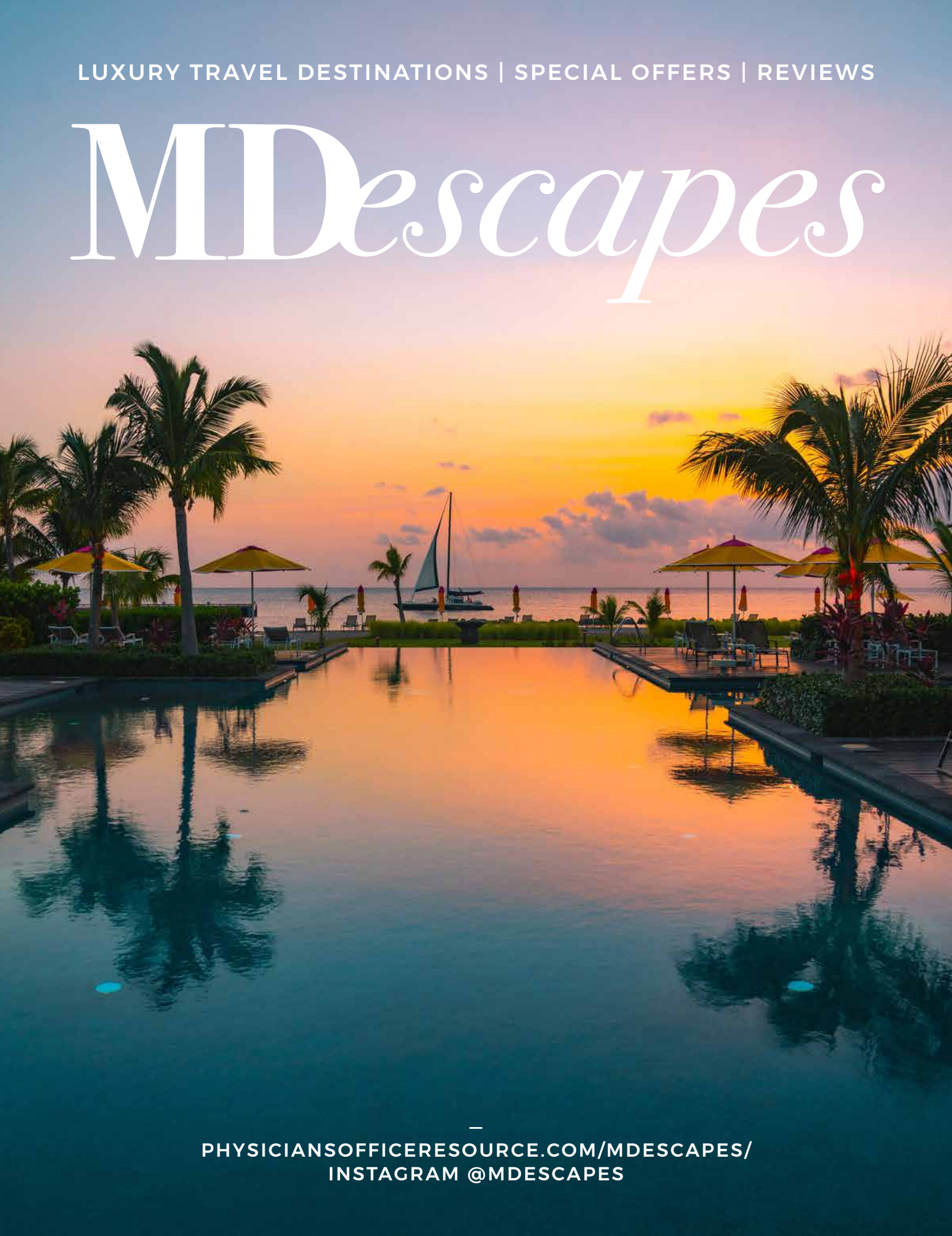
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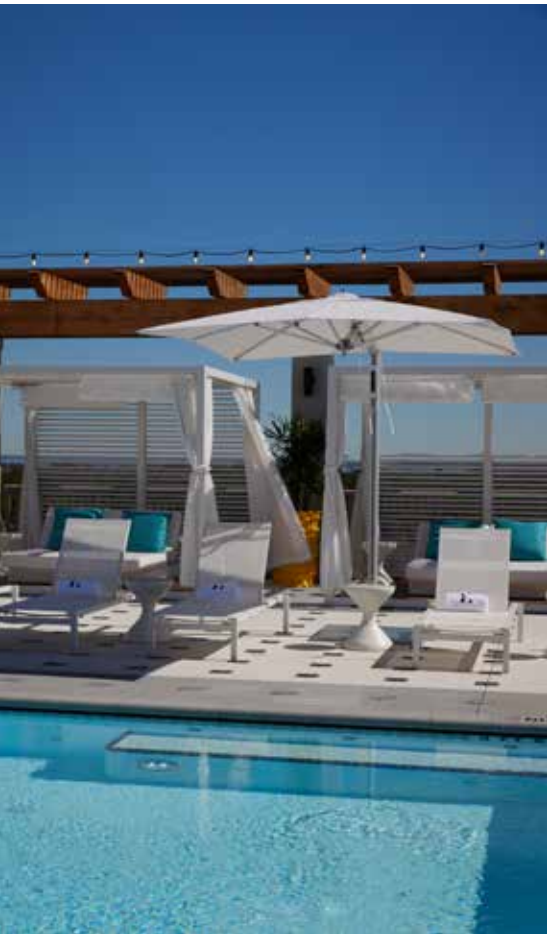
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