

**American College of Occupational and Preventive Medicine
2011 Annual Meeting, Orlando, Florida, November 1, 2011**



Business of Occupational Medicine

Gonzalo Fernandez, MD
P. Lance Walker, DO

About Us

Gonzalo Fernandez, MD

- Family Medicine Physician
- Based out of NC working full time in Occupational Medicine for the last 6 years
- Corporate Consulting Physician for Progress Energy
- Oversee 4 physicians and 10,000 employees at 4 nuclear power plants.
- Have also worked with John Deere Turf Care, Butterball, Caterpillar and many other national corporations providing medical directorship and consulting.

About Us

P. Lance Walker, DO MPH

- Family Medicine Physician
- Based out of Georgia, working full time in Occupational Medicine
- Associate Medical Director for Georgia Power
- Supervises the wellness program for over 12,000 Georgia Power and Alabama Power employees
- Secretary Elect of the American Osteopathic College of Occupational and Preventive Medicine.

About Us

- Together, they have 21+ years experience in occupational medicine
- Have performed thousands of HAZMAT, Fire Brigade Armed Guard, and Emergency Response Team physicals
- Have worked with many companies including Georgia Pacific, Duke Energy, Owens-Corning, Louisiana Pacific, Southern Company, Fluor Global and GKN
- Both started in general family medicine

What we do



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Learning Objectives

- Discuss common problems for physicians in occupational medicine.
- Learn how to prepare for and overcome challenges to a successful occupational medicine practice.
- Discuss resources for physicians and staff to learn more about occupational medicine and building a successful occupational medicine practice.

Benefits of Occupational Medicine

- Low overhead
- Cash business
- No special training needed to get started
- Low start up costs
- Customizable to your practice
- Many different practice niches

Pitfalls of Occupational Medicine

- Many the same as a Family Practice
 - Staff issues, training
 - Malpractice
- Some employers more concerned with convenience than safety
- Playing by the rules can make you unpopular

Pitfalls of Occupational Medicine

- Potential for Litigation, Subpoena
- May need Medical Director Insurance
- Licensing Issues multi-state practices
- Staff Training

Pitfalls of Occupational Medicine

- Tendency toward overconfidence with under competence
- Dealing with a new set of rules, OSHA, MSHA, FAA, MCSA (nobody taught me about this in medical school!!!!)
- Record Keeping OSHA 1910.1020

Pitfalls of Occupational Medicine

- Pricing of your services, not the same model as family/internal med
- The art of the minimum
- Contracts, price points, automatic renewals
- Clients try to shoehorn you into low paying services



Building your base

Surround yourself with people who are smarter than you

Don't reinvent the wheel

Building your base

Accountant
Billing Company
Attorney
Mentor
Consultants

The Most Important Thing

It's not the equipment or training

The Most Important Thing

It's about putting your customer first

The Most Important Thing

Understand your client and what they need

Remember that you have **two** clients:
The Company and the **Employee**

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The Most Important Thing

- What does the client want?
- What does the client need?
- What issues have they had with other providers?

The Most Important Thing

- Listen and Learn
- Show an interest, take a tour
- Go out of your way to make their life easier

The Most Important Thing

How do they want to communicate?

- Email?
- Fax?
- Phone?

**Preparing your Office and Staff to Offer
Occupational Medical Services**

Where Do I Start?

- Do I need expensive equipment?
- What kind of training do I need?
- What does my staff need to know?

**Preparing your Office and Staff to Offer
Occupational Medical Services**

If you have the following items, you'll be able to perform most occupational medical exams

- Stethoscope
- Otoscope/ophthalmoscope
- Blood Pressure Cuff
- Snellen Eye chart
- Reflex Hammer
- Electrocardiogram
- Spirometer
- A valid state medical license

**Preparing your Office and Staff to Offer
Occupational Medical Services**

What about training?

You have already taken the first step by attending this lecture

- We will talk more about specific training and courses you can take
- Physician should also have the training not just staff

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Spirometry

A little different than the primary care setting

Clearance vs. Diagnosis

- Post offer physicals
- Periodic monitoring
- Exit Testing
- Determination of Disability

Spirometry

What should you consider when buying a spirometer?

- Price
- Portability
- Ease of Use
- Must be able to generate the required reports

Spirometry Training

- NIOSH Course
At the minimum. have a staff member take the course

cdc.gov/niosh/topics/spirometry/sponsors.html

Audiometry

Complete occupational medicine provider should be able to offer audiometry

Not a lot of money in audiograms but essential part of some occmed exams

Audiometry

Reasons for Audiometry

- Mandated Testing
- Occupational Specific Testing
- Disability Determination

Audiometry

Sound Booth vs. Sound Room

Booths are expensive, heavy, and take up room

Consider a quiet room with continuous sound monitoring when getting started

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Training in Audiometry

Hearing Conservationist Course

CAOHC Council for Accreditation in
Occupational Hearing Conservation

Caohc.org/ohs/course

Marketing Tip

- Don't let certification dollars go to waste, use certifications to differentiate your practice from competitors
- If you pay staff to go to classes consider a contract where they repay the cost of the course if they leave your practice within a certain period of time

Vision Testing

Snellen Eye Chart good enough for about
90% of what you will do

Titmus vision tester is industry standard 2k

ECG

Consider laptop based ECG

- Price
- Portability
- Ease of Use
- Must be able to generate the required reports

USED vs NEW

Saved thousands as we were getting started by
buying used equipment

More experienced now, and buying more
new equipment

Workers Comp

- Great Practice Builder
- Community Relations
- Entrée to companies
- New Patients
- Face time with Company Executives

Other Occmed Niches

Revenue Enhancers

- Can Lead to Further Business
- Can Help Grow Your Primary Practice

How do I get started?

Marketing

Do you look the part?

- Website
- Brochures
- Business Cards

Additional Training

- NIOSH training course
- CAOHC training course
- CDL
- MRO
- FAA
- AOCOPM Occ Med course
- Business of Occupational Medicine Seminar