

Development of a Scope of Practice Document for a Large Urban Hospitalist Program

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Background:

The Calgary Hospitalist Program provides care to 554 acute and 248 sub acute patients across 4 adult hospitals. In order to provide a consistent level of clinical service across this very large program a clearly defined Scope of Practice document was required.

Methods:

Three strategies were employed to develop the Scope of Practice: 1) Broad, meaningful consultation with key stakeholders, 2) Targeted CME with internal and external experts and, 3) A conjoint working group with a key stakeholder.

Results:

A document was produced that described the Scope of Practice as it pertains to both acute and subacute patients. Guidelines regarding “appropriateness” of admission to the hospitalist service were established. Particular attention was paid to patients presenting with gastrointestinal bleeding, and patients presenting with a closed head injury.

Conclusions:

In a large and rapidly changing hospitalist program, clear communication with stakeholders is key, particularly with respect to scope of practice. Broad, collegial consultation utilizing a variety of approaches is shown to be effective at producing a clear and comprehensive Scope of Practice document.