



## COMPANY BACKGROUNDER

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*Bringing Real Choices to Physicians and Patients*

### **The Need for New Solutions for Physicians**

In 2005, Wayne Lipton, a healthcare and medical management industry veteran, recognized that in order for physicians to continue providing patients with high-quality care, while maintaining the practice model they preferred, they needed choices. He also wanted to ensure that, in the changing U.S. healthcare climate, the valued ideal of the trusted physician who knew their patients personally did not vanish or become diluted. To address the concerns of physicians and to meet the needs of patients, Lipton launched Concierge Choice Physicians, LLC.

The mission of Concierge Choice Physicians, (CCP), is to offer physicians and patients the chance to return to medicine the way it was meant to be practiced. Before the marketplace forced “volume” and big-box care on patients and physicians.

Toward that goal, CCP helps physicians introduce membership-based programs into their practice designed to offer the extra service, advocacy and preventive care that is often necessary for aging and busy patients, as well as those with complex or chronic illnesses, and those who simply want more emphasis on prevention and wellness.

Concierge options also enable physicians to maintain or introduce a revenue stream that will stabilize and support their practices, often giving them the flexibility to remain viable and independent. Program models include *FullFlex™*, where the entire practice is eventually converted to a full-concierge model, or the *Hybrid Choice™* model, in which just a portion of the practice joins the program.

For physicians seeking to move from a traditional setting into either a *FullFlex* or *Hybrid Choice* concierge practice, CCP provides guidance and support in how, when, and if to make such a transition. CCP services also include billing, in-depth market research, communication and outreach to patients, and staff training and development.

CCP operates in 24 states and the District of Columbia. CCP is the largest company offering physicians a hybrid option, and the second largest concierge management company overall.

### **Assuring the Viability of the Private Practice Physician**

To meet the demands of medicine today, many physicians are joining large medical groups, affiliating with health systems, or selling their practices to hospitals and other healthcare organizations. As a result of these trends, researchers estimate that nearly two-thirds of all physicians will be employees of hospitals or large corporations within 10 years.

Physicians note that one of the primary benefits of both the *FullFlex* and *Hybrid Choice* options are that both models allow them to maintain their professional autonomy.

However, even larger medical groups and health systems are beginning to adopt concierge programs as a way to differentiate their services in a crowded market and to recruit and retain top physicians.

### **Overview – FullFlex and Hybrid Choice**

Under either the *FullFlex* or *Hybrid Choice* models, physicians can be champions for their patients, and have time to coordinate care, make referrals, conduct hospital visits, and often make house calls. They also can focus on preventing illness and promoting wellness, two of the cornerstones of concierge medicine.

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In *FullFlex* models, affiliated physicians transition their entire practice to a concierge program with between 200 and 700 members.

In the *Hybrid Choice* program, patients have the option to remain in the traditional practice, or join their physician's concierge program. The concierge program operates alongside the physician's traditional practice, and he or she is able to continue to serve all patients. Most Concierge Choice hybrid programs have 50 to 150 members. Several hours are set aside each week for concierge services, including expanded office visits, greater care coordination with specialists, and more time for phone consultations and emotional support.

In both the *FullFlex* and *Hybrid Choice* programs, most physicians continue to take insurance, including Medicare.

### Features and Benefits

Under either *FullFlex* or *Hybrid Choice* options, physicians get similar benefits. For physicians, Concierge Choice models:

- Allow them to practice the kind of personalized medicine they prefer and enjoy
- Enhance revenue by bringing in a new source of income
- Enable physicians to have extended office appointments, allowing them to conduct a complete and more personal review of each patient's medical needs
- Create flexibility in scheduling that allows for more patient advocacy and treatment coordination

For patients, the CCP programs offer several advantages over more traditional care. The programs offer patients more time and availability, as well as a more personalized and enhanced connection with their chosen physician... the opposite of the direction medicine has been moving for the last 20 years. In a concierge practice, each patient gets:

- Direct care from his or her private physician
- Convenient, unhurried appointments that start on time
- Assistance with the complexities of specialist referrals and diagnostics
- A focus on illness prevention, managing existing conditions, and staying healthy
- Patient advocacy with outside health providers and insurance
- Physician availability 24 hours a day via private cell phone or email

Both models also offer services generally not covered in traditional or Medicare plans. However, each physician is free to design the program in a manner that best meets their needs, and those of their patients. Some physicians choose to offer nutrition counseling, others sports medicine, and still others specialize in geriatric care. The fee averages about \$160 per month, and children up to age 25 may participate under their parents' program at no additional charge.

### More Options for Today's Healthcare Environment

With a new shift in politics and questions on the future of the Affordable Care Act, the debate over how to fix the healthcare system will continue. Providing practice options that include market-driven components encourage more physicians to remain in primary care. The competition and reward mechanisms inherent in a freemarket-based enterprise strengthen relationships between physicians and patients, reward excellence, and stop the ongoing erosion of primary care. By providing solutions that are viable and preferable, there will be models that better meet the needs of all healthcare constituents.

For additional information visit [www.choice.md](http://www.choice.md)