

Orthopaedic Connection

The Best Job

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Transforming patient information into patient understanding.

Michigan's new football coach, Jim Harbaugh has a question that he often asks his players and it goes like this. "Who has it better than us?" And the answer the players are supposed to reply, "Nobody."

I'm not a coach or a player, but after I heard that a few times I found a correlation with what I and my office staff do. I think we do have one of the best jobs in medicine (now referred to as Health Care!) for this reason.

My staff and I are truly fortunate to be delivering Orthopaedic care. We care daily for patients who have sustained acute injuries or degenerative conditions that rob them of their ability to work, to function or even to enjoy life.

Some conditions patients bring us to evaluate and treat are completely obvious. At other times we see patients who are having one of the worst days of their lives and are in a state of fear, pain and disability.

Other conditions affecting patients are challenging and almost impossible to unravel because the musculoskeletal system is so vast and complex.

Nevertheless we are frequently able to successfully restore function, relieve pain and return patients to their occupations, avocations and family life by what we do in Orthopaedic Surgery practice.

You might say we have unique opportunities to literally change people's lives, which leads to great professional satisfaction.

Winds Of Change

Over many years changes have been taking place in how medical care is delivered. There appears to be a definite transition from a patient care model to an efficiency or business model. This is not unique to Orthopaedic Surgeons, but is characteristic of medicine in general.

Physicians are spending less and less time examining patients, taking histories and educating patients. They are spending more time importing information into computers, ordering x-rays, lab tests and writing prescriptions.

I never intend to forget the advice in medical school that said "If you take time to listen to the patient (or family) and take a good medical history they will in most cases tell you what their diagnosis is." The problem is hardly anyone does this anymore. Instead they order an MRI or pull out the prescription pad.

About the Future

I hope I am bright enough to realize that some of the changes in how we practice are here to stay. But the advice I was given at the University of Michigan medical school will always remain true.

I believe it is still possible to maintain a primary focus on good patient care no matter what practice situation the physician is in.

A statement in our office for patients and staff to see as a reminder says, "*Every patient deserves great Orthopaedic care.*"

The Gift

Our patients give us the rare gift of sharing their lives with us and trusting us to help them and in return we focus on our patients' needs and pledge to help them heal.

We are privileged to live in an amazing place called the “House of Orthopaedics”. Those of us who reside there exist for a singular professional purpose: to serve our patients.

We can use the new technologies and still remember that our patients come first. We can treat them as individuals and not as Orthopaedic problems or cases and in doing so patient satisfaction is greatly increased as is our own professional satisfaction. In short everyone WINS.

My patients put their trust in me and what I do improves the quality of their lives.

Office Website and Gratiot County Herald Archive

What if there was a whole world of musculoskeletal information at one place? There is!

www.orthopodsurgeon.com opens up for you the office website, Your Orthopaedic Connection and the Archive of all previous GCH articles I have written for you, your family and friends.

Please check it out. Do yourself a favor.

Be well.

Dr. Haverbush