Physicians weigh in on the DPC model

BY KIMBERLY LEGG CORBA, DO, AND MICHAEL WATSON, MD
“I was very burned out with my prior fee-for-service academic position. That dramatically resolved with direct primary care (DPC) but it's an interesting time in medicine in general. With alternative-thought forces such as Web-MDers (Google diagnosticians), anti-vaxxers, and those who approach physicians as only their dealer of Z-Paks, there are still some days where one feels like just a customer service representative but overall, DPC is amazing and renewed my love for being a physician!”
“I was at maximum burnout before DPC and was about to leave medicine altogether. But finding DPC has saved my career, my family, and my sanity. The whole of medicine is still in grave danger. But DPC is a beacon of hope for physicians and patients. If more young doctors chose DPC, their experiences will be vastly less traumatic than those of the last 40 years.”
“Pessimistic thoughts about family medicine and constant feelings of burnout are now gone that I started my DPC practice and left a hospital-owned practice.”

“I would never go back to traditional practice!”
“DPC is the answer to burnout as you are able to provide wonderful care for patients and spend the time necessary to build relationships. My patients are grateful for their care and I know that I have given them the best of my ability because I have the time to do so within this model. It is back to the ideal practice of medicine with direct primary care.”
“I was burning out quickly until I started my DPC practice—I wouldn't recommend medicine as a career until it was DPC.”

“Direct primary care is wonderful for both physician and patient!”

“Answers would have been much more pessimistic if I was practicing in fee-for-service realm.”
“I transitioned from hospital-based practice to DPC and it renewed my passion for medicine and allows me to practice the way that I think medicine should be practiced. I could never go back!”
“... I would never, ever want my kids to go through what I went through to get to this point. I don't want them to feel so empty and worthless and used up during training. I don't want my daughter to face the sexual harassment I endured. I don't want either of them to face the put downs and mind games. I don't want them to work ridiculously long shifts. I don't want them to give their young/healthy/fun years to study and work. So yes, DPC is great. At this point if someone is in med school or residency already I encourage them, but if they are still pre-med, I encourage them to consider a different path.”
“…I am happier than I have been since I don't know when. I would go into medicine if I could go to where I am now and not go through the last 15 years. If I had to do it the same, I wouldn't. My family practice residency program prided itself on toughening you up. And since many of the grads stayed in the area, this was also the culture of the local offices and hospital. I stayed due to my family and thinking that I was the problem. DPC is the first thing that I have found that gives me hope for the future of medicine and it's doctors. I wish I had had the guts to strike out on my own earlier. I think anytime you give someone all the responsibility and minimal decision making power it is a setup for bad mental health.”
“Only after I got rescued into my DPC practice did I start recommending family medicine again to pre-med students. It’s the only way to do primary care.”

“I think overall, the state of medicine is in terrible shape. I think direct primary care is one way to help save our profession. I have only been doing DPC for six months so I am still recovering from the previous 16 years of the fee-for-service nightmare. I could not recommend medicine to anybody in the current state of the profession but I definitely would recommend DPC!”