

# What is hospital medicine, and what is a hospitalist?

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Hospital Medicine is a medical specialty dedicated to the delivery of comprehensive medical care to hospitalized patients. Practitioners of hospital medicine include physicians (“hospitalists”) and non-physician clinicians who engage in clinical care, teaching, research, and or leadership in the field of general hospital medicine. Hospitalists manage and treat a significant range of complex and comorbid disease conditions. Hospitalists typically undergo residency training in general internal medicine, general pediatrics, or family practice. A minority of hospitalists specialize in fields including neurology, obstetrics and gynecology, and oncology.

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## Hospitalists improve care for hospitalized patients.

In addition to their core expertise managing the clinical problems of acutely ill, hospitalized patients, hospital medicine practitioners actively support the implementation of evidence-based guidelines and practices to facilitate optimal continuity of care and enhance the performance of hospitals and healthcare systems by:

- Managing day-to-day care and providing prompt and complete attention to all patient care needs including diagnosis, treatment, and the performance of medical procedures (within their scope of practice)
- Employing quality and process improvement techniques and practices to make the hospital a safer place and improve patient outcomes
- Facilitating collaboration, communication, and coordination with all physicians, healthcare personnel, and care team members caring for hospitalized patients
- Supporting safe transitioning of patient care within the hospital, and from the hospital to the community, which may include oversight of care in post-acute care facilities
- Practicing efficient and judicious use of hospital and healthcare resources

Through these practices, hospitalists provide efficient care delivery and improve clinical outcomes, reducing mortality rates, enhancing care coordination, preventing hospital-acquired infections, and facilitating comprehensive transitions of care. The hospitalist’s extensive clinical experience in caring for some of the most complex medically ill patients as well as the hospitalist’s focus on providing patient-centered care translates into safer, higher quality care for hospitalized patients.