

Dr Scott Caesar of University Urology: 5 Things You Need To Know To Create a Highly Successful Private Practice

An Interview With Luke Kervin



Luke Kervin, Co-Founder of PatientPop

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Dec 26, 2021 · 7 min read



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As *a part of our interview series with prominent medical professionals called “5 Things You Need To Know To Create a Highly Successful Private Practice” I had the pleasure of interviewing Dr. Scott Caesar.*

A board-certified urologist, Dr. Caesar is the lead physician at South Florida-based University Urology. Dr. Caesar’s areas of interest include minimally invasive (laparoscopic) and robotic surgery for the treatment of both cancer and benign diseases and he is a member of the American Urology Association.

Thank you so much for joining us in this interview series! Before we dive in, our readers would love to “get to know you” a bit better. Can you tell us a bit about your ‘backstory’ and how you ended up where you are?

I was born and raised in Miami and I was lucky to be raised by two wonderful parents, both teachers. I had no physicians in my family but always knew I wanted to go into medicine, particularly a surgical field. After spending four years at the University of Rochester for college, I attended medical school at the University of Pennsylvania, where I learned about urology. After seeing the technology involved in the operations and how life changing many of the procedures were, I was hooked. I

spent five more years in Philadelphia for my residency at Penn. My wife is also from Miami and we both wanted to be closer to home, so I established my practice, University Urology, in Southwest Florida in partnership with Genesis Care.

I'm a huge fan of mentorship throughout one's career. None of us are able to achieve success without some help along the way. Who has been your biggest mentor? What was the most valuable lesson you learned from them?

Every attending and co-resident I spent time with at Penn influenced my practice patterns and drive. I couldn't have reached where I am now without them helping me learn the art of medicine, not just the operative techniques. I also have to acknowledge having the privilege of studying under the renowned Dr. Alan J. Wein, the director of the Urology Residency Program at Penn Medicine.

What made you want to start your own practice? Can you tell us the story of how you started it?

I have always believed in patient autonomy. My job as a urologist is to inform my patients of what problems they have and the solutions available to treat them. By providing that information, I trust my patients to do what's best for themselves. I don't think I could have achieved that same level of autonomy for my patients without starting my own practice. I also enjoy having a family of co-workers that I can work with daily toward the goal of patient care.

I have an obsession with efficiency and running my own practice allows me to feed that obsession through achieving maximum efficiency. For instance, technology is a tremendous driver of efficiency in the clinical setting today, and being in private practice allows me to customize our software suite from ModMed in a way that's best for me and my practice. By minimizing paperwork, I can spend more meaningful time with my patients and get them in and out of the clinic more quickly.

Having my own practice also affords me the chance to make my own schedule and spend time with my wife and two daughters whenever possible.

Because it is a "helping profession", some healthcare providers struggle with the idea of "monetization." How do you address the business aspect of running a

medical practice? Can you share a story or example?

Patient care does not have to degrade in order to make a practice financially sustainable. The most important element to financial viability and quality patient care is efficiency. This does not just apply to me, but to my entire staff as well. In my practice, the statement “that is not my job” does not exist. Each of us is there for each other to make sure patients get the care they need. We all have the common goal of moving the days along as efficiently as possible. This ensures patients are taken care of in a timely fashion, but also allows the practice to run successfully and remain financially sustainable.

Managing being a provider and a business owner is a constant balancing act. How do you manage both roles?

Being on my own has some advantages and one of those is visibility into my financial details monthly. My practice manager is amazing. She has been with me since the beginning and we both have developed a great system in checks and balances to how the practice is run from a business perspective. In the end, I have learned that if you take good care of patients, build rapport with consulting providers, and work hard, that the business part takes care of itself.

From completing your degree to opening a practice and becoming a business owner, your path was most likely challenging. Can you share a story about one of your greatest struggles? Can you share what you did to overcome it?

In Southwest Florida, the over 60 population makes growth often come fast and fierce. With that, being in a solo practice immediately out of training came with a short amount of time for a steep learning curve. I learned quickly to listen to colleagues, my practice manager and other business owners outside the medical field. Taking in all of their insights helped me to build helpful habits and allowed me to succeed in a short amount of time.

Ok, thank you. Here is the main question of our interview. What are the 5 things you need to know to create a thriving practice, and why? (Please share a story or example for each.)

1. Always put patients first — Taking care of patients is why my colleagues and I pursued a career in medicine. I try to never lose sight of that fact.
2. Treat your staff like family — As I mentioned, my staff and our ethos of supporting one another is critical to ensuring the health of our patients and the health of our business. Without them, I cannot succeed.
3. Take time for yourself and your family — Spending time with my wife and daughters keeps me refreshed and passionate about my work, which ultimately helps me to deliver the best care possible for my patients.
4. Do not forget about relationships with your referring providers — As an independent practice, I rely on strong relationships with referring physicians. We are all in the healthcare ecosystem to help patients.
5. Be nice — We simply cannot deliver exceptional patient care without establishing a friendly and positive environment in our practice.

As a business owner you spend most of your time working IN your practice, seeing patients. When and how do you shift to working ON your practice? (Marketing, upgrading systems, growing your practice, etc.) How much time do you spend on the business elements?

In all honesty, at the start of my practice I spent countless hours in the car, personally visiting every doctor in the area to network with them and build a rapport that allows us to collaborate more effectively on patient care. Every doctor has my cell phone number and can reach out to me anytime. Now, I still try to find time once a year to get out and say hi to other physicians because I believe face-to-face contact is key to building relationships.

That level of networking also helps me to improve as a physician. In our conversations, I ask the other physicians if any complaints have come up, if they have any questions about my practice or if they see any other urological needs for their patients.

I understand that the healthcare industry has unique stresses and hazards that other industries don't have. What specific practices would you recommend to

other healthcare leaders to improve their physical or mental wellness? Can you share a story or example?

Take time off. Seriously. My rule is simple: If my daughters have time off of school, I close my office. I want that time to spend with them because it's healthy for me, and in the end, it benefits my patients. Spending some time with my family keeps me fresh and helps me to avoid burnout, which is rising during the pandemic, and could potentially lead to a shortage of physicians. I hope to practice medicine for a very long time, and life balance is a major contributor to making that a reality.

Can you please give us your favorite “Life Lesson Quote”? Can you share a story about how that was relevant in your own life?

“Excuses are the nails that built the house of failure.”

My high school wrestling coach would tell us that if we made an excuse for why something happened and it still holds true. Rather than make excuses, we should learn from our mistakes, improve on what made them happen and prevent them from happening again.

How can our readers further follow your work online?

My practice website is www.universityurologyfl.com

This was very inspiring. Thank you so much for the time you spent with this. We wish you continued success and good health!

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