AUPHA

THE VOICE OF ACADEMIC HEALTHCARE MANAGEMENT

2024-2025
BODY OF KNOWLEDGE

Association of University Programs in Health Administration

INTRODUCTION

AUPHA first published its Body of Knowledge (BOK) in 2012. The BOK provides an overview of content that may appear within a healthcare management program at the undergraduate or graduate level. Faculty may find the BOK useful to consult as they consider content for a single course, while program directors may reference it when considering the content they would like to include across a program's curriculum.

As part of the 2020-2024 Strategic Plan, the AUPHA Board of Directors committed the organization to updating this resource every other year, with the first new edition published in 2022-2023. The new edition also included the first ever Curriculum Guidance (CG), which provides faculty and program directors considerations for content delivery.

Please note: this document is not meant to be prescriptive. Together, the BOK & CG provide a resource for faculty and administration in healthcare management programs. Faculty and programs may select content from the document depending on a variety of factors. Those factors include, but are not limited to a program's school or college home (i.e., School of Public Health, College of Business, Department of Health Sciences, etc.), state and national legislation, the specific mission, vision, and values of the program, etc.
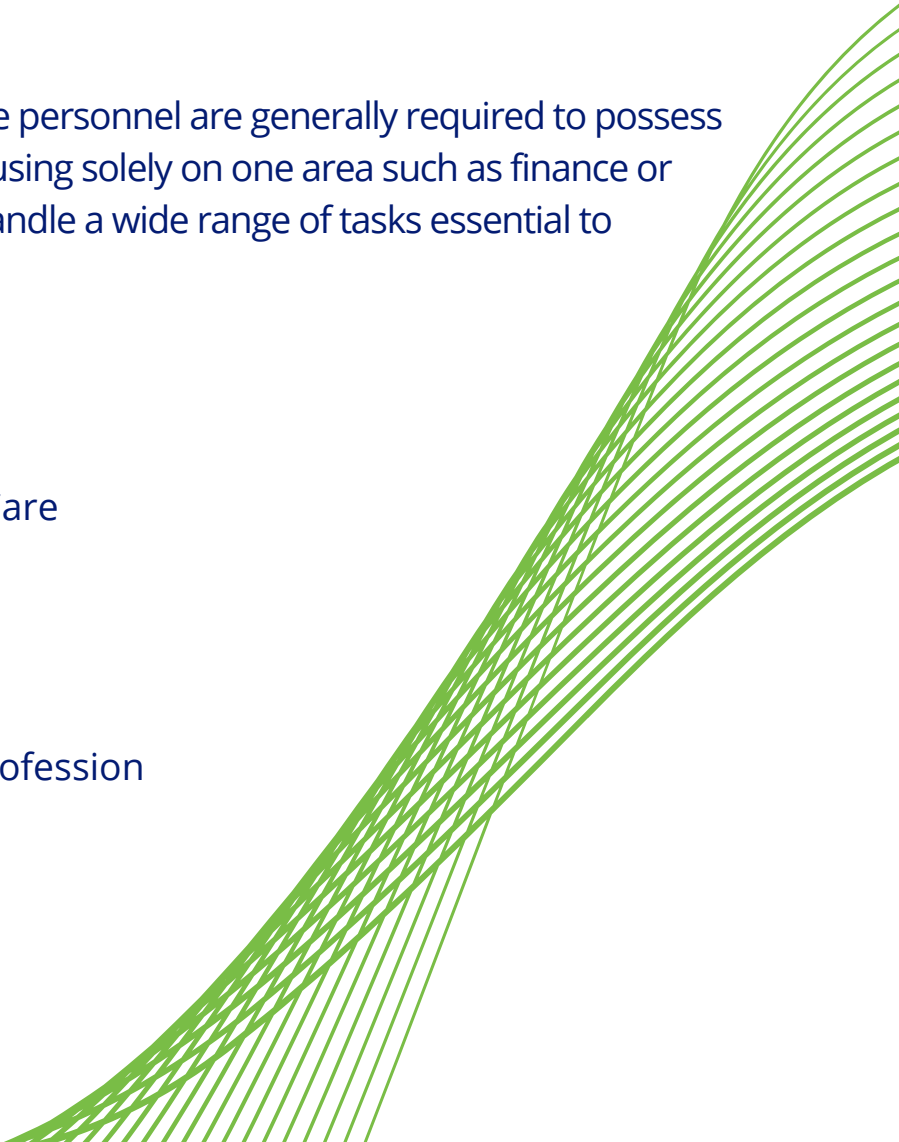
TABLE OF CONTENTS

DOMAIN 1: AMBULATORY CARE AND PRACTICE MANAGEMENT

General Description: Ambulatory care, also known as outpatient care, refers to medical services provided on an outpatient basis, including diagnosis, observation, consultation, treatment, intervention, and rehabilitation services. This care frequently involves advanced medical technology and procedures outside of outside of hospitals, academic medical centers, and other providers of institutional care. Ambulatory care-sensitive conditions are health conditions where appropriate and timely ambulatory care can prevent or reduce the need for hospital admission, such as diabetes or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

In practice management, healthcare personnel are generally required to possess a generalist skill set rather than focusing solely on one area such as finance or scheduling. This enables them to handle a wide range of tasks essential to effective practice operations.

Major topics include:
- Introduction to Ambulatory Care
- Settings
- Practices
- Personnel
- Practice Management
- Practice Management as a Profession

Content Included in this Domain:

Introduction to Ambulatory Care

Ambulatory care encompasses any same-day medical care or procedure performed in a hospital and/or outpatient setting.

- Four Components of Ambulatory Care:
  - Prevention/Wellness
  - Diagnosis
  - Treatment
  - Rehabilitation
- Ambulatory care is shaping healthcare:
  - Growth and expansion into traditional hospital space
  - Impact to patient care
  - Convenience
  - A cost-effective alternative for hospitals
- Affordable Care Act and The Triple Aim:
  - Triple Aim
    - Reduce per capita spending (affordable)
    - Increase access
    - Patient experience

Ambulatory Care Settings

Ambulatory care is care provided by healthcare professionals in a variety of hospital based and community outpatient settings.

Types of ambulatory care settings (partial list):
- Physician offices
- Non-hospital based medical clinics (e.g., public health clinics, rehab)
- Retail clinics
- Ambulatory surgery centers
- Hospital outpatient departments
- Dialysis centers
- Urgent care clinics
- Dental practices
- On-site employee health clinics

Ambulatory Care Practices	

Ambulatory Care Practices
 	
Ambulatory practice structures vary by type of practice and setting.
	• Organizational:
	  ○ Structures
	  ○ Design
	• Governance models[1]
	  ○ Shareholders
	  ○ For-profit/non-profit considerations
	  ○ Merger and acquisition considerations
	• Legal considerations[2]
	  ○ Legal structures
	  ○ Corporate practice of medicine
	  ○ Stark law, anti-kickback, self-referral
	• Construction/facility management

Ambulatory Care Personnel Ambulatory care personnel are varied and influenced by type of care delivered and setting.	• Clinicians (physicians, advanced practice providers, dentists) • Physical therapy/occupational therapy • Nursing • Medical assistants • Registered dietitians • Behavioral health • Registration/scheduling coordinators • Billing staff • Social work • Pharmacists • Entry level managers • Senior level ambulatory care managers

[1] See Domain 10: Governance
[2] See Domain 13: Health Law

Ambulatory Care Practice Management

Ambulatory care practice management requires comprehensive oversight to deliver effective, efficient, and patient-centered outpatient care.

Areas of oversight depends on ambulatory practice type and may include:

- Financial operations[3]
  - Audit
  - Budget planning
  - Capital
  - Expense management
- Billing/revenue cycle elements
  - Scheduling
  - Registration
  - Charge capture
- Purchasing/inventory management
- Risk management and regulatory compliance[4]
  - Licensure
  - Insurance
  - Vendor contracts
  - Accreditation
- Quality and patient safety[5]
  - Monitoring
  - Reporting
  - Integration with other "system" elements
- Performance measurement and reporting
- Emergency preparedness and response
- Patient experience/customer service
- Confidentiality, privacy, security
  - Policies and procedures

[3] See Domain 17: Healthcare Financial Management
[4] See Domain 13: Health Law and Domain 15: Health Policy
[5] Domain 26: Quality and Safety

Ambulatory Care Practice Management (Continued)	- Health information technologies and processes[6] - Telehealth - Digital health - Data analytics and artificial intelligence - Strategic planning and evaluation[7] - Human resources planning and management[8] - Clinical and non-clinical staffing - Recruitment - Training - Evaluation - Retention - Employment law - Payroll - Documents and reports - Operations - Expenses - Personnel - Administration - Maintenance - Value-based care/population health[9] - Value-based care models - Social determinants of health - Community partnerships and engagement

[6] See Domain 2: Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, and Digital Health and Domain 12: Health Information Systems

[7] See Domain 27: Strategic Planning, Strategy

[8] See Domain 20: Human Resources Management

[9] See Domain 5: Community, Population, and Public Health and Domain 21: Insurance, Payment Methods, and Value

Ambulatory Care Practice Management as a Profession

Ambulatory care practice management encompasses the comprehensive oversight required to deliver effective, efficient, and patient-centered outpatient care. Practice managers in this field must demonstrate a blend of strategic planning, resource management, and leadership to foster high-quality care that meets the evolving needs of diverse patient populations.

To meet the demands of modern ambulatory care, managers must also engage with advancements in telehealth, population health strategies, and value-based care initiatives. These elements emphasize a holistic approach to patient care by integrating social determinants of health, community partnerships, and preventive care. Mastery in these areas prepares practice managers to lead within outpatient settings that prioritize accessibility, quality, and cost-effectiveness.

- Settings
  - Physician Offices
  - Urgent Care Centers
  - Outpatient Clinics
- Types of Management
  - Operational[10]
    - Scheduling
  - Financial[11]
    - Billing
    - Revenue Cycle Elements
  - Regulatory[12]
    - Compliance with Legal, Safety, and Accreditation Standards
  - Quality[13]
- Required skills[14]
  - Interpersonal communication
  - Collaboration
  - Analytics and problem solving
  - Compassion and empathy
- Certifications and professional organizations:
  - American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE)
    - Fellow (FACHE)
  - American College of Medical Practice Executives
    - Certified Medical Practice Executive (CMPE)
  - Medical Group Management Association (MGMA)

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[10] See Domain 14: Health Operations, Process Improvement
[11] See Domain 17: Healthcare Financial Management
[12] See Domain 13: Health Law
[13] See Domain 26: Quality and Safety
[14] See Domain 4: Communication, Interpersonal Relations and Domain 25: Professionalism

What resources (textbooks, websites, etc.) might faculty use related to this domain?

National Association of Community Health Centers (NACHC): Provides resources and training on best practices, policy updates, and innovative models in ambulatory care.

Woodcock, E. & Bittle, M. (2021). *The Well-Managed Ambulatory Practice*. Springer Publishing Company, LLC. ISBN: 9780826156624, ebook ISBN: 9780826156631, DOI: 10.1891/9780826156631

Wagner, S. (2018). *Fundamentals of Medical Practice Management*. Health Administration Press. ISBN: 9781567939309.

Woodcock, E. (2017). *Front Office Success: How to Satisfy Patients and Boost the Bottom Line*. Medical Group Management Association. ISBN: 9781568295350.

Medical Group Management Association. (n.d.) *Body of Knowledge Review Series* (4th Ed).