

Phoenix meeting serves as launch pad for hospitalist think tank

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Thirteen health care leaders are calling themselves "The Phoenix Group" and hope to bring the concept of hospitalists to the forefront of medicine in the same way managed care made its mark.

Hospitalists, a rapidly growing specialty field, are specially trained physicians who work with primary care physicians and specialists to manage a patient's entire hospital experience.

The Phoenix Group was created following a March meeting among the doctors and executives, whose goal is to provide leadership on issues facing hospitalists in private practice, the group announced Monday.

The idea for the think tank came from Dr. Adam Singer, chief executive of IPC - The Hospitalist Co. of North Hollywood, Calif.

His model was the Jackson Hole Group, formed in the 1980s and whose ideas became the basis of today's managed care programs.

"The Phoenix Group is not just an academic exercise," said Singer. "It is comprised of leaders in our field rolling up their shirtsleeves to make sure that the resources and processes are in place to improve the delivery of hospitalist medicine five and 10 years down the road."

"This is still a new field with explosive growth ahead," said Dr. Robert Reynolds, CEO of North Carolina-based PrimeDoc Inc. and another group member. "We private practitioners have to take responsibility for our future, and by doing so can have a very positive influence on how medical care is delivered in the entire country."

A follow-up meeting is scheduled in Phoenix in September.

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