

# what is practice id on my patient visit

## What Is Practice ID on My Patient Visit? Understanding Its Role in Healthcare Management

what is practice id on my patient visit is a question many patients and even some healthcare professionals find themselves asking. If you've ever checked your medical paperwork, billing statement, or patient portal and noticed a term called "practice ID," you might have wondered what it means and why it's important. In the world of healthcare, where various codes, identifiers, and numbers are used to streamline operations and ensure accurate record-keeping, the practice ID plays a crucial role. This article will walk you through what the practice ID is, why it matters during your patient visit, and how it fits into the bigger picture of healthcare administration.

## What Exactly Is a Practice ID?

At its core, a practice ID is a unique identifier assigned to a medical practice or healthcare provider's office. Think of it as a digital fingerprint that distinguishes one clinic or healthcare facility from another. Unlike personal patient IDs, which are tied directly to you as an individual, the practice ID represents the organization providing the service.

This identifier is used in electronic health records (EHR) systems, billing software, insurance claims, and appointment scheduling platforms. It helps ensure that information is correctly attributed to the right healthcare entity, preventing mix-ups and facilitating smooth communication between different parts of the healthcare system.

## Why Is Practice ID Important During Your Patient Visit?

When you visit a doctor's office, you might not realize the complex backend processes that occur to

document your visit properly. The practice ID comes into play at various points:

- **Accurate Record Keeping:** By associating your visit with a specific practice ID, healthcare providers can ensure that your medical history, test results, and treatment plans are all stored under the correct provider.
- **Insurance and Billing:** Insurance companies use the practice ID to verify which provider delivered the service. This helps in processing claims accurately and reduces billing errors or delays.
- **Data Reporting and Compliance:** Practices often submit data to regulatory bodies or participate in quality improvement programs. The practice ID is crucial for identifying where the data originated.
- **Coordination of Care:** If you see multiple providers or specialists, the practice ID helps coordinate your care by distinguishing between different healthcare facilities.

## How Is Practice ID Different from Other Identifiers?

In healthcare, several types of identifiers exist, and it's easy to get confused about their purposes. Here's how the practice ID compares to some other common identifiers:

### Practice ID vs. National Provider Identifier (NPI)

While the practice ID identifies the healthcare facility, the National Provider Identifier (NPI) is a federal number assigned to individual healthcare providers—such as doctors, nurses, or therapists. The NPI uniquely identifies the person providing care, whereas the practice ID identifies the organization.

## Practice ID vs. Patient ID

Your patient ID is unique to you within a particular healthcare system or practice. It helps track your medical history, appointments, and billing information. The practice ID, however, identifies the entity where you received care.

## Practice ID vs. Facility ID

Sometimes, the terms practice ID and facility ID are used interchangeably. However, facility ID often refers specifically to hospitals or larger healthcare institutions, while practice ID usually pertains to smaller clinics or individual provider offices.

## Where Can You Find the Practice ID on Your Patient Visit Documents?

If you're curious about locating the practice ID related to your visit, here are some common places to check:

- **Billing Statements:** Insurance explanations of benefits (EOBs) or hospital bills frequently list the practice ID to specify which provider submitted the charges.
- **Patient Portals:** When accessing your medical records online, the practice ID may be displayed alongside provider information.
- **Appointment Confirmations:** Some appointment reminders or scheduling confirmations include the practice ID for internal tracking.

- **\*\*Insurance Claims:\*\*** If you review claim documentation, the practice ID is usually included to identify the service provider.

Understanding where this information appears can help you verify that your records and bills are accurate.

## **How Does Practice ID Affect Your Healthcare Experience?**

You might wonder why it matters to understand what the practice ID is during your patient visit. While it's largely an administrative detail, it does have direct and indirect impacts on your healthcare experience.

### **Ensuring Accurate Billing and Insurance Processing**

One of the most common issues patients face is billing errors—such as being charged for services they didn't receive or insurance denials due to incorrect provider information. The practice ID helps insurers confirm the service location, which can reduce these errors and prevent delays in claim approvals.

### **Improving Communication Between Providers**

If you receive care from multiple providers, especially within different practices or healthcare systems, the practice ID can help facilitate information sharing. This ensures that your treatment plans are coordinated effectively, reducing the chances of duplicated tests or conflicting prescriptions.

## Supporting Quality and Safety Initiatives

Healthcare organizations often participate in quality reporting programs that track performance metrics, patient outcomes, and safety standards. The practice ID allows these programs to accurately attribute data, helping improve care quality over time.

## Tips for Patients Regarding Practice ID on Your Visits

While the practice ID is primarily used behind the scenes, there are a few practical tips that can help you stay informed and proactive:

- **Review Your Bills and Statements:** If you notice unfamiliar practice IDs on your bills or insurance statements, don't hesitate to ask your healthcare provider or insurer for clarification.
- **Keep Track of Your Providers:** Knowing which practice or clinic you visited can help you cross-check the practice ID on documents, ensuring accuracy.
- **Use Patient Portals:** Many healthcare practices offer online portals where you can view your visit details, including provider information and associated practice IDs.
- **Communicate Errors Promptly:** If you spot discrepancies related to practice IDs or provider details, notify your healthcare provider or insurance company as soon as possible to avoid billing or record errors.

# The Future of Practice IDs in Healthcare Technology

With the increasing digitization of healthcare records and the push for interoperability, practice IDs are becoming more standardized and integrated across platforms. Technologies like electronic health records (EHRs), health information exchanges (HIEs), and telemedicine rely on accurate identifiers to ensure seamless care delivery.

As healthcare systems evolve, practice IDs may become more transparent to patients, perhaps appearing more clearly in patient-facing documents or apps. This transparency can empower patients to better understand their healthcare journey and foster trust in medical administration.

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Understanding what is practice id on my patient visit is a small but important part of navigating the complex healthcare environment. By recognizing its role and significance, patients can feel more confident when reviewing their medical documents and communicating with providers. After all, healthcare is a partnership, and knowledge is a key ingredient in making that partnership work smoothly.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### What is a Practice ID on my patient visit?

A Practice ID is a unique identifier assigned to a medical practice or healthcare provider that is used to track and manage patient visits within that specific practice.

### Why do I need a Practice ID for my patient visit?

The Practice ID helps healthcare systems accurately associate your visit with the correct medical practice, ensuring proper record-keeping, billing, and communication.

## **Where can I find the Practice ID for my patient visit?**

The Practice ID is typically provided on appointment confirmations, billing statements, or can be obtained by contacting the healthcare provider's office directly.

## **Is the Practice ID different from my patient ID?**

Yes, the Practice ID identifies the healthcare provider's office or practice, while the patient ID identifies you as an individual patient within that system.

## **Can I use the Practice ID to access my medical records?**

While the Practice ID helps locate the correct practice, you will typically need your patient ID or login credentials to access your personal medical records.

## **What should I do if I enter the wrong Practice ID during my patient visit registration?**

If you enter the wrong Practice ID, it may cause issues with your visit records or billing. Contact the healthcare provider as soon as possible to correct the information.

## **Does every healthcare provider have a unique Practice ID?**

Yes, each healthcare provider or medical practice is assigned a unique Practice ID to differentiate it from other providers in healthcare systems.

## **How is the Practice ID used in insurance claims for my patient visit?**

The Practice ID is included in insurance claims to identify the provider that delivered the services, facilitating accurate processing and reimbursement.

## Can I have multiple Practice IDs for different patient visits?

If you visit different medical practices, each will have its own Practice ID. Your visits to each practice will be associated with that practice's unique ID.

## Additional Resources

**\*\*Understanding the Practice ID on My Patient Visit: A Professional Review\*\***

what is practice id on my patient visit is a question frequently encountered by patients, healthcare professionals, and administrative staff alike. As healthcare systems become increasingly digitized, identifiers such as the practice ID play a crucial role in streamlining operations, ensuring accurate record-keeping, and facilitating communication between providers and patients. This article delves into the meaning, significance, and practical implications of the practice ID in the context of patient visits, providing a comprehensive overview for both medical professionals and patients seeking clarity.

## Defining the Practice ID in Patient Visits

At its core, the practice ID is a unique alphanumeric code assigned to a specific healthcare practice or facility. This identifier acts as a digital fingerprint, distinguishing one medical office, clinic, or hospital from another within electronic health record (EHR) systems, insurance claims processing platforms, and appointment scheduling software. When a patient visits a healthcare provider, the practice ID is often recorded alongside the patient's visit details to ensure that the encounter is correctly attributed to the exact practice location or entity responsible for the care.

Unlike patient IDs, which uniquely identify individuals, the practice ID is tied to the institution or practice itself. It is an essential element for administrative accuracy, enabling seamless data exchange and billing processes across various healthcare systems.

## How Practice ID Fits into the Patient Visit Workflow

When a patient check-in occurs, the practice ID is captured either automatically through the scheduling system or manually entered by administrative staff. This data point is then linked to the patient's visit record, which includes clinical notes, diagnostic codes, procedures performed, and billing information. Without the practice ID, there could be confusion in care coordination, especially in multi-site health systems or when providers share electronic platforms.

Moreover, insurance claims rely heavily on the practice ID to validate the service location and to ensure that reimbursements are processed correctly. For example, if a patient receives services at a satellite clinic rather than the main hospital campus, the practice ID clarifies which entity should be billed.

## The Importance of Practice ID in Healthcare Management

The practice ID serves multiple pivotal functions in healthcare management, affecting data integrity, compliance, and operational efficiency.

### Data Integrity and Patient Safety

Accurate attribution of patient visits to the correct practice helps maintain robust medical records. It prevents errors such as mixing up patient histories from different locations or providers. In complex healthcare networks, the ability to track where care was delivered is vital for continuity and quality assurance. For instance, if a patient undergoes follow-up care, the subsequent provider can reference the practice ID to access prior visit information easily.

## **Billing and Insurance Reimbursement**

One of the most critical roles of the practice ID is in the financial realm. Insurance companies require precise details about the location and provider responsible for services rendered. Incorrect or missing practice IDs can lead to claim denials or delayed reimbursements. In addition, practice IDs help differentiate between contracted and non-contracted facilities, which can influence coverage and copayment calculations.

## **Regulatory Compliance and Reporting**

Healthcare providers must comply with federal and state regulations regarding data reporting and patient privacy. The practice ID aids in generating accurate reports for government agencies, quality improvement initiatives, and accreditation bodies. It also facilitates audits by providing a clear trail of where patient care was administered.

## **Common Platforms and Systems Utilizing Practice IDs**

Various healthcare IT systems incorporate practice IDs in their workflows. Understanding where and how these identifiers are used helps demystify their practical relevance.

## **Electronic Health Records (EHRs)**

EHR platforms like Epic, Cerner, and Allscripts assign and use practice IDs to organize patient visit data by location. This ensures that clinical documentation, medication orders, and test results are correctly filed under the appropriate practice entity.

## **Practice Management Software**

Software solutions designed to manage scheduling, billing, and patient communication heavily rely on practice IDs to coordinate administrative tasks. This includes confirming appointments, sending reminders, and processing payments.

## **Insurance and Claims Processing Systems**

Payers and clearinghouses use practice IDs to verify claims submissions and validate provider credentials. The presence of an accurate practice ID expedites claims adjudication and minimizes errors.

## **Challenges and Considerations Associated with Practice IDs**

While practice IDs offer several benefits, healthcare organizations must navigate certain challenges to maximize their utility.

### **Multiple Locations and Identifier Confusion**

Large healthcare systems with numerous branches may struggle to maintain consistent practice IDs, especially when merging practices or expanding services. Patients may become confused if their visit documentation references unfamiliar or changing practice IDs.

### **Data Entry Errors and Mismatches**

Manual entry of practice IDs can lead to typographical errors, resulting in misattributed visits or billing complications. Automated systems reduce this risk but require proper setup and maintenance.

## Privacy Concerns

Although the practice ID itself does not contain patient-identifiable information, its linkage with patient records necessitates stringent data security measures to protect against unauthorized access.

## Best Practices for Managing Practice IDs in Patient Visits

To optimize the use of practice IDs, healthcare providers and administrative teams should consider the following strategies:

- **Standardization:** Adopt uniform naming conventions and formats for practice IDs across all systems.
- **Training:** Educate staff on the importance of accurate data entry and the implications of errors.
- **System Integration:** Ensure seamless interoperability between EHRs, billing platforms, and scheduling tools to minimize duplication or discrepancies.
- **Regular Auditing:** Conduct periodic reviews to verify that practice IDs are correctly assigned and functioning as intended.
- **Patient Communication:** Inform patients about the role of practice IDs if relevant, particularly in billing statements or visit summaries.

# Comparing Practice ID to Related Healthcare Identifiers

To fully grasp what is practice id on my patient visit, it helps to distinguish it from other common identifiers in healthcare.

- **Provider NPI (National Provider Identifier):** A unique number assigned to individual healthcare providers or organizations for billing and identification purposes, whereas the practice ID typically identifies the location or practice entity.
- **Patient ID:** A distinct code assigned to each patient for their medical record, separate from the practice ID.
- **Facility Code:** Sometimes used interchangeably with practice ID but can refer more broadly to hospital or clinic codes used in claims.

Understanding these distinctions is crucial for healthcare administrators and patients interpreting documentation or billing statements.

## Looking Ahead: The Evolution of Practice IDs

As healthcare technology evolves, the role of practice IDs is expected to become even more integral. Emerging trends include:

- **Enhanced Interoperability:** Practice IDs will facilitate smoother data exchange across disparate health systems, improving care coordination.

- **Blockchain Integration:** Secure, decentralized recording of practice IDs may enhance transparency and data integrity.
- **Patient-Centered Access:** Patients might gain better visibility into the practice IDs associated with their visits through patient portals and apps.

These developments underscore the ongoing importance of understanding what is practice id on my patient visit in the context of modern healthcare delivery.

Through this exploration, it becomes evident that the practice ID, while a seemingly small piece of administrative data, is a foundational element in ensuring accurate, efficient, and compliant patient care management. Recognizing its role empowers both providers and patients to navigate the healthcare landscape with greater confidence and clarity.

## **What Is Practice Id On My Patient Visit**

**what is practice id on my patient visit: Primary Care - E-Book** Terry Mahan Buttarro, Patricia Polgar-Bailey, Joanne Sandberg-Cook, JoAnn Trybulski, 2012-03-01 Written by and for Nurse Practitioners from a unique collaborative perspective, Primary Care: A Collaborative Practice, 4th Edition, prepares you to provide care for all of the major disorders of adults seen in the outpatient setting. Evidence-based content reflects the latest guidelines for primary care of hundreds of conditions, including hypertension, diabetes, and sexually transmitted infections. Now in full color, the 4th Edition includes chapters on emerging topics such as genetics, obesity, lifestyle management, and emergency preparedness. Combining a special blend of academic and clinical expertise, the author team provides a practical text/reference that promotes a truly collaborative primary care practice. Comprehensive, evidence-based content incorporates the latest standardized guidelines for primary care in today's fast-paced, collaborative environment. Unique! A collaborative perspective, reflecting the key roles of NPs, MDs, PAs, PharmDs, and others, promotes seamless continuity of care. A consistent format from chapter to chapters facilitates learning and clinical reference value. Diagnostics and Differential Diagnosis boxes provide a quick reference for diagnosing disorders and helping to develop effective management plans. Physician Consultation icons highlight situations or conditions in which consultation is either recommended or necessary. Emergency Referral icons identify signs and symptoms that indicate the need for immediate referral to an emergency facility. Co-management with Specialists discussions help you provide truly collaborative care in the outpatient setting. Complementary and alternative therapies are addressed where supported by solid research evidence.

**what is practice id on my patient visit: The Diabetes LIFEMAP** David Bleich, MD,

2020-07-07 The Diabetes LIFEMAP changes the way chronic diabetes care is delivered forever. The LIFEMAP raises diabetes care for the primary care and ancillary healthcare provider to the level of world renown diabetes expert, David Bleich, MD. For patients, the LIFEMAP provides real-time diabetes care that changes a "tough-to-manage" disease into a shared, personal, and efficient management experience. The LIFEMAP can be used as a stand-alone diabetes management tool or can be combined with our cloud based LIFEMAP platform through GoMo Health. Now care can be delivered seamlessly at home for both provider and patient. The Diabetes LIFEMAP is the playbook for 21st century diabetes care. It starts with an understanding of the basic principles of insulin secretion and moves to a discussion of how the LIFEMAP evolved and why it is such a powerful management tool. Finally, case studies are provided to reinforce basic concepts of LIFEMAP diabetes care with real world examples. Taken together, The Diabetes LIFEMAP succeeds in helping healthcare providers overcome a difficult to manage disease and provides patients with an optimal diabetes outcome with the least amount of effort necessary to achieve high level results.

**what is practice id on my patient visit:** Systems thinking: strengthening health systems in practice Kara Durski, Karl Blanchet, Aku Kwamie, Maria Del Rocio Saenz, 2023-12-12 As health systems all over the world not only recover from COVID-19, but learn to adapt to contexts of increasing uncertainty amidst persistent challenges, it is clear that systems thinking has never been needed more. Systems thinking is an approach to problem-solving that views problems as part of a wider dynamic system. It recognizes and prioritizes the understanding of linkages, relationships, interactions and interdependencies among the components of a system that give rise to the system's observed behaviour. Systems thinking is a philosophical frame, and it can also be considered a method with its own tools. Identifying ways in the short and long-term which strengthen health systems is critical and applied systems thinking offers opportunities to do this. Systems thinking is often considered to be a field, a discipline, a philosophical approach and a set of tools and methods and can be defined as a way to understand and improve complex issues and situations. Despite broad consensus that systems thinking is important in health systems strengthening, it remains underutilized by researchers, public health practitioners and health decision makers. Further, a gap remains in the translation from concept to policy.

**what is practice id on my patient visit:** Federal Register , 2014

**what is practice id on my patient visit:** Avoiding Common Anesthesia Errors Catherine Marcucci, Norman A. Cohen, David G. Metro, Jeffrey R. Kirsch, 2012-02-16 This pocket book succinctly describes 215 common, serious errors made by attendings, residents, fellows, CRNAs, and practicing anesthesiologists in the practice of anesthesia and offers practical, easy-to-remember tips for avoiding these errors. The book can easily be read immediately before the start of a rotation or used for quick reference. Each error is described in a quick-reading one-page entry that includes a brief clinical scenario, a short review of the relevant physiology and/or pharmacology, and tips on how to avoid or resolve the problem. Illustrations are included where appropriate. The book also includes important chapters on human factors, legal issues, CPT coding, and how to select a practice.

**what is practice id on my patient visit:** Hearing on Medicare's Reimbursement Cuts United States. Congress. House. Committee on Small Business. Subcommittee on Regulations, Health Care, and Trade, 2007

**what is practice id on my patient visit:** Communication Skills and Challenges in Medical Practice, An Issue of Medical Clinics of North America, E-Book Heather Hofmann, 2022-06-23 In this issue of Medical Clinics of North America, guest editor Dr. Heather Hofmann brings her considerable expertise to the topic of Communication Skills and Challenges in Medical Practice. Communication is a core part of medical practice, and just as physicians increase their knowledge and hone clinical reasoning skills, so too must communication skills be refined. This issue provides an evidence-based review of patient-centered communication for the general practitioner, covering key communications skills commonly used in patient encounters, including challenges posed by modern medicine to effective communication. - Contains 15 relevant, practice-oriented topics

including addressing the challenges of cross-cultural communication; gender and health communication; eliciting the patient narrative; motivating behavioral change; breaking bad news; using technology to enhance communication; and more. - Provides in-depth clinical reviews on communication skills and challenges in medical practice, offering actionable insights for clinical practice. - Presents the latest information on this timely, focused topic under the leadership of experienced editors in the field. Authors synthesize and distill the latest research and practice guidelines to create clinically significant, topic-based reviews.

**what is practice id on my patient visit: Advanced Qualitative Research for Nursing**

Joanna Latimer, 2009-02-12 This collection presents up-to-the-minute qualitative research methodologies creatively developed by and within nursing. The book is written by authors at the forefront of their fields. It is aimed at enabling people to research critical issues for nursing practice and health care. Nurses face the imperative for practice grounded in research-based evidence. The book demonstrates how qualitative methodologies can produce rigorous and valid research. Drawing on empirical data each chapter introduces a particular contemporary approach; examines the literature in its field; discusses its relevance for nursing and health care; and explains what claims to knowledge can be made.

**what is practice id on my patient visit: The Lancet , 1869**

**what is practice id on my patient visit: Ethics and Chronic Illness Tom Walker, 2019-04-17**

This book provides an account of the ethics of chronic illness. Chronic illness differs from other illnesses in that it is often incurable, patients can live with it for many years, and its day-to-day management is typically carried out by the patient or members of their family. These features problematise key distinctions that underlie much existing work in medical ethics including those between beneficence and autonomy, between treatment and prevention, and between the recipient and provider of treatment. The author carries out a detailed reappraisal of the roles of both autonomy and beneficence across the different stages of treatment for a range of chronic illnesses. A central part of the author's argument is that in the treatment of chronic illness, the patient and/or the patient's family should be seen as acting with healthcare professionals to achieve a common aim. This aspect opens up unexplored questions such as what healthcare professionals should do when patients are managing their illness poorly, the ethical implications of patients being responsible for parts of their treatment, and how to navigate sharing information with those directly involved in patient care without violating privacy or breaching confidentiality. The author addresses these challenges by engaging with philosophical work on shared commitments and joint action, responsibility and justice, and privacy and confidentiality. The Ethics of Chronic Illness provides a new, and much needed, critical reappraisal of healthcare professionals' obligations to their patients. It will be of interests to academics working in bioethics and medical ethics, philosophers interested in the topics of autonomy, responsibility, and consent, and medical practitioners who treat patients with chronic illness.

**what is practice id on my patient visit: British Medical Journal , 1870**

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**what is practice id on my patient visit: Complexities in Colorectal Surgery Scott R. Steele, Justin A. Maykel, Bradley J. Champagne, Guy R. Orangio, 2014-02-03** Complexities in Colorectal Surgery: Decision-Making and Management provides a unique, modern, practical guide that covers the strategic evaluation, specific approaches, and detailed management techniques utilized by expert Colorectal Surgeons caring for patients with complex problems—whether they result from underlying colorectal disease or from complications arising from previous surgical therapy. The text is formatted as both a “how-to” manual as well as an algorithm-based guide allowing the reader to understand the thought process behind the proposed treatment strategies. By making use of evidence-based recommendations, each chapter will include not only diagnostic and therapeutic

guidelines, but also a narrative by the author on his/her operative technical details and perioperative "tips and tricks" that they utilize in the management of these complex surgical challenges. This text includes chapters on the assessment of risk and nutritional intervention methods utilized to minimize perioperative complications. In addition, sections on medical and surgical therapies for abdominal, pelvic and anorectal disease are incorporated. Moreover, the technical challenges of managing complications resulting from the original or subsequent operations is addressed. The underlying focus throughout the text is to provide pragmatic and understandable solutions that can be readily implemented by surgeons of varying experience to successfully treat complex colorectal problems. The text also goes beyond the technical aspects of Colorectal Surgery and includes special sections highlighting the essence of a surgeon. These include chapters describing the importance of the first encounter, building patient rapport, and demonstrating confidence and competence while showing humility and avoiding arrogance. Additionally, aspects involving the medical-legal, ethical, and economic challenges confronting surgeons are covered.

**what is practice id on my patient visit: Congressional Record** United States. Congress, 1992

**what is practice id on my patient visit: The exhibition record, a descriptive account of the principal exhibits, compiled from special suppl. issued with the 'Sanitary record'.** International health exhibition, 1884, 1877

**what is practice id on my patient visit: Association Medical Journal** , 1853

**what is practice id on my patient visit: Association medical journal** Provincial Medical and Surgical Association, 1853

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**what is practice id on my patient visit: The Family in Medical Practice** Michael A. Crouch, Leonard Roberts, 2012-12-06 My practice life has spanned 36 years and during that time I have been involved in untangling countless mysterious maladies-or at least trying to do so. All of these efforts were without the benefit of any formal training about family systems. I am greatly encouraged by this book because it first draws attention to the intricate web that mankind has woven for itself. The family physician has often been caught up in this web, and therefore rendered impotent. Efforts to understand all of this are to be applauded. It has been my good fortune to know the editors, Leonard Roberts and Michael Crouch and, as a family physician, I feel that their hearts are in the right place. They have grown up, medically speaking, in an era when society has become more complex, where life is not easy. Birth and its medical participants are suspect; childhood is complicated by divorce

and loneliness; adolescence is a time of aimless searching; young adults are hard pressed to earn a living; the quality of life is being threatened somewhat by the overgrowth of high technology; dying with dignity is at a premium. The editors are to be commended for helping us clarify the role of the family physician in all of this.

**what is practice id on my patient visit: The Elderly** Martin Lyon Levine, 2017-05-15 Aging is a public health priority that is becoming increasingly important in both developed and less developed nations, with individual health care providers and law-makers each facing difficult ethical and policy dilemmas. The complex issues physicians deal with include informed consent and patient decision-making capacity, use of advance care planning and decision-making by family and medical staff, and withdrawing and withholding life-sustaining interventions. Broader questions include: has aging been over medicalized? Is it ethical for older patients to receive less medical care than younger ones, through unspoken practice or formal rationing? Is there inevitable conflict between the generations over scarce medical resources? How should physician, patient and family confront end-of-life decisions? How have different nations responded to increasing numbers of the elderly? Have social values changed as to family responsibility and individual autonomy? This volume brings together the most significant published essays in the field.

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