WEALTHCARE FINANCIALS

The Four Pillars of a Physician's Financial Life

Building Wealth on a Solid Foundation

Most financial conversations with physicians start in the wrong place — with investments. But a portfolio built on an unstable foundation can unravel quickly. A more durable approach organizes a physician's financial life around four interconnected pillars: practice ownership, financing, risk management, and wealth accumulation. Each one depends on the others, and gaps in any single pillar tend to create problems that ripple across the rest.

Pillar One: Practice Ownership

Whether you are employed by a health system, a partner in a group practice, or running an independent clinic, the structure of your professional arrangement shapes nearly every financial decision you will make. Ownership creates equity; employment creates income. Many physicians will move between these modes during a career, and each transition carries its own set of considerations — from entity structure to buy-in agreements to eventual succession planning. Understanding where you stand on the ownership spectrum helps clarify what the other pillars need to support.

Pillar Two: Financing

Physicians typically enter their peak earning years carrying significant debt. Managing that debt thoughtfully — balancing payoff timelines, refinancing options, and cash-flow needs — is its own discipline. Financing also applies on the growth side: acquiring a practice, purchasing equipment, or expanding into a new location often requires access to credit at the right terms and the right moment. Neither the debt side nor the growth side should be managed in isolation from your broader financial picture.

Pillar Three: Risk Management

Income is the engine that powers everything else. According to the Social Security Administration, a working person has roughly a one-in-four chance of experiencing a disability before retirement — yet a 2025 Guardian study found that only 43% of working Americans owned disability insurance that year. For a physician, an extended inability to practice can interrupt debt repayment, stall practice growth, and halt wealth accumulation simultaneously. Risk management — which can include disability income protection, life insurance, and liability coverage — is the pillar that keeps the others standing when something goes wrong. It is not an afterthought; it is load-bearing.

Pillar Four: Wealth Accumulation

Once income is protected and obligations are structured responsibly, the focus can shift to building long-

Why the Sequence Matters

These pillars are most effective when addressed in roughly this order. Ownership context informs financing decisions. Financing decisions affect how much cash flow is available for risk management. Risk management protects the income that funds wealth building. Skipping ahead to investments before the earlier pillars are solid is a common pattern among high-income professionals — and a costly one. A thoughtful roadmap works through each layer deliberately, revisiting them as circumstances change.

The chapters that follow explore each pillar in greater depth, with particular attention to the decisions that physicians and dentists face at different stages of their careers.

The content is developed from sources believed to be providing accurate information. The information in this material is not intended as tax or legal advice. Please consult legal or tax professionals for specific information regarding your individual situation. The opinions expressed and material provided are for general information, and should not be considered a solicitation for the purchase or sale of any security.

This material is intended for general use. By providing this content Park Avenue Securities LLC and your financial representative are not undertaking to provide investment advice or make a recommendation for a specific individual or situation, or to otherwise act in a fiduciary capacity.

Capitol Wealth Strategies and Wealthcare Financials is an Agency of The Guardian Life Insurance Company of America® (Guardian), New York, NY. Securities products and advisory services offered through Park Avenue Securities LLC (PAS), member FINRA , SIPC . OSJ: 901 S. Mopac Expy, Barton Oaks IV, Ste 150, Austin, TX 78746, ph# 512.651.2009 PAS is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Guardian. Capitol Wealth Strategies is not an affiliate or subsidiary of PAS or Guardian.

AR Insurance License # 15842501

Important Disclosures · Online Privacy Statement · Form CRS · Online Terms and Conditions of Use

GARI case # 9099692.1 Exp. 09/28 · © Wealthcare Financials · Capitol Wealth Strategies