

The Vascular Center: A Guide for Trainees

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Purpose

- Introduce the vascular center as a practice model to trainees who may be underexposed to this focused delivery of vascular care.
- This exhibit will offer perspectives from vascular centers as it related to the management of vascular disease, the complimentary skillset of interventional radiologists (IR) and vascular surgeons, technological innovations, practice building, and economic strategies.

Disease Management

- Focused high-quality vascular care is derived from ideas that vascular procedures offer patients great benefits especially if the performing physician provides close clinical follow-up.²
- This model provides comprehensive diagnosis, preventative, counseling, and treatment for patients with vascular disease¹⁻⁴.
- Risk factor reduction receives a top priority as these physicians are skilled in workup, epidemiology, and natural history disease².

Innovation and the Market

- An excellent platform for partnership with industry, vascular centers foster emerging technologies for endovascular treatment.
- The integration of IR, vascular surgery, and cardiology into one package, with its own outcomes and cost statistics, places vascular centers in an advantageous position to bargain in competitive health services markets²⁻⁴.
- Practices can merge to form networks in a geographic area and to better position themselves against reimbursement cuts²⁻⁴.

Methods

- Literature since the conception of the vascular center was reviewed, including journal articles and practice-building lectures¹⁻⁴.
- The origin of the vascular center will be given in brief.
- Operational experiences will be presented from private and academic centers.



Figure 1. Miami Cardiac & Vascular Institute serves as the gold standard for the vascular center model.

Conclusions

- The vascular center is a model that provides focused high-quality care for patients with vascular disease.
- Vascular centers serve as a hub for innovation through opportunities to collaborate with industry.
- With a common patient base, this model offers a potential framework for multidisciplinary collaboration for which patients are the greatest beneficiaries.

Origins

- The vascular center as a practice model grew from the need to educate patients and referring physicians about the benefits of interventional procedures and to commit to clinical care and close follow-up¹.
- This model was met with little enthusiasm at first, but the benefit to referring physicians became clear as IRs proved they could attract patients into the new system¹.
- Over 30 years later, the vascular center has redefined the role of IR as a clinical specialty.

Collaborative Care

- Vascular centers integrate the knowledge and skillsets of IR, vascular surgery, and cardiology for a multidisciplinary framework of patient management^{1,3-4}.
- Hostile turf wars leave everyone at a disadvantage including the common patient base².
- Here, each party shares knowledge of each other's skillset and sensitivity for when they should be applied².

References

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