

# *GU Extension and Advisory*

## The Scope of Clinical Urological Care

A urologist is a highly specialized surgical and medical physician who diagnoses, treats, and manages conditions affecting the male and female urinary tracts, as well as the male reproductive system. Because urologists are trained as surgeons, they provide a seamless continuum of care from initial diagnosis to complex operative intervention.

Clinical care in urology generally encompasses the following areas:

- **Diagnostic Evaluation:** Utilizing specialized tools to assess genitourinary health. This includes in-office procedures like cystoscopy (using a camera to examine the bladder), urodynamic testing (measuring bladder function), and interpreting advanced imaging (ultrasound, CT, MRI).
- **Medical Management:** Treating acute and chronic conditions without surgery. Common issues include urinary tract infections (UTIs), overactive bladder, and urinary incontinence.
- **Surgical Intervention:** Performing operations that range from minor to highly complex.
  - *Office-based:* minor cystoscopic procedures, and stent removals.
  - *Minimally Invasive:* Extracorporeal shock wave lithotripsy (ESWL) for kidney stones, and laparoscopic surgeries for precise, faster-healing operations.
  - *Major Surgery:* Organ removal or reconstruction, such as nephrectomies (kidney removal) or reconstructions of the bladder such as augments and Mitrofanoffs

## The Role of a Locum Tenens or Coverage Urologist

A locum tenens urologist is a fully credentialed, board-certified physician who steps in to provide temporary coverage. Facilities rely on them to maintain patient care during staffing shortages, physician leaves of absence, or surges in patient volume.

Here is what a locums urologist typically does:

- **Provide Uninterrupted Patient Care:** They seamlessly integrate into hospitals, private practices, or outpatient clinics to ensure patients do not experience delays in critical urological care.
- **Adapt to Facility Needs:** The day-to-day duties of a locum urologist depend entirely on the contract. Some assignments are 100% outpatient clinic work, focusing on bread-and-butter consults and minor office procedures. Other assignments require 24-hour hospital call, managing emergency room consults, trauma, and emergency surgeries.
- **Focus purely on Clinical Medicine:** Because they are temporary, locum tenens physicians are generally shielded from the long-term administrative duties, committee meetings, and bureaucratic tasks required of permanent staff. Their primary focus is direct patient care.
- **Support Underserved Areas:** Locums often travel to rural or high-demand geographic regions that struggle to attract permanent surgical specialists, ensuring those communities have access to life-saving care.
- **Collaborate with Existing Teams:** They work closely with the facility's permanent nurses, advanced practice providers (PAs and NPs), and anesthesiologists, adapting quickly to different Electronic Medical Record (EMR) systems like Epic or Cerner.