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# Current and Desired Practice Patterns of Trauma and Acute Care Surgeons (T/ACS)

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**CURRENT AND DESIRED PRACTICE PATTERNS OF  
TRAUMA AND ACUTE CARE SURGEONS (T/ACS)**

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**Objectives:** Resident hour restrictions and the addition of emergency general surgery (EGS) have changed how the T/ACS team functions and their work patterns. The purpose of our study is to report current practice patterns of T/ACS and compare those to desired practice patterns of the future workforce in the field (residents/fellows).

**Methods:** An IRB-approved electronic survey was distributed nationally to EAST members. Attendings were asked about their current work patterns; residents and fellows were asked about the work patterns they desire in a future job as a T/ACS.

**Results:** A total of 274 participants were analyzed (242 attendings). A comparison of current attending practices and desired resident/fellow practices is shown in Table 1. The current and desired practice patterns are very similar with a few differences. The most notable difference is that residents/fellows want to leave early on post-call days, which happens rarely in current practices. Residents/fellows also desire an attending hand-off which only occurs about half of the time in current practices.

Table 2 shows that current and desired scopes of practices are very similar, with the exception of residents/fellows having less interest in elective general surgery.

The majority of attendings have not developed innovative strategies for improving their work pattern but 68% have changed their practice pattern in the last 5 years, mostly based on the addition of EGS and changes in personnel; 34% state the change was to make the practice more attractive to those entering the T/ACS field.

**Conclusions:** Current attending practice patterns are similar to desired practice patterns of residents/fellows with notable differences in the areas of the post-call day, attending hand-off, and elective surgery scope of practice. T/ACS must find ways to implement changes to the current practice pattern to keep the field attractive for upcoming residents/fellows.

	Current ATTENDING Practices	Desired RESIDENT/FELLOW Practices
Academic practice	61%	50%
Size of group	94% Mod-Large group (4+ people)	100% Mod-Large group (4+ people)
Function as group (ie shared rounding responsibilities)	90%	100%
Length of call "shift"	57% 1 person/24 hour period	90% OK with 1 person/24 hr period
Calls per month	3-7 24 hr equivalents per month	4-7 24 hr equivalents per month
Post-call day	15% go home after shift 40% stay all day	47% want to go home after shift 50% want to stay to finish rounds/OR 3% want to stay all day
Structured attending hand-off	53% (face to face, verbal)	73% (face to face, verbal, no texts)
Call pay	57% have NO call pay	77% OK with NO call pay as long as base salary is good
Team Composition	88% have residents 94% have NP/PA's	93% want residents 97% want NP/PA's

Table 1: Comparison of current attending practice patterns and desired resident/fellow practice patterns

	ATTENDING Current Scope of practice	RESIDENT/FELLOW Desired Scope of practice
Trauma	99%	100%
Emergency General Surgery (EGS)	96%	90%
Trauma-ICU	90%	97%
Surgical-ICU	90%	87%
Elective General Surgery	75%	53%

Table 2: Comparison of attending current scope of practice and resident/fellow desired scope of practice

## Notes