

# DEFINING TOMORROW'S MSP:

## The Future of the Medical Services Profession

### ADVOCACY TOOLKIT

#### Your First Step in Advocating for the Medical Services Profession

The healthcare industry is evolving and Medical Service Professionals (MSPs) must acknowledge drivers of change and embrace the evolution of the profession in order to survive, succeed, and grow. The healthcare landscape is changing – from facility consolidations and a centralization of functions to technological advancements and growth of artificial intelligence – and MSPs must be prepared to meet these new challenges head on. The National Association Medical Staff Services (NAMSS) is proud to provide educational and career resources that help MSPs advocate for their role within their organization and the healthcare industry as a whole. Now, more than ever, it's time for MSPs to speak up about the important role they play as **gatekeepers of patient safety**.

In 2016, NAMSS first released the State of the Medical Services Profession Report to raise awareness, educate, and gain recognition within the healthcare industry for medical services as a valuable and necessary profession. In 2019, NAMSS conducted a study on the current MSP landscape as well as opportunities for the future of the profession. Receiving feedback and responses from MSPs across the country, NAMSS was able to take a detailed look at the core responsibilities, skill sets, and knowledge currently in place, and define the anticipated needs for the future of the profession. The study findings – **Defining Tomorrow's MSP: The Future of the Medical Services Profession Report** – will serve as a vital resource for Tomorrow's MSPs and demonstrate the important role MSPs play in the delivery of quality healthcare. The research shows that the MSP profession is continuously evolving and expanding and this toolkit will help translate the findings outlined in the report into tangible actions that can change perceptions, increase funding, and open doors to new opportunities. NAMSS is here to support the MSP community every step of the way and is committed to enhancing the professional development and recognition of the medical services profession through education and advocacy.

[DOWNLOAD THE REPORT](#)

[VIEW THE INTERACTIVE PDF](#)

## Talking Points

Use these talking points to effectively communicate the importance of your role in the healthcare industry to your peers, department management, and facility leadership.

- Medical Services Professionals are the gatekeepers of patient safety – we are the first point in healthcare delivery, connecting providers and healthcare practitioners with patients. My job is to ensure that we are employing and onboarding the best practitioners.
- The field of Medical Staff Services has developed from one that encompassed primarily clerical positions to one that spans employment settings and requires specific knowledge and professional competencies. The term Medical Services Profession was established to reflect this shift in settings, responsibilities and qualifications.
- With the development of new technology, the healthcare industry has been increasingly focused on standardization, centralization, and consolidation, as well as value-based over volume-based medicine in order to increase patient/member satisfaction.
- Credentialing and privileging practitioners is not easy – I often do background checks on practitioners with very little resources and incomplete databases. I work to ensure that credentials and previous experience are verified, and that practitioners have no history of malpractice.
- The medical services profession has grown into a significant role within any healthcare setting and continues to evolve as patient safety remains a core value of the healthcare industry.
- The healthcare industry is constantly changing and I am essential to ensuring patient safety through my expertise in credentialing and awareness of new guidelines.
- While skills like professional ethics and communication are important at all levels, specialized skills like clinical competence and political savvy become crucial as MSPs advance in their career and roles evolve.
- As healthcare organizations continue to shift, MSPs are adapting to the changing landscape, and doing more than ever before. With the trend toward centralization, automation and digitization, MSPs will need to remain vigilant, familiarizing themselves with new technologies, and understanding new ideologies in order to advance the profession and remain key leaders within the organization. To become the MSPs of tomorrow, today's MSPs must acknowledge these drivers of change and embrace the evolution of the profession in order to survive, succeed, and grow.
- As the healthcare field becomes more and more focused on standardization and consolidation, my role is changing tremendously. I now need to have a multidisciplinary approach and become well-versed in topics like risk management, project management, economics, legal and malpractice issues, leadership, and more. My goal is to grow my transformational skills to be ready to adapt to new challenges as they arise and to prepare myself and my facility for the future of the industry.

## Sample Communications

### To organization decision makers and stakeholders

Customize and send a message like this to start a conversation about your department's role with key decision-makers at your facility.

Hi **NAME**,

I just saw [this new study](#) from the [National Association Medical Staff Services](#) (NAMSS) that defines the importance of our department and areas of growth for the future. I thought you might like to share it with your team. This [graphic](#) of the core functional areas MSPs need to excel nicely sums up the important role our department plays in patient safety and within our facility.



In addition to what's outlined above, we are also responsible for **[LIST ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES]**.

Feel free to share this graphic and report with colleagues. If you want to learn more, visit [NAMSS.org/TomorrowsMSP](https://www.namss.org/TomorrowsMSP) to view and download **Defining Tomorrow's MSPs: The Future of the Medical Services Profession Report** and accompanying fact sheet from NAMSS. I would love to discuss with you the key role our department plays in ensuring quality healthcare delivery – let me know when you would like to chat.

Sincerely,

**YOUR EMAIL SIGNATURE**

## Sample Communications

### To peers, colleagues, and employees you supervise

You don't need to do this alone – empower your colleagues and fellow MSPs to join you. Customize the message below to encourage others to advocate for the role of the Medical Services Profession.

Hi **NAME**,

As you know, the [National Association Medical Staff Services \(NAMSS\)](#) offers resources designed to help us stay educated and relevant in our field. If you have not already read [Defining Tomorrow's MSP: The Future of the Medical Services Profession Report](#), I encourage you to review it, the [report fact sheet](#), and visit [NAMSS.org/TomorrowsMSP](#) to learn more. The report examines our role as gatekeepers of patient safety, and summarizes the current landscape of our profession as well as opportunities for the future. Recently, NAMSS completed a nationwide study in order to get a detailed look at the core responsibilities, skill sets, and knowledge essential to Medical Services Professionals (MSPs). The report identifies emerging trends in our field that can help us stay ahead of the curve and illustrates the continuously evolving and growing role that MSPs play in our facilities

Once you have read the report, I encourage you to join me in becoming an advocate for our profession. Together we can help spread the word about how important our role is to patient safety and help establish our department, and departments like ours across the country, as an imperative step on the path to delivering quality patient care.

Will you pledge to advocate alongside me?

Sincerely,  
**YOUR NAME**

*Plus, share this toolkit with them!*

## Sample Communications

### To your facility's educational grant approver

Use this letter to request funding to participate in an educational program that will help you reach the next level of your career.

Dear **NAME**,

In order to further my professional development and better serve **YOUR ORGANIZATION/FACILITY** I am requesting **\$AMOUNT** to participate in the [National Association Medical Staff Services](#) (NAMSS) **PROGRAM**. **PROGRAM** offers the opportunity to **[LIST BENEFITS, e.g. enhance skills, gain a better understanding of a certain topic, etc.]**.

As outlined in the Defining Tomorrow's MSP: The Future of the Medical Services Profession Report released in October 2020 by NAMSS, the essential skillsets required to effectively execute my job are shifting and growing as the healthcare landscape evolves. I feel confident in my **STRONG SKILLS** skills but feel that **PROGRAM** will improve my **WEAK SKILLS** skills. Specifically, **[GIVE 3-5 SPECIFIC EXAMPLES OF HOW THE PROGRAM WILL HELP, e.g. the program includes a course on people management, a new responsibility I've taken on in the past few months]**.

As you can see, the knowledge and resources that I will obtain from **PROGRAM** will help me deliver a higher level of support to **ORGANIZATION** as we pursue the highest quality of patient care.

Thank you in advance for contributing to my professional development.

Sincerely,  
**YOUR SIGNATURE**

# Quick-Reference Sheets

**DEFINING TOMORROW'S MSP:**  
The Future of the Medical Services Profession

Tomorrow's MSPs must acknowledge drivers of change and embrace the evolution of the profession in order to survive, succeed and grow.

**OUR LANDSCAPE IS EVOLVING**

EDUCATION AND CAREER ADVANCEMENT

CLINICAL PRACTICE AND PATIENT CARE

TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

**CORE FUNCTIONS OF THE PROFESSION**

MSPs must master core functions of the profession at all levels and years of experience. Our research has identified two new core functions for MSPs to master. These updates validate that the role of MSPs within the healthcare industry is continuously evolving and expanding. The MSPs of tomorrow will need to demonstrate mastery of these five core functions, hone their transformational skills, and continue to acquire new skills and technical knowledge as they prepare for the future of the medical services profession.

**CORE FUNCTIONAL AREAS**

Manages Provider Enrollment Process	<b>NEW</b>	Complies with Accreditation Standards and Regulatory Services
Analyzes and Manages Data Verification	<b>NEW</b>	Manages Compliance with State and Federal Accreditation Standards and Regulatory Requirements
Manages the Credentialing or Privileging Process		Conducts, Participates In, and Maintains Primary Source Verification
Conducts, Participates In, and Maintains Credentialing and Privileging		Manages Departmental Operations
Conducts, Participates In, and Maintains Current Clinical Competency Evaluations and Peer Reviews		Facilitates Medical Staff Functions

\*Based on 2019 survey data of current MSPs.

Tomorrow's MSP starts **TODAY**.  
Visit [NAMSS.org/TomorrowMSP](https://www.namss.org/TomorrowMSP) for more resources and to view the **The Future of the Medical Services Profession Report**.

**MORE** 

## Fact Sheet

This two-page fact sheet highlights findings from the **Defining Tomorrow's MSP: The Future of the Medical Services Profession Report** and serves as a quick-reference guide when advocating for your career. Save it to your Desktop and hang it in your office as a reminder to speak out about your role.

**DOWNLOAD THE FACT SHEET**

**VIEW THE INTERACTIVE PDF**

**DEFINING TOMORROW'S MSP:**  
The Future of the Medical Services Profession

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

**About the Defining Tomorrow's MSP: The Future of the Medical Services Profession Report**

**What is The Future of the Medical Services Profession Report?**  
The report is designed to equip you with the information you need to become the voice of the medical services profession and the MSPs of tomorrow. If you will find a better background, the current and future landscape of the profession, core functions of Medical Services Professionals (MSPs) and skills by years of experience.

**Why did NAMSS create The Future of the Medical Services Profession Report?**  
The report was created to raise awareness, educate, and demonstrate the vital role MSPs play in the healthcare industry as gatekeepers of patient safety. This report will help build recognition within the industry for MSPs and illustrate how their role is continuously evolving and expanding.

**How did NAMSS create The Future of the Medical Services Profession Report?**  
The core recommendations, findings, and knowledge are derived based on feedback and responses from MSPs across the country that were collected via the Job Task Analysis (JTA), and comprehensive member surveys, focus groups, and interviews conducted in 2019.

**How can I use this report?**  
Use this report to demonstrate the essential role of MSPs in the healthcare industry. The data-based research shows that the role of the MSP has evolved and grown, and professionals must advocate for changes in their facilities to reflect the expanded role MSPs play within the healthcare industry.


**About the Medical Services Profession**

**What is a Medical Services Professional?**  
Medical Services Professionals (MSPs) are the gatekeepers of patient safety, ensuring quality care through the credentialing and privileging of healthcare providers in an ever-changing industry. MSPs are highly trained professionals with specific expertise in credentialing processes and regulatory compliance.

**Is the Medical Services Profession different than Medical Staff Services?**  
As the healthcare landscape has evolved over the past 40 years, the field of Medical Staff Services has grown to encompass more than clinical problems. The MSP's role is a well-recognized component within the field. The growth in settings, responsibilities, and qualifications within some organizations may use the term Medical Staff Services. NAMSS believes that Medical Services Profession more fully explains how these professionals support patient safety, quality care, and continued improvement for excellence in healthcare delivery.

**About NAMSS**

**What is NAMSS?**  
The National Association Medical Staff Services (NAMSS) celebrates more than 40 years of enhancing the professional development of and recognition for professionals in the medical staff and credentialing services field. NAMSS' vision is to advance a healthcare environment that maximizes the patient experience through the delivery of quality services. NAMSS membership includes more than 6,000 medical staff and credentialing services professionals from medical group practices, hospitals, managed care organizations, and CCOs.

  
[www.namss.org](https://www.namss.org)

## Frequently Asked Questions

Get answers to basic questions about the **Defining Tomorrow's MSP: The Future of the Medical Services Profession Report**, as well as simple explanations of what a Medical Service Professional (MSP) is and the role the National Association Medical Staff Services (NAMSS) plays in supporting the MSP profession. Share this Frequently Asked Question guide with peers, colleagues in other departments, prospective MSPs, and anyone who wants to learn more about the current and future landscape of the profession.

**DOWNLOAD FAQs**

## Shareable Graphics

### Email Signature

Add this graphic to your email signature to show your MSP pride and remind others of your important role. Click on the graphic below to download.



### Social Media

Share these graphics on LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram with the hashtag #TomorrowsMSP! Click on the graphics below to download.

**PROUD TO BE  
TOMORROW'S MSP!**

Medical Service Professionals  
are the gatekeepers of patient  
safety — connecting patients  
to quality practitioners.

**NAMSS**  
EDUCATION. ADVOCACY. PATIENT SAFETY.

CORE FUNCTIONAL AREAS	
Manages Provider Enrollment Process	Complies with Accreditation Standards and Regulatory Standards
Analyzes and Manages Data Verification	Manages Compliance with State and Federal Accreditation Standards and Regulatory Requirements
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Conducts, Participates In, and Maintains Credentialing and Privileging	Manages Departmental Operations
Conducts, Participates In, and Maintains Current Clinical Competency Evaluations and Peer Reviews	Facilitates Medical Staff Functions

\*Based on 2019 survey data of current MSPs

## Steps to Becoming an Advocate

Now that you have the tools you need to advocate for your profession, here are some tips to get started.

1. **Reflect.** Think about what is most important to you. This could be increasing funding for your professional development or department, fostering a clearer understanding or appreciation of your role, or broadening the reach of your work.
2. **Plan.** Set an attainable goal and write your plan to get there. Which of these tools will you use?
3. **Recruit.** Enlist colleagues near and far to join in your mission.
4. **Mobilize.** It's time to act on your plans.
5. **Measure.** Did you reach your goal? What worked well? What could have been better planned for? What obstacles and challenges were most difficult to overcome?

## Additional Resources

- Defining Tomorrow's MSP: The Future of the Medical Services Profession Report | [Download](#) | [View Interactive PDF](#)
- The Future of the Medical Services Profession Report Fact Sheet | [Download](#) | [View Interactive PDF](#)
- The Future of the Medical Services Profession FAQs | [Download](#)
- [NAMSS.org/TomorrowsMSP](https://namss.org/TomorrowsMSP)
- [Tomorrow's MSP Podcast](#)
- [Tomorrow's MSP Minute](#)
- [Gateway](#)
- [Synergy](#)
- [NAMSS Educational Online Courses](#)

**Have questions or ideas? Contact us!**

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