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pages
25-32

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page 8

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October 2021

THE REGION'S MONTHLY NEWSPAPER FOR HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS & PHYSICIANS

OUR 18TH YEAR SERVING THE HEALTHCARE COMMUNITY!



Francis Afram-Gyening

Camillus Health Concern Receives 5 CHQR Badges

BY LOIS THOMSON

"We strive to keep our quality top-notch," said Francis Afram-Gyening, CEO of Camillus Health Concern. CHC is a community health center whose purpose is to help people experiencing homelessness and indigent people with health care services, and the organization was recently awarded five Community Health Quality Recognition (CHQR) badges. There are 1,400 community health centers in the nation, and the badges recognize health center programs that have made notable quality improvement achievements in the areas of access, quality, health equity, and health information technology.

The five badges CHC received were:

(1) Health Center Quality Leader, which recognizes health centers that improve quality of care and achieve best overall clinical quality measure performance. CHC was within the top 10%.

(2) Access Enhancer, which recognizes health centers that increase the total number of patients they serve who receive at least one comprehensive service (e.g., mental health, vision, dental) by at least 5%. CHC showed an increase of nearly 6%.

(3) Health Disparities Reducer, which recognizes centers that meet or exceed goals in the areas of low birth weight, hypertension, or uncontrolled diabetes for at least one minority group, and demonstrate at least a 10% improvement in those areas. CHC was one of 98 centers to achieve this, meaning it was in the top 1%

Continued on page 10

BY DANIEL CACCIATO

In September, Steward Health Care named Marisela Marrero, M.D., as its first Regional President for the South Florida Region. In her new role, Dr. Marrero oversees the five hospitals Steward acquired from Tenet Healthcare Corporation last month, including North Shore Medical Center, Coral Gables Hospital, Hialeah Hospital, Palmetto General Hospital in Miami-Dade County, and Florida Medical Center in Broward County.

"The opportunity to become market president was a pivotal one, because it allows me to instill positive change in a community that I personally love and have ties to," she says.

Dr. Marrero will also lead the hospitals' efforts to respond to the recent surge in COVID-19 cases, as well as to expand high-quality, physician-led healthcare to the diverse communities of South Florida.

"My primary challenge has been the resurgence of COVID-19," she says. "Hence, we are joining forces with all of the stakeholders in our community in an effort to educate the public on the importance of vaccination."

In addition to her regional role, Dr. Marrero has served as the new President of Hialeah Hospital since August.

Prior to coming to Steward, Dr. Marrero, a Harvard-trained, board certified emergency room physician, was clinically practicing as an ED physician at North Shore Medical Center, which included Salem Hospital in Salem, MA and Union Hospital in Lynn MA. Both hospitals were part of Partners Healthcare which is now known as

Continued on page 13



Dr. Marisela Marrero



Dr. Arthur E. Palamara

Dante's 10th Circle of Hell

BY ARTHUR E. PALAMARA, MD, FACS

In March or April, 1300, as he wandered through the underworld, Dante finds himself in a dark woods. Losing his way, he has to face monsters from classical mythology. As he wandered further into the underworld, he faces leopards, wolves, and a lion. He is driven back into a dark place into which the sun does not enter. Dante meets his guide, Virgil, the Latin epic poet who will lead him out. Dante hesitates. Virgil explains that he was sent by Beatrice, the symbol of divine love, Santa Lucia, the symbol of Grace, and Rachel, the symbol of contemplative life.

Dante then passes through the gates of hell which bears the inscription "abandon hope, ye who enter here." Dante and his guide Virgil, hear the anguished screams of the uncommitted, the opportunists—who were out only for themselves, and the cowards. These miscreants wander around naked in pursuit of their own ever-changing self-interest.

Dante wrote this epic poem to describe the punishment for sins, immorality, and transgression of the people and politicians of 14th Century Florence. While no one would suggest that COVID-19 is a result of moral turpitude, what doctors and nurses face daily, is no less traumatic.

Walking into the ICU corridor, one is confronted with an imposing series of long, shiny, aluminum vent pipes that appear more suited to a factory than a hospital. They are intended to carry aerosolized viral particles to the outside where they will be diluted and neutralized by the sun. The pipes are immediately discordant and jarring, although, after a while, one becomes oblivious to them.

The doors of the individual units are closed, on which signs are hung that pro-

Oncology... Oncology... Oncology... Oncology...

Mammograms and Breast Cancer Screenings Save Lives

BY ALIA ABDULLA, DO

Breast cancer remains the most common cancer diagnosis for women after non-melanoma skin cancer, and it continues to be the second leading cause of cancer death in the United States. According to a 2021 study by the American Cancer Society it is estimated that more than 281,550 new cases of invasive breast cancer and 49,290 new cases of non-invasive breast cancer will be diagnosed in women in the U.S.

These numbers are likely to be even higher as many women have delayed regular healthcare screenings due to the pandemic. A National Institute of Health study shows an alarming decline of nearly 60% in mammogram screenings last year. As a physician, I am concerned that prolonged delays in screenings will lead to a surge in later-stage cancer diagnosis.

During Breast Cancer Awareness Month in October, women should educate themselves and understand what to expect in breast health. There is no question that early detection, whether it's breast cancer or other cancers, saves lives. We all must be in tune with our own bodies.



Dr. Alia Abdulla

Continued on page 14

Continued on page 8

Malpractice insurance policies are not one size fits all.



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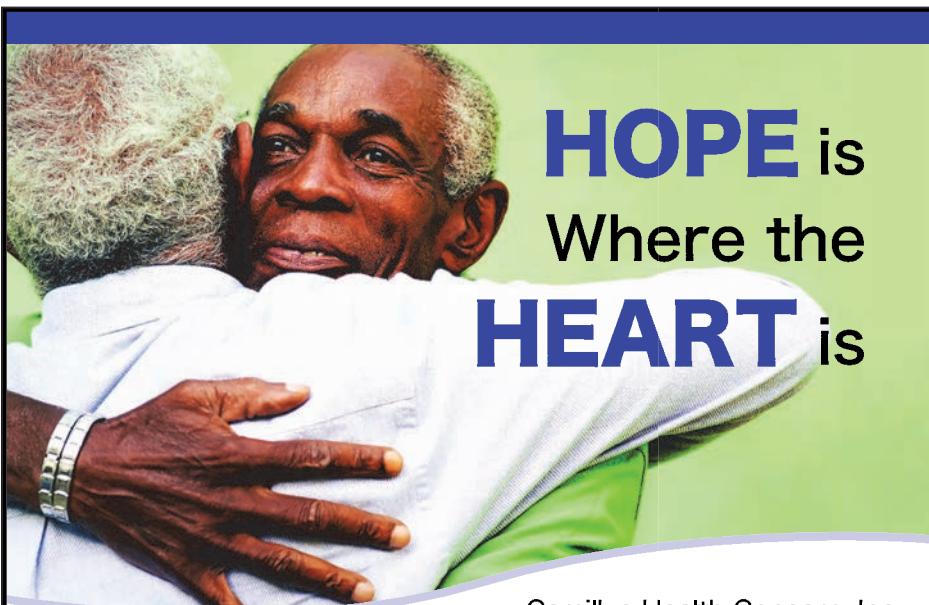


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Camillus Health Concern, Inc. strives to deliver high quality comprehensive health care services for those less fortunate in the Miami-Dade Community.



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Publisher's Note

Let's celebrate the day you gave up on finding anyone better than me. Happy Anniversary!

Anonymous

What could possibly prevent me from ranting this month (as I have for the last three) about how crucial it is to get your COVID vaccine — it must be something incredibly momentous. And it is ... the Felix's 50th wedding anniversary. Yes, I know what you're thinking. We must have married quite young, and you would be right. We were barely in our twenties and actually got engaged without even going on a real date. As Carol likes to say, "We were too lazy to date and equally too lazy to ever get divorced." According to the U.S. Census Bureau a mere five percent of marriages makes it to 50 years. So, I guess we really must be Mr. and Mrs. T-Rex.



To celebrate this questionable milestone, Carol and I decided it was time (for probably only the third time in our married life) to buy a new mattress. (Yes, we've been sleeping on lumps and bumps for ages.) The only problem was the necessary "test drive" in the age of COVID. And despite the sales spiel about all sample mattresses being sanitized after every trial, Carol wasn't buying it. So only after arming herself with sanitizer spray AND a personal pillowcase could we venture forth.

I think our salesperson Gloria is still reeling from the speed at which we made our choice. We walked in, listed our criteria: extra firm, low profile, and no pillowtop. She showed us 3 beds and we were done in 15 minutes. Of course she tried to sell us on the adjustable bed idea, demonstrating the remote control — at which point she got the Carol "death star glare." So much like the way I've navigated the past 50 years, Gloria quickly learned it's sometimes just easier to back off than to engage.

I did want to give Carol (a woman of few words) a chance to comment about this upcoming milestone. However all Carol would say was, "It's remarkable how long we have tolerated each other."



Charles Felix

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When It Comes to Patient Care, Are You Easy to Do Business With?

Recently I was thinking about buying a new car. Based on research and many owners bragging about how much they enjoyed driving it, I settled on a Tesla. As I sat in my house and almost effortlessly put down the deposit on my future vehicle, I say to myself, 'Wow! This is way too simple.' But then I caught myself by wondering why every car company can't do the exact same thing? Tesla enjoys one of the highest customer satisfaction ratings in the world and when you look at how easy they make it to do business with them, you start to figure out just why that is. Taking it to a wider gaze, if you think about brands, vendors, or companies, you personally cannot live without, the one thing all great B2B or B2C companies have in common is ease of use.

So, let's ask this question, if your goal is to be the local, regional, or national provider of choice, what is the experience like for patients seeking care from your organization? Put yourself in the shoes of an average patient. From making the appointment to paying a bill, is it easy or way too difficult?

Many organizations are way ahead of the curve when it comes to utilizing technology and other means to make the entire experience smooth. While others are still literally living in the dark ages where the patient experience mirrors what was going on in the early 80's. If you want a starting point, simply look at how many pieces of paper a new patient must fill out to seek even routine medical attention. Streamline that process and then start looking at each step after that. You will be on the way to making things smooth for your patients and their families. If you want to be the medical professionals patients can't live without, make it easy to do business with you.

Jay Juffre is Executive Vice President, ImageFIRST. For more information on ImageFIRST, call 1-800-932-7472 or visit www.imagefirst.com.



BY JAY JUFFRE

Fortis College Welcomes a New Dean of Nursing

BY CAROL NEWMAN

The South Florida region is nothing if not diverse. And the area's diversity in culture, language, ethnicity and age, is one of the chief factors that drew Abby Villarroya, Fortis College's new Dean of Nursing, to the area. That, and in her words, "a desire to bring a positive and nurturing teaching and learning experience to a diverse population."

With almost two decades of experience as a working nurse and nurse educator, Villarroya realized early in her career that she wanted to focus on equipping student nurses with the knowledge and skills, and equally important, disposition, that they will need to succeed in today's challenging healthcare climate. Helping students develop the cultural competence that she, personally, has found so valuable, is a priority.

Fortis College Cutler Bay's academic structure was also an attraction. Abby believes that career colleges provide an ideal environment for students to grow personally and professionally. Small class sizes and a comprehensive curriculum that delivers a balance of traditional classroom instruction, laboratory work and real-world hands-on skill development, "allows us to fulfill the needs of the community and future employers in a shorter amount of time."

A native of the Philippines, Villarroya says that adjusting to the American culture made her not only a stronger person, but professionally, made her even more committed to her values. As a nurse educator, she says that although the transition was not easy, she was supported by her family and friends and as a result is even more aware and responsive to the needs of her students.

Currently in the final stages of her doctoral program at the Catholic University of America, Villarroya is excited to embark in this teaching-learning journey at Fortis College because, "the mission, vision, and student-centric philosophy of this College fit perfectly with my own personal values and professional value of nursing excellence." To further illustrate her perspective, she shares one of her favorite quotes by Gandhi, "Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever."

Fortis College Cutler Bay offers both Associate Degree in Nursing and Practical Nursing programs as well as Medical Assisting. Learn more about how to get started on your career education at Fortis by calling (786) 345-5300.



Abby Villarroya

Barry University

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Malpractice Insurance EXPERT ADVICE

Why Professional Liability Insurance Premiums Continue to Rise

BY VANESSA ORR

As if the past couple of years haven't been difficult enough, physicians are now starting to feel the pain of medical professional liability rate increases.

"Major carriers are really concerned about current rate adequacy," explained Medical Malpractice and Workers' Compensation Specialist Tom Murphy at Danna-Grace, the largest medical malpractice insurance agency in Florida. The company recently merged with Risk Strategies, one of the top 20 insurance brokerages in the country.

"Unlike other forms of insurance, medical professional liability is based on historic claim and loss trends, but because it can take five years or more to settle a claim—and this can be different in every state because of statutes of limitations—they don't know if the rates they set today will be correct," he added. "Until they see how claims play out, and what they need to pay out, they don't know what their reserves should have been."

Murphy explained that insurers look at the combined ratio, which includes all of their expenses, such as management costs and claims payments, to determine what premiums should be. "If the combined ratio is 100 percent, for every dollar they take in, they pay out one dollar," he said. "If that number is over 100 percent, they are losing money."

In 2020, medical professional liability carriers were working at a 118 percent combined ratio, so they began raising rates. Those who didn't plan well have raised rates dramatically—in some cases, up to 50 percent. Companies who anticipated this issue began raising rates incrementally about three years ago by about 5 percent each year; something Murphy says that these companies will need to continue to do while the market is on a downward trend.

With the exception of 2021, the past four to five years have seen an increase in lawsuits, as well as in the amounts awarded to plaintiffs.

"Because of COVID, 2021 saw a decrease in lawsuits, but this is an anomaly; lawsuits are expected to accelerate again once courts are back in session," said Murphy. "Right now, companies don't know what the final outcome of claims relative to the pandemic will be."

Paid indemnity, or what carriers have had to pay on average, has increased considerably over the past two decades. "Before the last hard market hit in 2000-



Tom Murphy

01, the average claim payment was \$250,000, which is what the average physician carries in liability," said Murphy. "In 2020, that average was over \$400,000.

Other factors affecting these lawsuits and the concurrent rise in insurance rates include social inflation and the rollback of tort reform in many states, including Florida.

"Everyone now has social media, and large settlements and jury awards have become commonplace," said Murphy. "When a claim payment is made for \$10 million, the average Joe thinks nothing of it. It has really changed people's attitudes and beliefs about entitlement for compensation injuries and losses, and their willingness to pursue litigation. In the past, they were not so quick to pull the trigger."

Before tort reforms were rolled back, there were limits on judgements, but now "shock" awards are more commonplace, especially with the proliferation of class-action lawsuits.

"Reptilian brain theory, which is a tactic used in jury trials to activate a juror's survival instincts, is being used more often by lawyers to induce fear in order to overcome logic and reason," said Murphy of these massive awards. "The goal of saying that a doctor is a danger to the community and patient safety, for example, is to create verdicts to punish, instead of compensate. It gets the jury angry, and they come back with larger verdicts."

He adds that third-party litigation financing, in which private equity firms finance law firms in their litigation and then receive a cut of the award, is also growing. "This incentivizes lawsuits, which is a dangerous trend," said Murphy.

A trend in increased defense costs has also resulted in premium increases; in 1991, defense costs averaged about \$200,000 on closed claims; that number has increased to \$1.2 million.

"While none of this is good news, the best way for physicians to weather the market is to look for higher ground—to stay with A-rated AM Best companies that have lasted through all the ups and downs, and who defend their physicians," said Murphy. "You may pay a little higher premium to be with a better company, but they'll be there when you need them."

To contact Danna-Grace, a Division of Risk Strategies, call Tom Murphy or Matt Gracey at (800) 966-2120 or visit www.dannagracey.com.

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The Telehealth Tax Checklist

Your telehealth tax questions, answered

Healthcare practices implementing telehealth often focus their efforts on the marketing, technology, security and logistics of providing healthcare services to their patients and occasionally overlook tax and state regulatory considerations. The very nature of telehealth, which allows for patient care delivery across state lines, requires a careful analysis of federal and state tax compliance obligations. Fortunately, BDO has resources that can help.

Whether you are the owner of a small startup or the tax director of a large healthcare enterprise, BDO's telehealth tax checklist highlights information that should be gathered and common issues to consider when assessing telehealth Federal and state tax obligations. Using your knowledge in conjunction with this checklist will help identify gaps in your telehealth tax planning regardless of the stage of implementation.

1. Before you implement telehealth:

- If you are a tax-exempt healthcare provider, have you analyzed whether telehealth revenues could result in Unrelated Business Income Tax?
- Have you properly assessed and addressed HIPAA, HITECH and other security risks?
- Do you have records detailing where all your equipment and employees are located?
- Where are your patients who will be accessing telehealth services located?
- Do you know where your providers are licensed to practice?
- Are you up to date on state-level corporate practice of medicine laws?
- Do you have the resources to address telehealth tax compliance in-house?
- Are you working with an attorney and tax advisor with telehealth expertise?
- Have you conducted a state-by-state analysis to determine where your company should be registered to do business?

2. While you're implementing telehealth:

- Does your practice management and



BY JIM WHITE

billing software maintain documentation on where your patient is located to ensure you allocate revenue properly?

- Are you using billing codes consistently and accurately for the telehealth services you perform?
- Are you tracking patient outcomes to understand at what point your performance obligations have been fulfilled?

• Do you have one centralized, easy-to-use dashboard to aggregate all data related to telehealth visits and outcomes?

- Have you addressed potential sales and use tax obligations of providing telehealth technology in various jurisdictions?

• With employees in various states and local jurisdictions, have payroll tax and withholding obligations been addressed?

3. After you've implemented telehealth:

- Have you recently conducted a nexus review for your organization?
- Do you have a list of all states in which you may have generated revenue via telehealth visits?
- Are you staying up to date on new telehealth tax compliance rules as states look for ways to increase revenues?
- Are you confident that you are accurately recognizing revenue for your telehealth visits?
- Have you received any tax notices or letters from either the IRS or any states?
- Have you complied with all state and local tax obligations in each state in which you are providing telehealth services?

Need more telehealth tax help?

Please contact Jim White, Tax Partner and BDO, National Healthcare Tax Leader, at jrwhite@bdo.com.

Contact:

Alfredo Cepero, Managing Partner
305-420-8006 / acepero@bdo.com

Angelo Pirozzi, Partner
646-520-2870 / apirozzi@bdo.com

Thank You: Florida's Hospital Workforce



BY MARY MAYHEW

I saw a sign the other day that said, "Not all heroes wear capes," and next to those words were the outline of a medical professional in a surgical mask. It is so true, but not just because of the work our doctors, nurses, and hospital staff have performed during the pandemic; it is because of the heroic work they perform every day, whether we acknowledge it or not!

Most days, people don't typically think of the hospital or the more than 280,000 doctors, nurses, therapists, and support staff who work there until we need them. Instead, we simply take comfort knowing they are there. But will that always be the case?

Even prior to COVID-19, hospitals across Florida and the nation faced a workforce crisis. The 24/7 hospital environment is demanding and difficult. In addition, there are many healthcare jobs outside of the hospital setting that have contributed to the workforce shortages. Then COVID-19 hit, and a bad situation got even worse.

According to a study this spring by the Florida Hospital Association, prior to the most recent surge in COVID-19, eleven percent of registered nurse (RN) positions at our hospitals were vacant. That number may not sound significant, but a single nurse may be responsible for the care of 6–8 patients in a general care setting during their shift. Thus, having one in ten nursing positions vacant results in 60–80 fewer patients that can be served or extra shifts and even longer hours for those on duty to make sure every patient receives the care they need.

Those extra shifts and hours add up and eventually take their toll. Last year one in four nurses in Florida left the field, including one in three critical care nurses. Again, a bad situation worsened as hospitals responded to record hospitalizations and the need for critical care as intensive care units were close to maximum capacity. Hospitals that already faced a shortage of nurses were now losing experienced nurses who were just packing up and leaving altogether or left to work for staffing agencies that provide nurses in Florida or around the country.

Something had to be done. Hiring

more nurses seemed like an obvious choice, but there are not enough candidates out there. In fact, our survey showed more than 40 percent of our hospitals reported taking longer than 60 days to fill a nurse vacancy.

It's no wonder burnout is taking a hold of the nurses and medical professionals in our hospitals. High vacancy rates, high turnover rates, the length of time it takes to fill a nurse opening; then add a record number of people in the hospital due to COVID-19. It's a difficult time to be a medical professional.

So, what can a Floridian do? Get vaccinated! One of the best ways to thank a nurse or doctor is not to see them for something you can protect yourself against, like COVID-19.

Thank them - not just on the days you need them, but whenever you encounter one of these brave men and women in your neighborhood, at church, or in the store. Thank the doctors, nurses, and staff who stayed on the job and encourage those in school seeking to enter this noble profession.

Lastly, remember that our hospitals are more than just buildings; they are about the people who deliver lifesaving care every day. Maybe your kind word of thanks or a friendly gesture will be the inspiration a doctor, nurse, or hospital staff member needs to hang on just a little longer.

Florida hospitals are responding to this shortage by increasing efforts to recruit and retain their existing staff. They are also focusing on making more nurses available to serve as faculty, expanding training slots, creating apprenticeships, and providing additional career ladders for nurses who want to move to advanced practices.

It will take everyone working together to let our tremendously talented medical professionals know that we respect their work and how much they mean to your hospital, to your family, and to our communities.

Mary Mayhew is President and CEO of the Florida Hospital Association.

What's Next?

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ACHE of South Florida Member Spotlight: Dr. Jeff Ritter, Assistant Professor, College of Nursing and Health Sciences Master of Science in Health Service Administration Programs at Barry University

BY VANESSA ORR

Dr. Jeff Ritter, an assistant professor in the College of Nursing and Health Sciences Master of Science in Health Service Administration Programs (MSHSA) at Barry University, first became interested in a career in healthcare at a young age.

"As a child, I had a number of ailments that required clinical care, and I developed a great respect for the clinicians, physicians and nurses that treated me," he explained. "That drove me to pursue a career in healthcare after college."

After earning a Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) from Baruch College in New York City, a Master of Business Administration (MBA) from Long Island University, and a Doctorate of Business Administration (DBA) from Nova Southeastern University, Dr. Ritter served as a hospital administrator, and held executive positions in both the managed care and insurance industries. He also has more than 25 years of management consulting experience in the pharmaceutical, managed care, technology and business process industries.

"Around 2004, I got into teaching because I decided at a certain point that I wanted to be able to give something back; to provide students with the kind of direction and support that I had gotten in my career," said Dr. Ritter.

At Barry University, he teaches health care strategy, marketing, leadership, managed care, and policy, and is also the coordinator of the internship program for graduate students.

Approximately 15 years ago, Dr. Ritter joined the American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE), where he served as a board member for the South Florida chapter and also led the student case competition for the MSHSA program for a number of years that was sponsored by ACHE.

"I joined because I thought it would be a good way to connect with local healthcare leaders; the networking events provide an opportunity to establish relationships with those in the same industry," he explained. "It's hard to say what aspect I find the most useful; I appreciate the educational programs and mentoring opportunities, and just being a part of the community."

He also utilizes the things he learns through ACHE in his day-to-day job.

"I think that it's very important to be able to share best practices with students, and to explain what it's like for those in administration to manage teams and to be part of an organization," he said of the opportunity to see how a range of healthcare leaders deal with various leadership and managerial challenges.

He added that he encourages students planning a career in healthcare to join ACHE as well.

"ACHE is a great resource, whether you're looking for educational events, mentoring, internships or more," he said. "I encourage students to join because it gives credibility to what they're doing. It's another step in the process toward success."



Dr. Jeff Ritter



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A message from our President

“What About Me,” Cried the Poor Little Seasonal Flu (Influenza) Virus. “I’ll Make You Pay for Forgetting Me!”

We must keep our eyes on the future while at the same time being mindful of the rearview mirror and what has happened behind us. Namely, over the ages, influenza has been a much bigger problem around the world. While “COVID-19 has now killed about as many Americans as the 1918-19 Spanish flu pandemic did — approximately 675,000” over time influenza has taken a serious toll in terms of total deaths. Moreover, like the worldwide scourge of a century ago, the coronavirus may never entirely disappear from our midst.

Vaccine safety has been of paramount importance since the creation of the first vaccines. With COVID-19 vaccines, we have seen that safety on display every day with growing numbers of vaccinated individuals experiencing minimal side effects and lasting protection. Please, do everyone around you a favor, get one of the approved COVID-19 vaccines, and let’s stamp out this virus. In addition, influenza vaccines have even a longer history of imparting lasting protection. Now, let us get back to influenza.

You can do what I did, use your favorite search engine, and search for “seasonal flu predictions” and you will see several pages of articles with typical titles such as this, “HEALTH AND SCIENCE, Health experts are anxious to prevent a ‘catastrophic’ winter flu season.” Last year, because of the extraordinary measures that most of us took to remain safe from contracting COVID-19, there weren’t that many flu cases. That is good news, and bad. It was good news because it showed us

what using the big three could do in terms of minimizing exposure to the virus (masking, distance, and hand cleanliness) and bad because natural immunity to influenza wanes over time and we have likely used up what immunity we had.

To put this into perspective, we have seen an estimated 42.3 million COVID-19 infections since this virus first showed up in the U.S. In comparison, just over the years 2017-2020, we have experienced an estimated 119 million symptomatic illnesses that lead to 56 million medical visits and 117,000 deaths. Over the last ten years, there have been 359,000 deaths attributable to influenza.

Trust me; hospitals do not want to see you as a patient if there is any way for you to prevent it. As luck would have it, there is a way that you can prevent it, go and get your flu vaccine! The vaccine is tried and true and has been around for years. It infers temporary protection against getting the flu and, if you still get the flu after being vaccinated, your cases will be minor requiring just home rest or, maybe, a doctor’s visit. Yes, only “cents” for your protection and dollars of savings if you are able to avoid becoming a statistic. Schedule your appointment for your flu shot today ... don’t wait.



Jaime Caldwell

Five Reasons to Utilize Video Content Marketing

Video content marketing is a relatively new way for businesses to promote their products and services. By making videos, companies can curate shareable content on various social media platforms, such as YouTube, Facebook, or Twitter. As technology advances, it has become a method sought after by more companies due to its reach and returns.

The great thing about video content marketing is that it's becoming easier to do. When done well, it can be a powerful tool for a brand to spread its message in a way that is easily accessible to a larger audience. But aside from the reach it provides, what else can it do?

1. Better Explanation

Videos provide better explanations and context than photos. Video content is a helpful tool for enticing potential buyers to buy a product by showing the items' uses, importance, and relevance. At least 94 percent of marketers mentioned that using video content has helped increase user understanding of a product or service.

Most customers only buy products that they understand. It also adds to the buying possibilities if they can understand what the product does exactly. For example, companies that sell tech devices invest in videos to help sell new products to the market.

2. Return on Investment

ROI is possible for video content marketing, but it would still depend on several factors, such as the content strategy and the quality of videos. However, 83 percent of marketers still think video content gives them a good return on investment. Although producing video content is expensive, various options make it possible to create a good video without having to spend too much.

People can record high-quality videos on mobile phones. Before, without smartphones, people needed expensive cameras and luxurious setups. But now, with an entry-level phone and a skill for editing, everyone can create video content that can help a business sell. Keep in mind that spending less on producing video content means it's easier to get a positive ROI.

3. Variety of Use

Video content is a versatile tool that provides marketers with options. It's easy to find a method that fits your company's



BY CHAD TINGLE

marketing goals. Although YouTube is the most popular platform for creating videos, other social media platforms, such as Snapchat, Instagram, and Facebook, are also exciting contenders.

Live videos have grown in recent years, with industry giants like Facebook, YouTube, and Twitch—offering ways for businesses to stream live content. Live videos are as effective as uploaded videos. Facebook claims that live streams get six times more interactions than regular videos.

4. People Are Drawn to Videos

People, by nature, are drawn to videos. As technology made it easier for businesses to record videos, it has also made it convenient to watch content. In 2017, people watched over a billion hours of videos every day on YouTube.

Meanwhile, Twitter revealed that there are two billion views on its platform daily. On top of that, tweets with embedded videos get ten times more engagement than those without. In effect, businesses that do not produce video content are missing out on attention online.

5. Videos Are SEO-Friendly

Video content ranks better in SEO. Uploading videos on video-sharing platforms while using target keywords can be an excellent way to get your business on the first page of Google. The search engine includes YouTube videos at the top of the page for most search terms.

Conclusion

Overall, video content marketing is the future of promoting products and services. Since it's easier to produce videos today, most businesses result in creating high-quality content while maximizing what people need and expect from them. If your company doesn't use video content as a marketing tool, then maybe it's time to consider it.

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What's New in Pediatric Surgery

While all eyes have turned to COVID-19 mitigation, pediatric surgeons have been working on other advancements as well. Surgeons are playing an integral role in a child's medical team more so than ever before — they aren't just in the OR and then out of the child's life. Instead, pediatric surgeons are looking to up the standards and methods for care in the areas of educating new pediatric surgeons, policies for opioid use, gun violence, and child abuse, proving their continued desire and innovation to protect the youngest among us.



BY CARMEN RAMOS-IRIZARRY, MD

as an educator is to progress from teaching how it's done to allowing them to perform under supervision, then distant supervision, then independently.

The program started gaining more steam as residency programs were communicating with medical schools that their new residents weren't fully capable of accomplishing tasks and competencies required for their level. There was a gap across medical school programs.

The EPA program allows for more comprehensive teaching and learning, such as performing an appendectomy, start to finish. There is an entrustability scale where you can measure performance and give feedback. You can ask the trainee how they felt doing the appendectomy. They may say, 'I appreciated when you told me to put this clip here or to watch out for arteries.' With that constructive feedback, they get a chance to tell what they need. The EPA will help attendings identify the needs of a resident to know if she needs to prompt the resident's next step or to let them go ahead independently.

A study that includes Olle Ten Cate, the original Netherlands researcher piloting the program, concluded that the EPA program on average shortens the necessary length of training by 3 months. The pilot studies continue on and I hope this framework will soon be implemented in widespread fashion.

Dr. Carmen Ramos-Irizarry, a pediatric surgeon at KIDZ Medical in Naples, is a Councilor of The American Board of Surgery (ABS), the national certifying body for general surgeons and related specialists.

For more information, visit www.kidzmedical.com/provider/carmen-ramos-md.



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Disability Income Risk for the Physician

What is your most valuable asset? For most of us it is our ability to generate a paycheck. Physicians or other medical professionals may earn millions of dollars during their working career, and this income provides our lifestyles. You should pay very close attention to your personal Disability Income coverage. If you suffer an injury or prolonged illness, and need to use this important insurance, your claim will be governed by this contract.

Personal Disability plans should be periodically reviewed because income and lifestyles change over our careers. You can self-insure or purchase coverage from an expert who understands how to tailor a program for your specific needs. Earned income is a multimillion-dollar asset. If you suffer an injury or illness, you need an Advocate to help you when you need it most. Are you totally disabled or returning to work? What if you have a relapse? This is when a great agent can help you know your options and provide assistance.

So what do you look for in high quality Personal Disability Income Insurance? Most physicians and other medical professionals want a contract with a definition of disability in their specialty practice of medicine. But there are other very important contract features that need to be considered. What is the definition of residual disability? Do I need recovery benefits? Do I receive a cost of living raise if totally disabled? Can the price of my insurance increase or the coverage be canceled during my working career?

When disability strikes are you prepared? How will you continue paying your mortgage, auto, and other monthly expenses? Does your retirement contribution stop? Could you pay any student loans? There are options in these contracts that will pay your loans, retirement plans, and other expenses in the event of a disabling injury or illness. Most claims are illness not injury and suffering a long-term reduction in income could be devastating.

If you own a Practice or purchase one, you have turned into a Business Owner, this provides opportunity and presents expanded risk. As the Owner if you were to suffer from a disabling injury or prolonged illness for 60 days or 180 days and



BY SUMMER
WESTERBUR

are unable to work, would you sell or could you return? Or more importantly how much is it worth? These are important considerations. Do you have a succession plan?

There are several important ways to protect your Practice from the disability of the primary Physician. One idea is tax-deductible Overhead Expense Insurance. This will reimburse the Practice for expenses incurred to help with

employee salaries, temporary replacement Physician if needed, rent, utilities, equipment costs/leasing, malpractice. After accounts receivable are exhausted, how would you keep the Business going while you decide if you can return or not?

If there are multiple Owners, there are important procedures that should be followed to keep the health of the organism that is the shared business. A carefully drafted Partnership Agreement is critical and should be regularly reviewed. What are the provisions for an injury or illness? How long do the healthy remaining Partners cover for someone that is not financially contributing? What do you do if a disabled Partner is only working part time and suffering relapses? Do you have liability if they are not 100 percent healthy?

As a Business Owner it would be wise to create the exit ramp and buyout for a disabled Partner. This agreement can allow for return to work which may include relapses, setbacks or total recovery for a disabled Physician and Partner. The Practice will run better if these important guidelines are set in place prior to a disabling event, put in writing, and communicated. These are easy prevention strategies that are cost effective, can be tax favored, and benefit everyone involved.

Summer Westerbur, founder of Kairos Insurance Group, is experienced in all types of insurance including employee benefit packages, product liability, general liability, professional liability and building insurance. Kairos also has expanded to include a Cannabis Division to address the unique challenges facing the cannabis industry and its employees. For more information, contact Summer@kairosinsurancegroup.com or call (719) 331-1832.

Cover Story: Dante's 10th Circle of Hell

Continued from page 1

vide warning to the unbidden. Slowly opening the door, the nurse or physician enters a surreal world of gray, blue, and beige, soothing colors that do little to dispel the gloom. Gone is the incessant chatter of nurses, respiratory techs, doctors who formerly would be going about the business of recuperating patients in various stages of illness. The silence of oppressive. Oppressive because unlike previous ICU cases where the vast majority of patients would survive, few occupants will recover.

On one side, are the closed doors of cubicles. Holes have been cut into the doors through which pass various tubes connecting the patient to IV pumps and other paraphernalia, allowing adjustments without entering the patient rooms. This minimizes staff contact with patients and lowers their potential for contracting the virus. On a wall, seen only by staff, is a white board posting the names of the patients. Room 1 on top and 8 on the bottom. Next to their name are symbols. "V" stands for ventilator. "T" stands for tracheostomy. A red dot, "DNR" or do not resuscitate. The family or the patient has made the decision that if their heart stops, they will not receive cardiac massage and often futile measures ICU doctors use to preserve life.

Looking though the glass, the patient's unmoving head and upper torso is seen. Their chest rising and falling with the mechanical rhythm of the ventilators. Others have an enhanced type of nasal cannula that are capable of delivering higher flows of precious oxygen. Their breathing is more spastic: they must work harder to supply their bodies with that essential ingredient necessary to maintain cellular activity. When it falls too low, a tube is placed in their windpipe and a machine takes over. Once this occurs, their chance for survival is around 10%. And even if they do survive, they likely will experience profound medical and emotional scars.

What is different from our experience a year ago is the color of the patients' hair. A year ago, it was gray. Now it is brown. Many men sport beards and upper torsos that look formidable and robust. Except for the tubes protruding from their nose, mouth or neck, they look like they could pull out their IV, pack up their belongings and walk out of the hospital. It is unlikely that they will.

This past week, a nurse was observed to be crying softly. The day before, as her patient's condition worsened, his family came in. They knew that they were probably saying good-by. The

patient was alert and responsive enough to have personality and bonded with the nurse. She came in at 7:00 the following morning and learned that he had expired. Her humanity deserves respect in that she had continued to regard him as a human being. More often than not, the only way for healthcare professionals to survive is to depersonalize their charges and regard them as "cases." To her credit and pain, she had not. Magnifying the loss was the patient's widow and 3 young children. He was in his late 30s.

The scene was replayed the following day. This time a pregnant mother with severe COVID symptoms was flown in. Over the course of several days, her condition deteriorated. To try to preserve her life and that of her unborn child, a hysterectomy was performed. The child survived, but the mother did not.

She left behind several small children at home as well as her newborn child who will never enjoy her mother's hugs or kisses. The emotional effect on her caregivers exceeds description.

What these cases have in common is the fact that neither of these patients were vaccinated. Nor are more than 99% of the other cases in the ICU.

At the end of Dante's Inferno, his Purgatorio, is a passage from his female friend Casella: "As I once loved you in my mortal flesh, without it now, I love you still." Why 700 years later should this be necessary? Why should the surviving wife or husband have to love only the memory of their lost spouse? Dante, in the end, was a poet of hope. As we have hope that our burden will soon end.

America has overcome 9/11, depressions, recessions, wars, and severe adversity. We will doubtlessly overcome this pandemic. Life will again one day become normal. But we need to lower the number of casualties. We have the ability. We stopped smoking. We use seat belts. We have the means to do so. Creation of the vaccine in less than a year is a miracle in itself!

There is only so much pain and suffering that the psyche of health givers can endure. And they (we) have given themselves selflessly for over a year and a half. While there is no Virgil to lead us out of hell, there are vaccines. There are masks. There is simple distancing. To those who deny the reality of the pandemic and its morbid consequences, I ask: please help us. Use those measures to keep yourself and others healthy.

Dr. Arthur E. Palamara is the Past President of the Broward County Medical Association and a vascular surgeon in Hollywood, FL.

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Around the Region... Around

CHS Board Appoints Aristides Pallin as New President and CEO

The board of directors together with The Most Reverend Thomas Wenski, Archbishop of Miami, announced the promotion and appointment of Aristides (Ardy) Pallin as the new President and Chief Executive Officer of Catholic Health Services.

Pallin has served as Chief Operating Officer for the organization since 2017 and on the board of directors prior to his post as COO for 10 years.

"This breadth of experience and full immersion in the organization, coupled with his broad knowledge of the industry and marketplace and his impressive business acumen made him the most outstanding of all candidates presented," comments Ralph Lawson, chairman of the board, CHS. "The entire CHS board and Archbishop Wenski have full confidence in Ardy's ability to lead this organization into the future. Furthermore, through his strong leadership and guidance style, Ardy has garnered the admiration, respect and trust of the entire CHS team."

Judy Frum Joins Broward Health Medical Center as New Chief Operating Officer

Broward Health Medical Center and Salah Foundation Children's Hospital welcome Judy Frum, RRT, BSN, MBA, as Chief Operating Officer (COO). Frum is an award-winning healthcare executive with more than 16 years of healthcare leadership experience.

Frum most recently served as COO of Memorial Regional Hospital in Hollywood, FL, where she led strategic initiatives, business development, quality care and operational efficiency. Prior to her time as COO, Frum served as the Chief Nursing Officer at Memorial Regional Hospital.

Frum earned her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Florida Atlantic University. She received a Master of Business Administration from Florida International University. She also completed an Associate of Nursing from Broward Community College, an Associate of Respiratory Therapy from West Virginia Community College and elementary education undergraduate studies at West Virginia University. Frum was awarded the 2017 Humanitarian of the Year award from the Fort Lauderdale Chamber of Commerce, and the 2018 Hollywood Businesswoman of the Year from the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce.

Delray Medical Center Appoints New Chief Operating Officer

Delray Medical Center promotes Maria Morales-Menendez to the position of Chief Operating Officer.

Prior to her appointment as COO, Morales-Menendez started at Delray Medical Center as an associate resident, before being promoted to the position of associate administrator. She led several process improvement and operational initiatives at Delray Medical Center, and for the Palm Beach Health Network.

Morales-Menendez graduated from the University of Kentucky in Lexington, KY with a degree in biosystems engineering. She then went on to earn her Master's in Business Administration with a healthcare specialization from Baylor University in Waco, TX.

Palm Beach Gardens Medical Center Appoints New Associate Administrator

Palm Beach Gardens Medical Center announces the appointment of Darrin Cook to the position of Associate Administrator at the hospital.

Cook has 20 years of health care administration experience and comes to Palm Beach Gardens Medical Center from Renown Health's Institute for Heart and Vascular Health as an administrative director in Reno, Nevada.

Cook spent six years on active duty as a medical specialist with the United States Army, serving one tour in Kuwait as well as one year in the Army National Guard. Darrin holds a Master's Degree in Healthcare Management and a Bachelor's of Science in Human Services from the University of Phoenix.



Aristides Pallin



Judy Frum



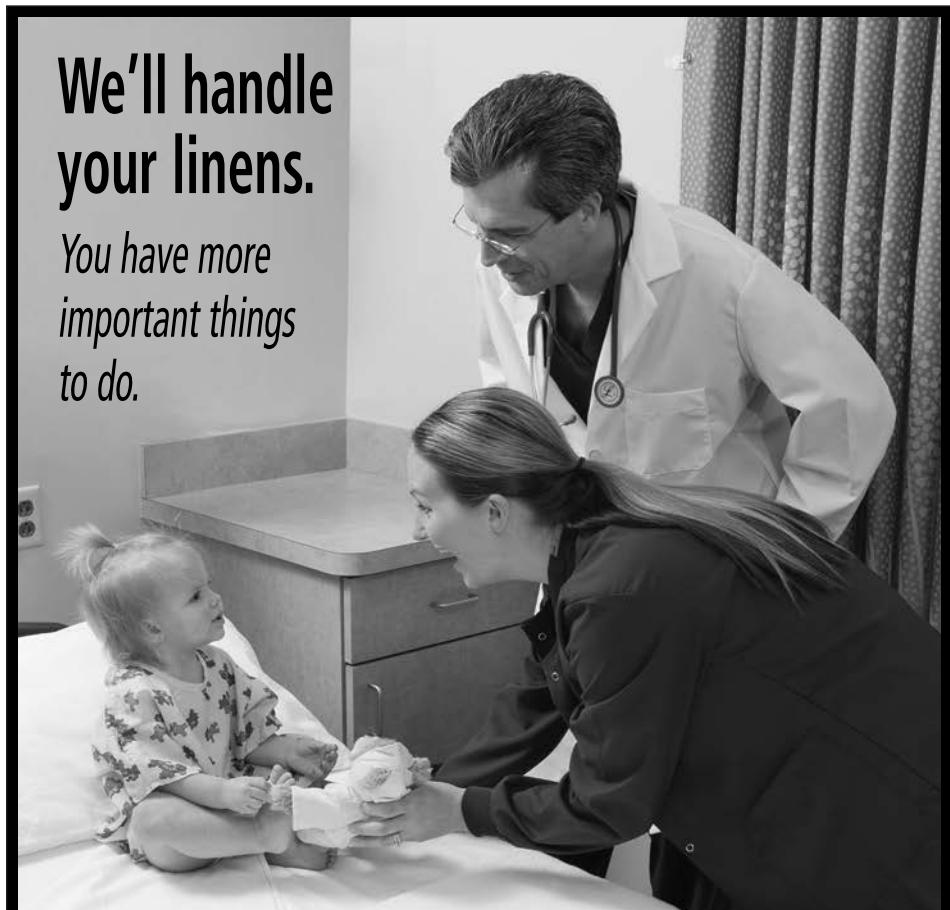
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Cover Story: Camillus Health Concern Receives 5 CHQR Badges

Continued from page 1

of health centers in the nation in this category.

(4) Patient-Centered Medical Home Recognition, which recognizes centers in one or more delivery sites. CHC was among about 75% of centers in this category, as this is a core element of all health centers' missions.

(5) COVID-19 Testing, for centers that tested more than 50% of their reported populations from April 2020 to July 2021, and had a response rate of at least 50% to a COVID-19 survey. CHC was among less than 22% of centers to receive this.

With the level of quality offered by CHC, Afram-Gyening shouldn't have been caught off guard by the awards, but he was. "We were surprised to receive those five badges. We had received one or two before, but to be given all of those at once! I am particularly proud of the COVID-19 award – we really tested a lot of people with community partners, the sheltered and unsheltered, people experiencing homelessness. So to be recognized for that was very satisfying."

Afram-Gyening said each of the health centers must submit a Uniform Data Set report every year that details a great deal of information. The Health Resources and Services Administration analyzes the data and determines if and how much the health centers have improved. He said that, in CHC's case, for example, they served 5,700 new patients in 2019, but in 2020, the number increased by more than 5%, to 6,000.

"Frankly, we should have seen a reduction in total patients during the pandemic because people were reluctant to come to clinics, with social distancing and masking and all of that. But for us, we grew during the pandemic. That alone was a significant achievement."

He said word of mouth is the number one way new clients come to the center. "The population we serve – they move

around, they are transient. They know where they have to go for their evening meal, and word spreads easily." Afram-Gyening also said CHC works very closely with other homeless service providers, particularly the shelters, and when the clients stay with them, they are often referred to CHC.

Camillus Health Concern is located in Miami, and Afram-Gyening said, "Our sole mission is helping those experiencing homelessness and the indigent population. The Little Brothers of the Good Shepherd was established in 1960 when the Cubans were fleeing Cuba under Castro's regime. We welcomed them when they came to Miami. We clothed them, we housed them, and fed them. So that was the original idea, to help these new refugees; and that gave birth, in 1988, to Camillus Health Concern."

Of the many services offered by CHC, Afram-Gyening commented on what he considers to be the most significant: "The most important service is to wake up every morning, come to work, and see the success this population has when they come to the clinic for dental care or behavioral health or primary care."

To see the smiles when they leave the clinic is what seems like the most important. It is so hard for this population to seek care because most of them are not working, and they might be experiencing mental health and financial challenges, they are sleeping under bridges, not in homes. Too often they are greeted with disrespect or disdain. So for them to get up and say, 'Today I'm going to see a dentist, I'm going to see my counselor,' it gives me joy to be able to provide those services with dignity and respect to these individuals who need them most."

For more information, call (305) 374-1065 or visit www.camillus.org.

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South Broward Hospital District Board of Commissioners Adopts Lowest Millage Rate Ever Recorded for the District

South Florida, like other areas of the country, has experienced serious surges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, creating a high demand for healthcare services and challenges across hospitals. Medical teams cared for a high level of COVID-19 cases coupled with steady patient volumes in other clinical areas, such as cardiac and cancer.

Memorial Healthcare System has been on the forefront of the pandemic, managing up to 738 COVID-19 positive patients at the peak of the latest surge, while also investing \$16 million in personal protection supplies, and supplementing its front line with close to 1,000 contract nurses to address the constant needs brought on by the pandemic this past year.

Such level of response had significant impact on Memorial's finances, yet the Board of Commissioners for the South Broward Hospital District, which oversees all actions for Memorial, voted Wednesday to still move forward with the adoption of the lowest millage rate ever recorded for the district. This latest millage reduction to 0.1144 marks the 11th year in a row that the Board has voted to lower the overall millage rate, resulting in the lowest rate in the history of the South Broward Hospital District. Commissioners supported their decision based on Memorial's strong financial position and having the ability to provide that reduction to residents in south Broward County.

What does the lowest millage rate represent?

The 0.1144 millage rate represents a 4.59 percent decrease from last year's rate of 0.1199. The resulting gross tax revenues are estimated to reach \$7.7 million. After accounting for early payment discounts and a certain percentage of uncollectible taxes, the anticipated tax payments this year of \$7.6 million will provide the District enough revenue to cover its governmental obligations,

which include paying Broward County's Medicaid Match program and community redevelopment agencies in several municipalities in south Broward County, as well as tax collector commissions and property appraiser fees.

The newly adopted millage rate will leave no net tax revenue to fund uncompensated care, the District will use operating income to cover all uncompensated care costs for the entire Memorial Healthcare System, including its six hospitals and its eight Memorial Primary Care clinics. In fiscal year 2022 uncompensated care is projected to exceed \$967 million.

Memorial's Minimum Wage Increase

On a separate and unanimous vote, the Board of Commissioners also approved an increase in the Memorial Minimum Wage, from \$13 an hour to \$15 an hour – an investment of over \$8 million in Memorial's workforce. This is the second minimum wage increase in the last six months.

This historic reduction of this millage rate coupled with the increase in minimum wage also comes at a time when Memorial Healthcare System continues to offer a comprehensive array of services, such as cardiac and stroke care, Level 1 trauma services, maternity, kidney transplant and many others. Memorial's quality and safety has been recognized nationally by Leapfrog Group, a national nonprofit organization that collects and transparently reports hospital performance.

Memorial Cardiac and Vascular Institute continues to receive outstanding ratings from the Society of Thoracic Surgeons, placing Memorial in the top 1% of U.S. cardiovascular centers for 2017. Memorial also remains one of only a handful of public hospitals in the nation to achieve AA, Aa3 financial ratings by Standard and Poor's and Moody's, respectively.

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WHAT'S NEW... WHAT'S NEW... WHAT'S NEW...

Jupiter Medical Center Receives \$4 Million to Enhance Emergency Services

Jupiter Medical Center's Emergency Department is set to undergo a major expansion and renovation beginning in October. The Emergency Department is a critical entry point to the hospital and important for future growth and patient satisfaction.

The expansion is the result of gifts to Jupiter Medical Center Foundation - a \$3 million gift from the Attilio & Beverly Petrocelli Foundation and a \$1 million gift from Joyce C. Fisher. The gifts will enable the medical center to build a new wing, including eight fast-track bays to assist patients with less-acute medical needs, thereby improving wait times, enhancing the patient's experience, and increasing the overall footprint of the existing Emergency Department. The renovation will include the purchase of advanced clinical equipment, spacious patient and triage rooms, a more functional layout for clinicians, with state-of-the-art technologies to handle higher patient volumes, and expansive waiting areas for loved ones. This expansion will augment a patient's experience by providing a comforting environment with streamlined services to assist during a potentially stressful time. The new center will be named the Petrocelli Emergency Center.



North Broward Hospital District Board of Commissioners Approves New Millage Rate

The North Broward Hospital District Board of Commissioners approved a new millage rate of 1.2770 for FY2022.

The increase over last year's mileage rate of 1.1469 is due to the negative effects of the pandemic and the impact of the current economic environment. "To ensure reserves required to overcome this volatile virus and the continuance of our provision of high-quality care, we are recommending this increase," said Alex Fernandez, Senior Vice President and CFO of Broward Health.

Reasons provided by the board for voting on the new millage rate included ensuring Broward Health, a safety net hospital, can offset unprecedented costs, including supplies, pharmaceuticals and labor, all attributed to the pandemic.

"This past year, we saw that it was necessary to have the tax revenue to provide the services needed by our community," said Stacy Angier, chair, North Broward Hospital District. "Without raising taxes, we wouldn't have been able to provide necessary COVID-19 care. We have to ensure the safety of this hospital for this community."

Past Chair Nancy Gregoire Stamper added, "People's health is of paramount concern." "We thank the board for voting to protect services and care for our community's most vulnerable," said Shane Strum, Broward Health President/CEO. "We will aggressively look for ways to increase existing and new revenue streams with the goal that next year we can roll back the millage rate."

The millage rate is a set percentage of property values used to generate tax funds to cover all uncompensated care costs for Broward Health, which includes four hospitals and Broward Health Community Health Services. Broward Health is the primary care provider for the indigent, uninsured and underinsured living in the northern two-thirds of Broward County.

Palm Beach Gardens Medical Center Now Offering the CORI™ Surgical System for Knee Replacement Surgery



Palm Beach Gardens Medical Center is now offering patients the CORI™ Surgical System for knee replacement surgery. The CORI™ Surgical System uses handheld robotics-assisted technology helping the surgeon plan and perform the procedure. It also gives surgeons a three-dimensional view to help finalize and verify the selection of the knee implant and create a plan for surgery without the need for either a CT scan or MRI.

"This new technology gives our community an additional innovative orthopedic procedure designed to allow patients to have normal function in their knee, and return to their daily activities," said Teresa Urquhart, chief executive officer at Palm Beach Gardens Medical Center. "We are committed to bringing some of the latest technologies to our area so we can give our patients quality treatment options close to home."

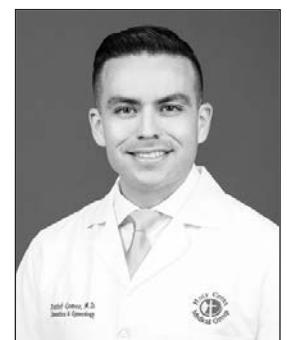
New Innovative Procedure for Hysterectomies Now Performed at Holy Cross Health

A new minimally invasive procedure is now being performed at Holy Cross Health in Fort Lauderdale for women who must undergo a hysterectomy.

Vaginal Natural Orifice Transluminal Endoscopic Surgery (vNOTES) is the advanced gynecologic technique and newest approach to hysterectomy procedures which provides many benefits to patients, including a shorter hospital stay, less postoperative pain, no visible scars and a faster recovery time. Daniel Gomez, M.D., FACOG, FACS, Chief, Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Holy Cross Health, was the first surgeon in the state of Florida to perform this procedure and among the few surgeons in Broward County/South Florida who has been specially trained on the innovative approach to hysterectomy and other common gynecologic procedures.

"At Holy Cross, we provide the highest quality care for patients, and vNOTES is a leading-edge technique that certainly enhances patient care for women," said Dr. Gomez. "As a less invasive option, vNOTES provides many benefits to our patients. A vast majority of my patients are able to leave the hospital the same day of the procedure."

The vNOTES technique, which uses the vagina as a surgical access route, is the newest approach to hysterectomy procedures. For the surgery, a vNOTES device known as theGelPOINT® V-Path transvaginal access platform is placed through the vagina into the pelvic cavity, giving access to the uterus, fallopian tubes and ovaries. The vNOTES device is the means by which the abdomen is inflated with carbon dioxide gas to give the surgeon the space needed to see and operate. A high-definition camera and specialized instruments are inserted through the device, allowing surgeons to operate with the utmost precision and visualization. Once the surgery is completed, the vNOTES device is removed and the gas is evacuated.



Dr. Daniel Gomez



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Neurologist Samina Kazmi, MD, Joins Cleveland Clinic Martin Health

Cleveland Clinic Martin Health welcomes board-certified neurologist Samina Kazmi, M.D. Dr. Kazmi specializes in stroke care, as well as treatment of headaches, neuropathies and other neurologic conditions. Dr. Kazmi earned her medical degree at Sindh Medical College, University of Karachi, in Pakistan. She completed the residency program in the Department of Neurology at University of Mississippi Medical Center. She completed the fellowship program in Clinical Neurophysiology at West Virginia University. Prior to joining Martin Health, Dr. Kazmi practiced as a general neurologist and neurodiagnostician in Canada. She is a Diplomat of the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology, of the American Board of Clinical Neurophysiology and of the American Board of Vascular Neurology.



Dr. Samina Kazmi

Dr. Stephanie Stovall Named Chief Quality and Safety Officer

Lee Health is pleased to announce Stephanie Stovall, M.D., has been named Chief Officer of Quality and Safety.

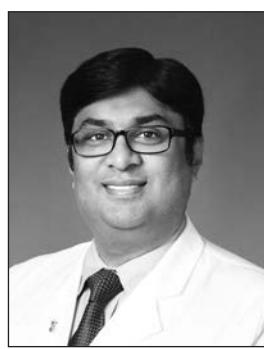
Dr. Stovall joined Lee Health in 2011 as an attending physician for pediatric infectious diseases at Golisano Children's Hospital of Southwest Florida. Since joining Golisano Children's Hospital, she has also served as division director of pediatric infectious diseases, medical director of epidemiology and infection prevention, and medical director of quality and patient safety. Dr. Stovall is a former president of the Medical Staff and Medical Executive Committee, and she was the medical director of the Antimicrobial Stewardship Program. Before joining Golisano Children's Hospital and Lee Health, Dr. Stovall was an attending physician for pediatric infectious diseases at Arkansas Children's Hospital and the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) where she also served as assistant professor of pediatrics. She served as the medical director of the Clinical Microbiology and Virology Laboratory and co-director of the Antimicrobial Stewardship Team.



Dr. Stephanie Stovall

Fawad Yousuf, MD, Joins Marcus Neuroscience Institute

Fawad Yousuf, M.D., joins Marcus Neuroscience Institute, part of Baptist Health South Florida, as a neurologist. Dr. Yousuf specializes in general neurology, multiple sclerosis and neuroimaging. Dr. Yousuf joins Marcus Neuroscience Institute from the University of Kentucky Albert B. Chandler Hospital, where he completed a neurology residency. During his residency training, Dr. Yousuf was awarded the prestigious University of Kentucky College of Medicine Silver Award twice for patient care and professionalism. He also served as "Residents as Teachers" course director in the Department of Neurology. Dr. Yousuf completed a post-doctoral research fellowship in multiple sclerosis and neuroimaging at Brigham and Women's Hospital and Harvard Medical School. His areas of research include the treatment effect of multiple disease-modifying therapies on MRI metrics in patients with multiple sclerosis and neuroimaging in patients with MS.



Dr. Fawad Yousuf

Endocrinologist Alexander Williams, MD, Joins Cleveland Clinic Indian River Hospital

Cleveland Clinic Indian River Hospital welcomes board-certified endocrinologist Alexander Williams, M.D. Dr. Williams earned his medical degree from Ross University School of Medicine in Dominica, West Indies. He completed the Internal Medicine Residency Program at Virginia Tech. He completed the Endocrinology, Diabetes and Metabolism Fellowship Program at Vanderbilt University Medical Center. Dr. Williams is certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine. He holds memberships in the American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists, American College of Physicians, American Medical Association and The Endocrine Society.



Dr. Alexander Williams

Urologist Specializing in Robotic Urology Joins Tenet Florida Physician Services

Jordan R. Luskin, M.D., MS, an experienced urologist specializing in robotic surgery, men's health and general urology has joined Tenet Florida Physician Services (TFPS) in West Palm Beach, FL. Dr. Luskin specializes in the UroLift® System, an in-office treatment option for an enlarged prostate condition. Prior to joining TFPS, Dr. Luskin worked as an urologist with Elite Urology/Elite Robotics in Venice, FL and at San Juan Urology in Montrose, CO. From 2018-2020, Dr. Luskin was instrumental in helping San Juan Urology achieve the status of UroLift® System Center of Excellence. Dr. Luskin is a member of the American Urological Association. He has been practicing medicine since 2010. Dr. Luskin completed a general surgery internship, urology residency and medical school at Georgetown University School of Medicine and Georgetown University Hospital located in Washington, D.C. Dr. Luskin authored numerous medical book chapters and original medical research papers and presented his findings to the medical community.



Dr. Jordan R. Luskin

Family Medicine Physician Zhanna Grinchuk, MD, Joins Cleveland Clinic Indian River Hospital

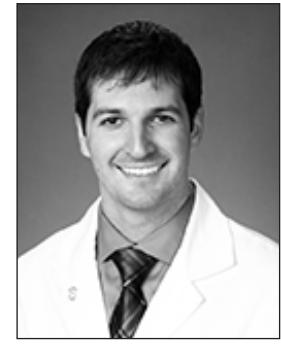
Cleveland Clinic Indian River Hospital welcomes board-certified family medicine physician Zhanna Grinchuk, M.D. As a primary care physician, Dr. Grinchuk focuses on preventative care, as well as treatment of chronic medical problems. Dr. Grinchuk earned her medical degree from Ross University School of Medicine in the West Indies. She completed the Family Medicine Residency Program at Virginia Tech Carilion Clinic. Prior to joining Indian River Hospital, Dr. Grinchuk worked as physician at Vanderbilt Walk-In Clinic in Tennessee. She has also served as a Clinical Instructor in medicine and pediatrics. Dr. Grinchuk is board-certified by the American Board of Family Medicine.



Dr. Zhanna Grinchuk

Timothy O'Connor, MD, Joins Marcus Neuroscience Institute as Director of Minimally Invasive and Robotic Spine Surgery

Timothy O'Connor, M.D., joins Marcus Neuroscience Institute, part of Baptist Health, as the director of minimally invasive surgery and robotic spine surgery. Dr. O'Connor specializes in minimally invasive, robotic and complex deformity surgery. Dr. O'Connor joins Marcus Neuroscience Institute from the University at Buffalo, where he completed a CAST-accredited complex spine surgery fellowship. While completing his complex spine fellowship, he was awarded the AO Discovery and Innovation Young Investigator grant by the AO Spine Foundation for his biomechanical research in junctional tethers. He was invited to join the AO Knowledge Forum, a leading group of surgeons around the world to collaborate on solving some of the greatest challenges in modern spine surgery. He received his medical degree from the University of Florida, where he graduated with honors in research and academic excellence. During medical school, he was invited to join the University of Florida Medical School admissions committee and was elected into the Alpha Omega Alpha honor society. He received the resident of the year award and the highest neurosurgery board score award at University at Buffalo Neurosurgery during residency.



Dr. Timothy O'Connor

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Dr. Debra A. Shannon, Department Chairperson, Health Associated Studies, Informatics, and Career Technical Education Programs, Miami Dade College, Medical Campus, can be reached at (305) 237-4088 or dshannon@mdc.edu.



BY DR. DEBRA A.
SHANNON

Cover Story: Steward Health Care Names Marisela Marrero, MD, as Regional President for South Florida

Continued from page 1

Mass General Brigham.

She also served as President of Good Samaritan Medical Center, one of Steward's largest and most successful Massachusetts hospitals. Originally from Puerto Rico, Dr. Marrero has dedicated her career to engaging and partnering with Latino communities to provide vital health information and care, regularly appearing on Spanish-language television to provide expertise on many important healthcare topics.

Since she was a young girl, Dr. Marrero says that she always knew that she wanted to practice medicine.

"It was the perfect combination for someone who loved both science and people," she says.

Based in Dallas, Steward currently operates 44 hospitals around the world, including 39 across Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas, and Utah, as well as five internationally within Malta and Colombia.

This past summer, Steward and Tenet Healthcare Corporation announced that they had signed a definitive agreement

regarding the acquisition by Steward of Tenet's five hospitals and related hospital operations in the Miami-Dade and Southern Broward counties.

"Steward acquired these hospitals for a variety of reasons," explains Dr. Marrero. "For one, this is our chairman's beloved home state. Second, Steward is a physician-led system, and as such, we have a unique way of partnering with our providers and our patients that unquestionably results in better care. Finally, we are fully engaged, on all fronts, and will work hand in hand with our community to address their needs."

Dr. Marrero is excited about her new role and the challenges and opportunities that await her.

"My vision is to deliver the highest quality healthcare within all of our communities," she notes. "The Steward Healthcare System will take this region to new heights and we will provide compassionate high quality care throughout the region."

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Oncology... Oncology... Oncology...

Cover Story: Mammograms and Breast Cancer Screenings Save Lives

Continued from page 1

Screenings

The American Cancer Society recommends women between 45 to 54 years of age schedule an annual mammogram, and those between 40 and 44, should do so if they wish to. Women 55 and older may decide to schedule mammograms every two years or can continue annually. Scheduling a mammogram can be life-saving. Often, women with breast cancer do not have any physical symptoms, including pain. Detecting breast cancer early, before it has spread to the lymph nodes or elsewhere, dramatically increases a woman's chance of a full recovery. In contrast, advanced breast cancer requires more intensive treatments and leads to higher mortality rates.

Advanced Technologies

In terms of detection, we've come a long way. Advanced radiation oncology equipment and the latest technology for early detection of breast cancers is available, including digital mammography, sensory suites, contrast-enhanced mammography and Tomosynthesis. These innovative tools enable physicians and clinicians to better pinpoint breast cancer and design a customized treatment plan.

It is helpful to be aware of the technology available. As an example, technicians at Broward Health use:

- SmartCurve™ paddles with 2D and 3D technology, which provides radiologists with a clearer image and gives the patient a more comfortable experience since the paddle mimics the shape of a breast.
- The 128 Multi-Slice CT Scanner

detects cancer and other conditions early with unprecedented image quality.

- A magnetic seed localization device allows for greater accuracy and optimal results, helping to locate and remove even the smallest of lesions with unprecedented precision while facilitating the best cosmetic results and a better patient experience.

- The CyberKnife® Robotic Radiosurgery System, designed to treat tumors with pin-point accuracy, minimizing damage to surrounding healthy tissue and providing a pain-free, non-invasive alternative surgery.

Personalized Breast Cancer Treatments

Most importantly, should treatment be required, you want a multidisciplinary medical team. At Broward Health, a team of physicians, surgeons, medical oncologists, radiation oncologists, reconstructive surgeons and other specialists pool their expertise to provide each patient with a personalized treatment approach. Nurses are specially trained to provide care to oncology patients and are certified in cancer care through the Oncology Nursing Society. Patients should have access to a full range of support services including integrative oncology specialists within rehabilitative medicine, social work, nutritional specialists, palliative medicine and behavioral health.

Together we can beat cancer. Make your appointment today.

Dr. Alia Abdulla is a Surgical Oncologist at Broward Health. For more information, visit BrowardHealth.org/BeatCancer or call (954) 888-3453.

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Oncology... Oncology... Oncology...

Biosimilars Expand Access to Treatments Floridians Need

Biologics are a type of medicine derived from living systems, like bacteria and yeast. These powerful medications are manufactured through highly involved biotechnology processes, producing medications that treat such diseases as rheumatoid arthritis, ulcerative colitis, and Crohn's disease, among many others. The number of biologic therapies continues to increase, and so does the number of patients using them.

The cost of biologics has reached an all-time high. The cost of oncology drugs specifically is growing at twice the rate of the general health care cost. The median monthly cost of new U.S. cancer drugs surpassed the median monthly household income in 2000. By 2014, this cost more than doubled the median monthly household income.

There are various solutions to solving this high-cost problem for Floridians, and one of them carries a similar name but very different pricing. They are called biosimilars, and they represent an innovative opportunity to increase access and expand use of these critical treatments for Florida's patients while reducing cost.

I'm a pharmacist in South Florida, and I lead national advocacy efforts to promote the evaluation and the safe and effective use of biosimilars. Biosimilars can generate cost savings by providing more affordable options and creating competition that prevents increasing costs. This could be particularly important when it comes to oncology.

We are currently seeing real growth in the market share of biosimilars. If they reach a 75% share, Florida can expect to see nearly \$1 billion in savings each year, according to the Pacific Research Institute.

The health care system has already seen the far-reaching benefits of competition in the pharmaceutical marketplace through generic drugs, small molecule drugs synthesized in the lab to provide a lower cost alternative to the brand products.

Utilization of generic drugs have proven to be one of the most meaningful and



BY JORGE GARCIA,
PHARM.D, MS, MHA,
MBA, FACHE

effective interventions to help mitigate cost of care in the U.S. Today, generics account for 90% of prescriptions in the country, at only 20% of the cost.

Much like generic medications, biosimilars can boost needed competition in the marketplace, thereby driving down costs and increasing access to critical treatment options.

Health care professionals who work in oncology often experience the financial toxicity that cancer patients can

face. The biosimilar value proposition is that they can deliver the same high-quality products at a fraction of the cost.

While biosimilars can be developed at lower cost and expedited fashion compared to their counterpart products, biosimilars are deemed by the FDA as safe and effective treatment options. In addition, with more than 6 years of post-marketing pharmacovigilance, each day in the marketplace biosimilars provide additional confidence regarding their safety and efficacy profiles. No biosimilar product has ever been removed from the marketplace in the U.S. due to a safety or efficacy concern.

Biosimilars face many challenges and barriers to marketplace entry. To name just a few examples, there is a great deal of room for patent litigation prolonging biosimilar launch and there is no guaranteed payer coverage or market share for manufacturing companies.

Health care professionals are uniquely positioned to promote the evaluation of the growing body of evidence and enable biosimilar utilization where there is evidence to support the use.

Dr. Jorge Garcia is the Assistant Vice President of System Oncology Pharmacy Services at Baptist Health South Florida. He also serves as the Pharmacy Liaison and Board Member for the Florida Society for Clinical Oncology. To learn more, view Dr. Garcia's presentation on Biosimilars: What's New and What's Next? at <https://youtu.be/h5kfjp7KNqs>

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Get Your Mammogram Safely With Memorial

As someone with a family history of breast cancer, and as a member of the South Broward Hospital District Board of Commissioners that oversees Memorial Healthcare System, I am typically busy in October — National Breast Cancer Awareness Month — helping to spread the word about breast cancer and the importance of breast self-awareness and getting screened.

While breast cancer awareness activities look different again this year, early detection is as important as ever. As the pandemic continues, I encourage you to be vigilant. Your mammogram should not wait. Screenings are safe at Memorial Healthcare System thanks to the COVID-19 vaccine and continuing the extra safety precautions that were put in place, including: COVID-19 screenings, physical distancing, enhanced cleaning and disinfecting, appointment spacing, personal protective equipment and face masks required for everyone.

Each year, more than 300,000 women — one in eight in the U.S. — will be diagnosed with breast cancer, and nearly 3,000 men will, too. The good news for all of us in South Florida is that Memorial Healthcare System and Memorial Cancer Institute offer the kinds of diagnostic services that make early detection of breast cancer easier.

Coming in 2023 is a new freestanding Cancer Institute on the campus of Memorial Hospital West. We will have an entire floor exclusively devoted to breast oncology and will offer patients all the services they need under one roof, from diagnosis through treatment to survivorship. This approach works together with the wide range of rehabilitation and supportive care Memorial provides to help patients be stronger against breast cancer.

Our leading-edge 3D mammography technology and our “one-stop shop,” 3D Stereotactic Tomosynthesis Breast Biopsy System mean that patients no longer need to schedule follow-ups and wait days for results. Our highly experienced team of specialized radiologists is dedicated to reading only mammograms and breast imaging. Our outstanding team of medical, surgical and radiation oncologists helps identify individualized treatment options for each patient. Through our Office of Human Research, Memorial strives to offer each patient who would like it the opportunity to participate in a potentially groundbreaking research study or clinical trial.

And it's all here in South Florida. Thanks to the resources of Memorial Healthcare System, you don't need to go anywhere else to access outstanding breast cancer diagnostic care, treatment and support services. It's safe and it's in our own backyard.

For more information on Memorial Cancer Institute, call 954-265-4325 (HEAL) or to schedule a 3D mammogram, visit MHS.net/Mammogram.



LAURA RAYBIN MILLER
Commissioner
South Broward Hospital District d.b.a.
Memorial Healthcare System



Oncology... Oncology... Oncology... Oncology... Oncology... Oncology...

Memorial Cancer Institute Celebrates Future Site with Inspirational Event Wrapped in Themes of Gratitude, Hope and Strength



Memorial Cancer Institute is building its new home on the corner of Pines Boulevard and Flamingo Road with an expected opening date in 2023. To usher an era of innovation in cancer care with the compassion and care Memorial Cancer Institute is known for, leaders, employees and patients gathered at a special “Tag a Wall” event in which they wrote inspirational messages of hope and positivity at the future site of its new institution.

What stood at that location before the demolition of the building were Toys “R” Us and Petco structures, which closed in 2018, at which time Memorial Healthcare purchased both buildings. It is all part of the relocation and expansion plans for the Memorial Cancer Institute. The Tag a Wall event highlighted the optimism and hope this new cancer center will bring to the community. Participants wrote inspiring messages on the walls of the old structures before the two buildings were cleared to make way for the new, progressive and leading-edge Memorial Cancer Institute.

This new structure will be a freestanding 121,300-square-foot outpatient facility. In addition to innovative and world-class care and treatment options, the cancer center will also feature a meditation room that will emphasize healing patients through the body, mind and spirit. Another highlight includes a rooftop garden overlooking CB Smith Park and offering plentiful space for outdoor dining, social functions, yoga and garden therapy.

Memorial Cancer Institute is designated as a Florida Cancer Center of Excellence, one of only five cancer centers in the state to receive this distinguished honor. The new free-standing facility will include radiation oncology; a breast cancer center; a hematology-oncology clinic; the Moffitt Malignant Hematology and Cellular Therapy Clinic; and an infusion clinic. Driven by patient-centered care, world-class cancer treatment and innovative cancer research, MCI is and will continue to be a leader in the fight against cancer.

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One in eight American women will be diagnosed with breast cancer in her lifetime.

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BROWARD HEALTH IMPERIAL POINT

Lauren Patterson, MSW

Lauren Patterson, MSW, Social Services Coordinator, manages a team of clinical social workers whom interview and assess each patient to develop an appropriate discharge plan that meets the patient's particular needs.

Patterson, who has been with Broward Health Imperial Point for six years, shares what she treasures most about her role. "What I love about case management is the ability to work interdisciplinary throughout the acute hospital continuum," Patterson said. "Each day I am able to speak with nurses, physical therapists, physicians and more to include their recommendations into what will be the best plan for the patient." "I then am able to fully educate the patient on why this particular plan is being recommended and work hand-in-hand on individualizing that plan to cater the patient's needs."



BROWARD HEALTH NORTH

Beverly Harriot, RN, RRN, CCM

Beverly Harriot, RN, RRN, CCM, case manager at Broward Health North, takes pride in her ability to provide comforting measures to patients during vulnerable times. As a case manager for the past five years, Harriot enjoys interacting with patients' families and her nursing colleagues, while discovering innovative ways to help patients and utilize cost-efficient measures to positively impact the organization. Harriet is devoted to finding resources to help meet the needs of the uninsured, the homeless and patients who lack family support.

Harriet recently obtained a certification in case management. "I like to be an expert in the field," said Harriet. "That always puts the icing on the cake."

Harriet advises aspiring case managers not to expect case management to be an easy profession as "you will be challenged every day with new and different scenarios, and you must be prepared to accept those challenges the best way you can so that the optimum desired outcome for your patient is achieved."



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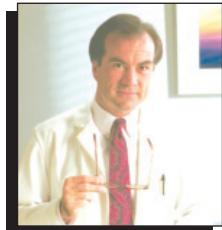


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BROWARD HEALTH MEDICAL CENTER

Binu Chilampath, ACCM, RN

Binu Chilampath, ACCM, R.N., is an acute care case manager in the pediatric unit at Salah Foundation Children's Hospital. Over the last four years, Chilampath's role as a case manager has encompassed all facets of discharge planning for pediatric patients and their families. He also works on providing cost-effective, quality outcomes to help ensure patient and family satisfaction. When asked about her favorite part of her profession, Chilampath's answer was simple: "Being able to be a resource and assistance during these difficult times for the children and families is rewarding. It is worth all the hard work when a child is placed with the best possible discharge arrangements." Chilampath's commitment to the success of Broward Health's patients also translates into her community involvement. She is a professional member of the Indian Nurses Association of North America and has held various positions in the local and national chapters of the India Press Club of North America. Chilampath received her Bachelor of Science in Chemistry at BCM College in Kottayam, India. She also earned her Bachelor of Science in Nursing at the College of Nursing in Jaipur, India. She is certified in pediatric nursing and chemotherapy.



Crystal Fricano, RN

Crystal Fricano, R.N., is an acute care case manager at Broward Health Medical Center. Over the last seven years, she has worked in the step-down ICU/liver transplant and trauma departments. "Being a case manager is a very fulfilling job," said Fricano. "You get to meet many different patients and develop a relationship with the nurse and physician teams providing their care." Fricano is an advocate for the patient, and her role revolves around the patient's discharge plan. She meets with patients and learns about their prior level of function, their support system and their goals for recovery. She also communicates with the physicians regarding their goals and concerns. "My favorite part about being a case manager is being able to create an individualized plan for each patient, see them thrive, and make progress toward their recovery," said Fricano. "It is very rewarding to have a positive impact on the lives of my patients and make my clients' lives a little bit easier." Fricano earned bachelor's and master's degrees in nursing at Cardinal Stritch University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.



BROWARD HEALTH CORAL SPRINGS

Lourdes "Lu" Perez

Lu Perez has been a Case Manager with Broward Health for almost four decades. She graduated from Broward Community College in 1983 with an Associate Degree in Nursing and started her nursing career at Broward Health Medical Center the same year. Perez also worked as an admission nurse, assistant nurse manager and later transitioned into case management. She carried that role to Broward Health Coral Springs, where she has worked since 1996. In her current role, Perez specializes in discharge planning, arranging post-acute care needs of general and orthopedic surgical patients. It requires daily interaction with patients, families, insurance providers, physicians, nurses, physical therapists and social workers to ensure that post-acute care is coordinated in a timely manner. Perez enjoys interacting with the patients and helping those with complex discharge planning needs. She is also an active member of the Colorectal Committee and was part of the team instrumental in helping the hospital gain Joint Commission certification in minimally invasive colorectal surgery.



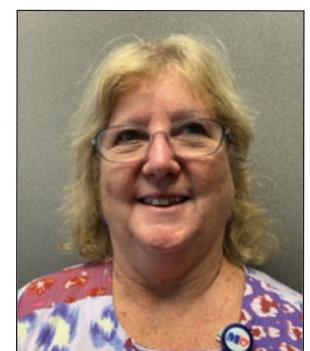
MEMORIAL REGIONAL HOSPITAL

Polly Marinelli, RN

Polly Marinelli has been a nurse in the Memorial Healthcare System for more than 30 years, first in the intensive care unit, then in the cardiac cath lab, and, for the past decade, as a case manager in Hollywood.

"I've learned I can help patients in a significant way without being bedside," said Marinelli. "I enjoy closing the care loop by discharging them to a safe place and assisting the family with the transition."

Marinelli says she finds small ways to preserve the patient's dignity, especially in situations where going back home isn't the best option. She understands that individuals often give up their independence and are forced to accept assistance when a change in lifestyle is required, so Marinelli makes it a point to be especially encouraging to the patient and their family.



SALUTE TO CASE MANAGERS... SALUTE TO CASE MANAGERS... SALUTE TO CA

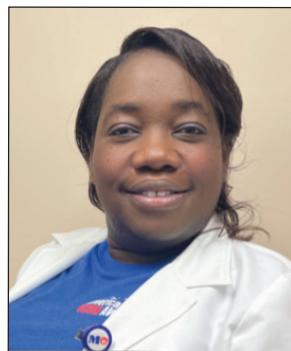
MEMORIAL REGIONAL HOSPITAL SOUTH

Kelly J. Charles, RN BSN

It's the smiles on the faces of patients and family members that Kelly Charles enjoys, since it tells her she's brought relief to a stressful situation and comfort to individuals thankful for her advocacy on their behalf.

Working primarily with cancer, transplant and LVAD patients, Kelly focuses on ensuring a smooth transition to wherever the patient is discharged to. "I provide a step-by-step plan, because it can be intimidating even when returning to environments an individual is familiar with, let alone traveling to be with relatives or going to skilled nursing facilities. There are follow-up appointments and treatments, transportation issues, medical equipment that needs to be set up, and medications needed to provide the best opportunity for a full recovery."

Charles has now been a case manager for more than seven years and a registered nurse for 10.



MEMORIAL HOSPITAL MIRAMAR

Leslie Lavoy, RN

Wife, mother, student (RN-to-MSN), nurse, and case manager, it's all in a day's work for Leslie Lavoy, and she wouldn't have it any other way. A self-described "passionate case manager," Lavoy enjoys interacting with patients and family members, advocating for them in situations that are unfamiliar. "I speak with patients, call families, and often round with physicians to be up to date with the patient's plan of care. Communicating with the family and care team enables me to ensure that treatment plans are understood and that discharge plans are followed." Lavoy cites the ability to communicate effectively, prior bedside nursing experience, and a positive attitude as the keys to her success in case management, a role she took on in the past year. It's especially important, she says, to remain calm while interacting with families to prevent confusion and guarantee a safe patient discharge.



MEMORIAL HOSPITAL WEST

Sonia Murray, RN

A case manager for more than two decades, Sonia Murray says her co-workers are like family to her. "We all work well together and truly want to do our best for patients and families. We support each other in good times and during the more difficult periods and the efforts of the entire team lead to good patient outcomes." While COVID-19 has complicated the jobs of everyone in hospitals, Murray says she has adapted to sharing instructions on the phone with coronavirus patients and not having families on-site because of visitation restrictions. She says every patient and situation is different but that her knowledge of available resources and willingness to begin communicating immediately is the key to a successful discharge and what comes after for the patient. "Educating family members is critically important to ensuring a smooth transition to home," says Murray. "The reward for me is guiding the patient journey and helping everyone with what they need."



MEMORIAL HOSPITAL PEMBROKE

Tra'keisha Patrick, MSW, RCSWI

A social worker, Tra'keisha Patrick brings some different skills to her case manager's position at Memorial Hospital Pembroke. "My social service background makes me very aware of the emotional side of what our patients and families are going through. I'm able to counsel and reassure them through the situations they're in." During her two years on the job, Patrick has worked with intensive care, COVID-19, and telemetry units and learned about the unique needs of each type of patient. She credits past experience with helping her adapt to constantly-changing environments, which included getting up to speed on medical terminology, labs, and medications that can be unique to each area's charts.



"The medical component is very important," said Patrick. "But it's also vital to honestly communicate and bring the human level of caregiving to each patient interaction."

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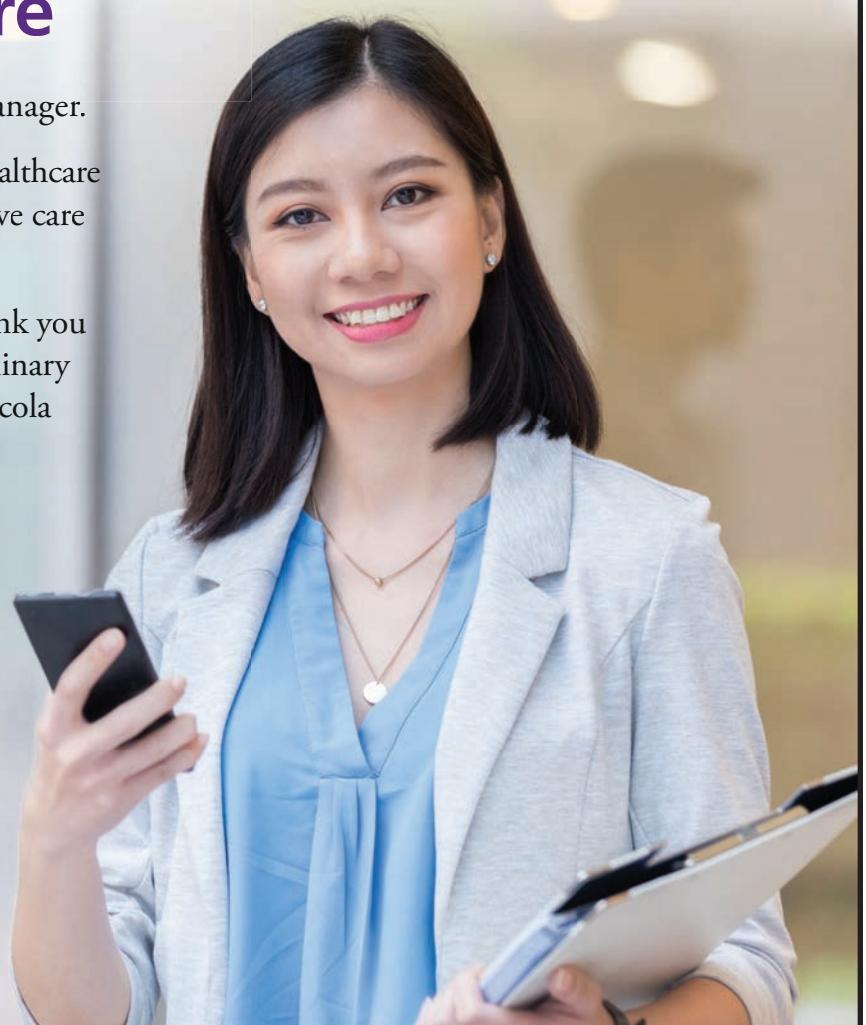
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JOE DIMAGGIO CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

Samantha Vega, RN

A registered nurse that has been part of the Memorial Healthcare System for more than 10 years, Samantha Vega transitioned to case manager in early 2020. "Working at the bedside was great, but I was intrigued and moved by our patient's needs after they left the hospital and wanted to be sure they got everything they needed to thrive."

A mother herself, Vega is a passionate advocate for children and is especially proud of the work she does helping kids and families with illnesses and limited resources. She works closely with social workers to navigate insurance issues, secure medications, and contact the appropriate companies to ensure her patient's needs are met.

"I feel like we set them up for success and that's what gives me the most satisfaction," said Vega. "Our families are grateful that we've helped them get what they need and where they need to go."



ST. MARY'S MEDICAL CENTER

Robin Campbell

Robin Campbell is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker who is part of the case management team at St. Mary's Medical Center & Palm Beach Children's Hospital. In her role, Campbell provides emotional support, care coordination, and community resources to help patients and families navigate their transition from hospital to the next level of care. With over 10 years of experience in hospital case management, Campbell has worked at multiple medical centers including St. Mary's. Prior to the acute care setting, Campbell worked in outpatient mental health for 4 years providing services for patients with severe and persistent mental illness who were also homeless and struggling with substance abuse. Campbell has a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology from Cal State-San Bernardino in San Bernardino, CA. She then went on to earn her Masters in Social Work from Cal State-Long Beach, in Long Beach, CA.



PALM BEACH GARDENS MEDICAL CENTER

Karen Olsowski

Karen Olsowski is the Director of Case Management at Palm Beach Gardens Medical Center. Her responsibilities include handling and overseeing the case management staff and the patient care coordination at the hospital. Prior to her time at Palm Beach Gardens Medical Center, Olsowski was the Manager of Clinical Care Coordination and Utilization Management at Northwest Community Healthcare. In her role, she established and implemented measures for appropriate staffing, production, compliance, quality, accuracy and customer service. In addition, she provided clinical disease management and utilization management expertise, consultation, support and guidance for complex case management. Olsowski is a graduate of Olivet Nazarene University in Bourbonnais, IL. She received her Master's degree from American Sentinel University in Aurora, CO.



DELRAY MEDICAL CENTER

Jennifer Costanza

Jennifer Costanza is the Assistant Director of Case Management for Delray Medical Center. In her role, Costanza is responsible for overseeing the Case Management staff and social workers to ensure a safe discharge plan for patients who are admitted to the hospital. Prior to her time working in case management, Costanza worked as a nurse in the cardiovascular step-down unit, working up to the position of clinical nurse manager. As manager, she oversaw the 31 bed cardiovascular step-down unit as well as the 12-bed overflow unit. With nearly 15 years of nursing experience, Costanza has worked in various roles at Delray Medical, including on the telemetry and the intermediate care unit. Prior to her time at Delray, Costanza worked in the orthopedic unit at another South Florida hospital. Constanza earned her bachelor's degree in nursing from Western Governors University in Salt Lake City, UT.



MORSELIFE HEALTH SYSTEM

Megan Bernat, LCSW

Megan Bernat joined MorseLife Health System and its Lola & Saul Kramer Senior Services Agency in 2008 where she coordinates health care for seniors on the MorseLife campus in West Palm Beach and in the community. Visiting clients weekly, and often several times a week, Megan coordinates care with their other health care providers and serves as a liaison with clients' families. Megan determines programs or assistance that may be obtained to address current and forthcoming needs including medical care, personal care and companions, available social activities, meal preparation, housekeeping and transportation. She joined MorseLife after receiving her master's degree in social work from Florida Atlantic University where she also earned her undergraduate degree and a specialized certificate in aging. Megan has always had an interest in health care and attended a medical magnet high school in which her dual enrollment enabled her to earn her CNA and EMT licenses.



Susana Lopez-Sierra, MSW, CDP

Susana Lopez-Sierra joined the MorseLife Care Management and Counseling program six months ago and her work focuses upon working with the elderly who are experiencing chronic illness, dementia and preparing for end of life. She often serves as a health care navigator to assist clients in obtaining care and advocating for them as a liaison between their other health care providers as well as with their families. For the past 11 years, Susana has worked in the field of geriatrics with Oasis Senior Advisors, Martin Memorial Hospital, United Healthcare and Treasure Coast Hospice. After earning an undergraduate degree from Kean University in Union New Jersey, she received her master's degree in social work from Barry University. Susana is a certified dementia practitioner and certified professional coach. A longstanding member of the National Association of Social Workers, she served three terms as Unit Chair for the Florida Chapter Treasure Coast Unit.



WEST BOCA MEDICAL CENTER

Anjali Konjalwar

Anjali Konjalwar is a licensed clinical social worker and part of the case management team at West Boca Medical Center. With nearly 30 years of experience as a social worker, Konjalwar collaborates on a multidisciplinary treatment plan to develop planning, discharge, and mental assessments for adult, pediatric, neonatal, and post-partum patients. Prior to working at West Boca, Konjalwar worked as a social worker at Fresenius Kidney Care in Atlantis, FL. During her career, she has also worked as a social worker at hospitals in the Pittsburgh and Boston area. Konjalwar graduated from M.S. University in Baroda, India with a Bachelor of Science degree. She then earned her Master's in Social Work, also from M.S. University in Baroda. She is also a certified drug and alcohol counselor, graduating from Robert Morris University in Pittsburgh, PA.



GOOD SAMARITAN MEDICAL CENTER

Suzanne Stark

Suzanne Stark works as a case manager at Good Samaritan Medical Center. In her role, Stark serves as an advocate to meet an individual's and family's health needs through communication and available resources, and promoting patient safety and quality. Before working at Good Sam, Starks served as a nurse at sister hospital St. Mary's Medical Center for 9 years before switching into case management. Prior to her time at Good Sam, Stark worked at VITAS Home Health Care as an admissions manager. In her position, Stark says she always wants to put the patient first, as it is her top priority. She has her ASRN degree in nursing and is currently earning her bachelor's degree at South University.



Accolades Accolades Accolades

Holy Cross Health Recognizes Extraordinary Colleagues



(l-r) **Mark Doyle, President and CEO, Holy Cross Health; Angie L'Heureux; Stonish Pierce, COO of Holy Cross Health**



Youdeline Balzora with Mark Doyle

Throughout this pandemic year, Holy Cross Health has recognized its healthcare workers who have demonstrated the loyalty to serve patients and the community with compassionate care. From those honorees, Holy Cross Health has named the Colleague of the Year, Director of the Year and Leader of the Year, recognizing them in a recent special ceremony.

Holy Cross Director of Laboratory Services Angie L'Heureux was selected as the non-profit hospital's Director of the Year. L'Heureux played a vital role throughout the pandemic and as a long-tenured colleague of Holy Cross Health's Regional Health Ministry, she has embodied and demonstrated Trinity Health's mission and core values for more than a decade. L'Heureux demonstrates rapport with her leadership colleagues, has garnered respect from senior leadership and engaged her colleagues and partnering physicians. L'Heureux served on the hospital's COVID-19 steering committee, quickly pivoting the Holy Cross ministry's testing efforts in partnership with physician leadership and ensuring her team provided consistent communication of supplies necessary to facilitate ongoing patient care. She responded to reimagining her department as a true service line to contribute to the Holy Cross ministry financially in order to uphold the legacy and aspirations of the Sisters of Mercy.

Leader of the Year was presented to HUB C3 house supervisor, Youdeline Balzora, a supervisor on the night shift who was recognized as a role model in translating vision into reality and empowering colleagues to reach their full potential. The 18-year veteran of Holy Cross has received numerous recognitions from the emergency department for her ability to help with any situation that she has faced. The Holy Cross inpatient staff acknowledges her as always being there to lend a hand, an ear or a prayer, resolving patient, family, staff or physician concerns. Balzora treats everyday as God's work in this ministry where she embodies the Holy Cross Health mission, vision and core values.

Holy Cross respiratory therapist Kurt Kamrad was named Colleague of the Year. He was so instrumental in the COVID pandemic by helping to craft policy and procedure to keep Holy Cross colleagues safe, staying focused in the crisis and helping others to see that calmness and clarity would persevere. He is admired for his courage to not shy away from the challenge but rather hit it head on and conquer. Kamrad joined Holy Cross in 2018 following graduation from Keiser University. He completed his rotations at Holy Cross and knew he wanted to be a part of the team. Previously Kamrad served as a firefighter and paramedic, skilled in the field which serves him well in his medical career.

Jupiter Medical Center Receives Three Prestigious Recognitions from the American Heart Association

Jupiter Medical Center has received three American Heart Association Get With The Guidelines® Achievement Awards for implementing quality improvement measures that ensure cardiovascular patients receive efficient and coordinated care, ultimately leading to more lives saved, shorter recovery times and fewer returns to the hospital.

The Get With The Guidelines® distinctions for which Jupiter Medical Center has been honored this year are:

- The Get With the Guidelines® Stroke Gold Plus Achievement Award
- The Get With the Guidelines® Target Stroke Honor Roll Recognition
- The Get With the Guidelines® Target Type 2 Diabetes Honor Roll Recognition



Kurt Kamrad with Mark Doyle

Physician-led Steward Health Care Achieves CMS' 100% Quality Ranking

Steward Health Care, owner of Coral Gable Hospital, Hialeah Hospital, North Shore Medical Center, Palmetto General Hospital in Miami-Dade County, and Florida Medical Center in Broward County, ranked first in membership, tied for first in quality, and earned the second highest shared savings payout out of 513 participants in the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Service's (CMS) Medicare Shared Savings Program (MSSP) through its subsidiary Steward National Care Network, according to recently released CMS data. As the nation's largest physician-led health care network and accountable care organization (ACO), Steward generated more than \$68 million in total 2020 Medicare cost savings while receiving a perfect 100% quality rating amid the challenges of the COVID-19 global pandemic.

Delray Medical Center Becomes First Hospital in Florida to Use New Technology for Stroke Patients

Delray Medical Center is the first hospital in the state of Florida to use the RED 62™ Reperfusion Catheter & BENCHMARK BMX96™ for stroke patients. Neurointerventionalist, Dr. Dennys Reyes, is the first doctor in the county to use this technology. The RED 62™ is designed to navigate complex distal vessel anatomy and deliver powerful aspiration along with the BENCHMARK BMX96™ to remove blood clots in acute ischemic stroke patients with large vessel occlusions. In addition, it provides faster navigation and shorter times to recanalize "brain vessels".

"The RED 62™ is engineered with some of the latest innovations in tracking and aspiration technology to address large vessel blockages from a stroke located in more challenging areas, while maximizing powerful aspiration to remove blood clots," said Dr. Reyes. "With the help of the BENCHMARK BMX96™ Access System, hypotube technology provides a higher stability for more complex cases when it comes to treatment of a stroke. In addition, when performing a procedure, the catheter is designed to increase versatility and visualization designed to help offer patients the best possible outcomes."

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Back Cover Story: Cannabis Spotlight: *Durée Ross, DURÉE & COMPANY*

Continued from page 32

rapid growth, companies are seeking expert PR help to define their space among consumers/patients and that's where we come in!

How did you get started within the cannabis industry?

Recognizing opportunities in the marketplace and embarking on industries that others were once afraid to touch has led me into the cannabis. An existing real estate client brought me into the space; he was confident I could help move the needle for a company that desperately needed our help. So, prior to the Farm Bill passing in 2018, I took a leap and began representing clients within the cannabis industry. Per my relationships and research, I continued to see a need in the marketplace to represent clients in this space who wanted strategic, proactive PR help. Fast forward to today, Durée & Company has a bustling cannabis practice, but we remain dedicated to a select roster of clients, limiting the amount of brands we work with in each industry segment.

Are you personally a MJ card holder?

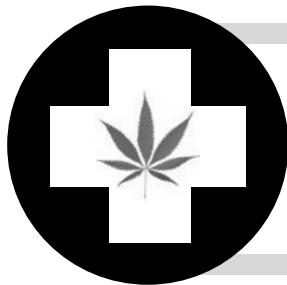
Not yet but I am working on it! I want to make sure to get the full patient experience and document it, so I know how to explain the steps to journalists and others who are trying to obtain one. I also spend part of the year in Colorado at our Colorado office, where a card is not needed.

Do you see Florida moving forward with recreational Marijuana/cannabis and how will that affect your business?

I think time will tell, but yes, there is potential for this to happen in the future! Recreational cannabis will definitely impact our business, as it will open up a whole new segment that needs public relations – including education, promotion and storytelling. There is huge potential for existing MMTCs to expand their business and reach a greater audience so that it drives more competition and demand – two key areas where our agency can help prepare businesses and strengthen their brand.



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Florida Medical Marijuana Physicians Group

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Curaleaf Announces Voting Results of Its Annual and Special Meeting of Shareholders

Curaleaf Holdings, Inc. conducted its annual and special meeting of shareholders on September 9, 2021.

At the Meeting, the number of directors on the board of directors of the Company for the ensuing year was fixed at nine by the shareholders and the following nominees for election as directors of the Company were elected by a majority of votes cast by the shareholders virtually present or represented by proxy at the Meeting: Boris Jordan; Joseph Lusardi; Dr. Jaswinder Grover; Karl Johansson; Peter Derby; and Mitchell Kahn.

Further, Antares Professional Corporation, Chartered Professional Accountants was reappointed as the Company's auditor for the ensuing year.

Finally, at the Meeting, the shareholders approved the amendment (the "Amendment") to the articles of the Company in order to extend the automatic termination of the dual-class structure of the Company and to maintain such dual-class structure of the Company until the earlier to occur of (i) the transfer or disposition of the multiple voting shares in the capital of the Company by Mr. Boris Jordan, the Executive Chairman of the Company, to one or more third parties (which are not Permitted Holders (i.e. members of his immediate family and entities controlled by Mr. Jordan and members of his immediate family)); (ii) Mr. Jordan or his Permitted Holders no longer beneficially owning, directly or indirectly and in the aggregate, at least 5% of the issued and outstanding shares of the Company; and (iii) the first business day following the first annual meeting of shareholders of the Company following the subordinate voting shares of the Company being listed and posted for trading on a United States national securities exchange such as The Nasdaq Stock Market or The New York Stock Exchange.

In accordance with the corporate and securities legislation, the special resolution authorizing the Amendment was duly approved at the meeting by:

(i) 99.53% of the votes cast at the Meeting by all holders of subordinate voting shares and multiple voting shares present in person or represented by proxy, voting together as a single class;

(ii) 100% of the votes cast at the Meeting by all holders of multiple voting shares present in person or represented by proxy, voting as a class;

(iii) 97.528% of the votes cast at the Meeting by all holders of subordinate voting shares present in person or represented by proxy, voting as a class; and

(iv) for the purpose of confirming the requisite minority approval under Multilateral Instrument 61-101 – Protection of Minority Securityholders in Special Transactions has been obtained, a majority of the votes cast at the Meeting by the holders of subordinate voting shares, excluding the votes attached to 59,235,411 subordinate voting shares beneficially owned or over which control or direction is exercised by Mr. Jordan as at the record date; and the Subordinate Voting Shares beneficially owned or over which control or direction is exercised by related parties of Mr. Jordan and persons acting jointly or in concert with Mr. Jordan (including affiliates and associated).

The Company expects to file a notice of alteration with the British Columbia Registrar of Companies declaring that the articles of the Company have been amended in accordance with the Amendment on September 10, 2021, the first business day following the Meeting, and the date on which the Amendment will become effective.



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U.S. House Approves House SAFE Banking Act as Part of Military Spending Bill in Historic Vote

The U.S. House approved the Secure and Fair Enforcement (SAFE) Banking Act recently in a bipartisan 316-113 vote as part of the latest National Defense Authorization Act, a military spending bill. It's the fifth time the legislation has been approved in the House as a standalone bill or an amendment as part of larger legislation. Since statewide cannabis reform has been enacted over the past four decades, cannabis businesses still are not fully tolerated, most evidently in federal restrictions, such as the way banking is restricted.

Representative Ed Perlmutter re-introduced the bill, as promised, saying that it would allow cannabis businesses to access the banking system—like any other industry—and would bring more money into the economy and offer the opportunity to create good-paying jobs. On September 21, the House Rules Committee approved the SAFE Banking Act as they sifted through over 800 amendments filed for the \$778 billion FY2022 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) to determine which ones will get a floor vote. As Representative Perlmutter sits in the Rules Committee, the move suggests he has influence.

Amazon Reaffirms Support for Marijuana Legalization

On September 21, Amazon disclosed that its earlier decision to end drug testing for cannabis also would be retroactive, allowing former employees and applicants penalized for testing positive for cannabis will have their eligibility restored and reconsidered. Initially in June, Amazon's position to end marijuana drug testing was widely celebrated but only mentioned future policy. However, the policy was recently clarified by Amazon's senior vice president of human resources Beth Galetti, who said it also "reinstated the employment eligibility for former employees and applicants who were previously terminated or deferred during random or pre-employment marijuana screenings." It is Amazon's position that the state-level legalization movement has made it "difficult to implement an equitable, consistent and national pre-employment marijuana test program, showing it disproportionately impacts people of color and acts as a barrier to employment."

Harvest Opens Twelfth Florida Dispensary in Jacksonville

Harvest Health & Recreation Inc., a vertically integrated cannabis company and multi-state operator in the U.S., announced the opening of a new medical dispensary in Jacksonville, FL. Harvest of South Jacksonville is located at 10339 San Jose Blvd, Jacksonville and is open Monday through Saturday from 9:00 am to 8:00 pm and Sunday from 10:00 am to 7:00 pm. Additional Harvest dispensaries in Florida are located in Gainesville, Kissimmee, Lehigh Acres, Longwood, North Jacksonville, North Miami Beach, North Port, Olympia Heights, South Miami Beach, Tallahassee, and West Palm Beach.

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Trulieve Debuts New Line of Concentrates Using Hydrocarbon Extraction

Trulieve Cannabis Corp. announced the launch of a new line of high-quality cannabis concentrates made through hydrocarbon extraction. Live Resin, a high-terpene, single-source extract, is the first offering from Trulieve's new hydrocarbon line.

Live Resin is created in Trulieve's state-of-the-art hydrocarbon extraction lab using the Company's proprietary blend of propane and butane on TruFlower that has been frozen immediately after harvest. The result is a strain-specific and full-spectrum concentrate that is exceptionally flavorful. It contains higher levels of cannabinoids and terpenes than other concentrates. Live Resin provides patients with a powerful and richly aromatic experience with a broader sensation of effects.

"We've spent the last year focused on developing products that highlight more than THC and CBD, creating terpene-heavy, full-spectrum, and single-source oil products including our TruWax concentrate and signature TruSpectrum cartridges," said Trulieve CEO Kim Rivers. "Cannabis is an incredible medicine not only because of the medical properties of cannabinoids like THC and CBD, but because of every element of the plant. Having an opportunity to utilize an industry-leading technology like hydrocarbon extraction will allow us to expand our comprehensive product catalog and continue bringing innovative, natural, and, more importantly, effective relief to our diverse range of patients across Florida."

Hydrocarbon extraction uses solvents to gently process cannabis, allowing for the retention of high levels of the plant's original flavor and terpene and cannabinoid profiles at a lower temperature. By protecting the delicate properties of the plant from high heat, the process creates a consumption experience most similar to smoking whole flower cannabis. Trulieve's first hydrocarbon extracted concentrates, Live Resin in the popular Member Berry and Orchard Nectar strains, are available in .5g sizes throughout Florida. All of the extracts in Trulieve's product line will be strain-specific, ranging across Indica, Sativa, and Hybrid products.

For more information, or to order online, visit www.Trulieve.com.

Ayr Wellness Adds to Florida Footprint with Opening of New Dispensary in Port Richey

Ayr Wellness Inc. announced the opening of Liberty Health Sciences (LHS) Port Richey, the Company's 42nd operating dispensary in Florida.

The dispensary is located at 9314 US Highway 19, Port Richey within Pasco County, which is home to a population of 560,000 people, according to the 2020 U.S. Census. The store brings LHS to the Gulf Coast city, which attracts visitors from throughout Florida and the U.S. for its lush landscapes and well-known 8,300-acre wilderness park. The new location features LHS's expanded selection of flower strains, in addition to the Company's recently launched Origyn concentrates, Big Pete's Cookies and Secret Orchard vape cartridges.

Jonathan Sandelman, CEO of Ayr, said, "We appreciate the wonderful reception that we've received from the people of Port Richey and look forward to introducing them to our high-quality offerings. We now have 42 stores open in the state, thanks to the hard work from our Florida team which continues to find excellent locations to plant our flag."

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HEALTHCARE CANNABISNEWS™ FLORIDA

Back Cover Story: Medical Cannabis and Cancer: Caution Urged as Studies Continue

Continued from page 32

for that use. These products might even endanger user's health, or interact with other medications they are taking.

While there have been some early clinical trials of cannabinoids in treating cancer in humans, and more studies are planned, the American Cancer Society reports that while the studies so far have shown that cannabinoids can be safe in treating cancer, they do not show that they help control or cure the disease. However, scientists have reported that THC and other cannabinoids such as CBD slow growth and/or cause death in certain types of cancer cells growing in lab dishes, and some animal studies also suggest certain cannabinoids may slow growth and reduce spread of some forms of cancer.

Further Studies Underway

Following promising results from a Phase 1 study in 27 patients, a Phase II trial, led by the University of Leeds in the United Kingdom, will assess whether adding Sativex—an oral spray containing cannabinoids THC and CBD—to chemotherapy, could extend life for thousands diagnosed with

recurrent glioblastoma (GBM). The disease currently has an average survival of less than 10 months.

According to Professor Susan Short, the principal investigator on the new trial and professor of clinical oncology and neuro-oncology at Leeds, glioblastoma brain tumors have been shown to have receptors to cannabinoids on their cell surfaces. Laboratory studies on glioblastoma cells have shown that these drugs may slow tumor growth and work well when used with temozolamide chemotherapy.

The three-year Phase II trial (ARISTOCRAT) will recruit more than 230 patients beginning in early 2022, once enough money is raised by the Brain Tumour Charity, which is funding the study. It is hoped that in this randomized trial, a cannabinoid combination added to temozolamide chemotherapy can help glioblastoma patients live longer.

While this study may provide hope to those suffering from glioblastoma, it is important to note that researchers caution against the use of off-label nabiximols or other cannabinoid products in patients with GBM—or any cancers—until sufficient high-quality evidence supports their use.

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While Delta-8 Grows in Popularity, Federal Agencies Warn of Health Risks

BY VANESSA ORR

There's always something new in hemp-derived products, and Delta-8, which is available in vapes, gummies and other forms, has been growing in demand over the past couple of years. In fact, according to the Addiction Center website, sales of the compound increased by 144 percent from April 2020 and April 2021.

Its popularity—and a growing number of complaints—have caught the attention of both the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). Both recently put out warnings about serious health risks that users of the product could be facing.

What is Delta-8?

According to the FDA, delta-8-tetrahydrocannabinol, or Delta-8, is a psychoactive substance found in small amounts in the cannabis sativa plant; however, concentrated amounts of delta-8 THC are typically manufactured from hemp-derived cannabidiol (CBD).

While those who use delta-8 report that it calms nausea, boosts appetite, eases pain and reduces anxiety, it is also known for producing a mild high. The product's pop-



ularity has grown in part because it is marketed as legal in places where marijuana, and delta-9, which is far more potent, is not. Most delta-8 is synthesized from CBD, which comes from hemp, which was legalized by Congress in 2018.

While delta-9 THC is illegal in Florida, delta-8 is legal to purchase for those 21 and older.

Is It Safe?

These products, which have not been evaluated or approved by the FDA, may pose serious health risks.

From December 2020 through July 2021, the FDA received adverse events reports from both consumers and law enforcement. Of 22 patients who consumed delta-8 products, 14 went to the

hospital or emergency room following its ingestion, and 19 experienced adverse effects including vomiting, hallucinations, trouble standing and loss of consciousness.

National poison control centers noted 661 cases resulting from delta-8 exposure between January 2018 and July 31, 2021, of which 18 percent required hospitalization, including children who required intensive care unit admission. Children who had ingested delta-8-infused gummies experienced deep sedation, slowed breathing, irregular heartbeats and decreased blood pressure, among other symptoms.

There are a number of issues surrounding Delta-8 products that are making them more difficult to monitor. While a legal loophole in the 2018 Farm Bill defines the legal delta-9 concentration of 0.3 percent for hemp, it does not define delta-8 concentrations. Products labeled simply as 'hemp products' can also mislead customers who do not realize they may contain the psychoactive delta-8, and some products are also marketed for therapeutic or medical uses, which has not been approved by the FDA.

Because the natural amount of delta-8 in

hemp is low, manufacturers who convert other cannabinoids in hemp, like CBD into delta-8, may potentially use unsafe household chemicals or create them in unsanitary settings, creating more issues for consumers.

Some states have begun reacting to issues caused by delta-8; in May of this year, the Colorado Marijuana Enforcement Division and the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment banned the sale of products containing delta-8, noting that "chemically modifying or converting any naturally occurring cannabinoids from industrial hemp is non-compliant with the statutory definition of 'industrial hemp product.'"

A number of other states, including Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, Delaware, Idaho, Iowa, Michigan, Mississippi, Montana, New York, North Dakota, Oregon, Rhode Island, Utah, Vermont and Washington have followed their lead and either banned or more stringently regulated delta-8 products.

As interest in delta-8 continues to grow, it remains to be seen if its benefits outweigh its drawbacks, and how manufacturers, consumers and state mandates will affect the burgeoning market.

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HEALTHCARE CANNABISNEWS™ FLORIDA

Back Cover: Florida International University Announces Global Initiative for Cannabinoid Research and Education

Continued from page 32

ative activity, and collaborative engagement with our local and global communities."

Dr. Konin also speaks to the fact of how important it is to build partnerships with this initiative as the cannabis space is growing so rapidly. "There is so much we want to do, and so many areas that could benefit from the research ideas and educational dissemination that we have planned. It is not only essential, but we welcome with open arms anyone in the industry that has an interest in collaborating with us," Konin added.

The Nicole Wertheim College of Nursing and Health Sciences' vision is to be globally recognized as the higher education destination organization that is innovative, inquiry-driven and technologically advanced, drawing diverse top-class faculty, students, staff and others for positive transformation of society with a focus on the healthcare needs of underserved populations. The University was just named as the #78 best public University in the nation according to the U.S. News and World Report 2022 National University Rankings.

Dr. Ora Strickland, Dean of the Nicole Wertheim College of Nursing & Health Sciences at FIU excitedly shared, "The work of our Athletic Training faculty and students to gain evidence about the effective use of cannabinoid products is

crucial for the quality of care of athletes and others who are faced with pain from injuries or who have anxiety or sleep disturbances. This database evidence will provide guidance for use of these products."

Additionally, the initiative is being facilitated by the efforts of the Department of Athletic Training and under the guidance of its Doctoral program. FIU's Doctor of Athletic Training (DAT) degree is one of only 8 in the entire country, and the only one that has a focused effort on cannabis research and education. This exciting endeavor has fostered the ability to recruit some of the very best individuals from all over the country to pursue FIU's innovative degree and have the opportunity to work with industry leaders.

Dr. Michelle Odai, the Chair of the Department of Athletic Training stated, "This initiative adds to the rich history of success and innovation within the Department of Athletic Training at FIU. We look forward to research and educational outcomes that will enhance the field of sports medicine and beyond."

To learn more about FIU's cannabinoid research and education initiative, visit their website at go.fiu.edu/GlobalCannabis. Anyone wishing to collaborate and partner with the program can contact Dr. Konin at jkonin@fiu.edu.

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While Delta-8 Grows in Popularity, Federal Agencies Warn of Health Risks

page 30



CANNABIS BUSINESS DIRECTORY

page 25

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Medical Cannabis and Cancer: Caution Urged as Studies Continue

BY VANESSA ORR

With the legalization of medical marijuana in a number of states including Florida, cannabis' effectiveness in treating everything from PTSD to epilepsy has gained attention, not just in the medical community, but from patients hoping that it can be used to treat other conditions, including cancer. And while it has been effective in treating some side effects from cancer treatment, such as nausea and vomiting, as well as for providing pain relief, helping to stimulate appetite and curb anxiety, there is still much more research to be done to determine if the drug can work on defeating the disease itself.

To date, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has not approved cannabis or cannabinoids for use as a cancer treatment; however, it has approved two cannabinoids, dronabinol and nabilone, for the treatment of nausea and vomiting caused by chemotherapy in patients who have not responded to antiemetic therapy.

Buyer Beware

Despite the fact that the FDA has not approved any medical cannabis cancer treatment, that has not stopped fraudulent claims online from companies claiming that their products shrink malignant tumors, treat all forms of cancer, or are more



effective than chemotherapy. Not only are these claims illegal, but they may also prevent patients from receiving the proper treatment for their disease.

According to Jason Humbert, a regulatory operations officer in the FDA's Office of Regulatory Affairs, if a product is marketed as a natural cure for cancer or a natural treatment for cancer on a website or in social media, unless it has been evaluated by the FDA, there's no reason to believe that it is safe or effective

Continued on page 29



Dr. Jeff Konin

Florida International University Announces Global Initiative for Cannabinoid Research and Education

BY CAROL NEWMAN

Dr. Jeff Konin, a Clinical Professor in the Department of Athletic Training in the Nicole Wertheim College of Nursing and Health Sciences at Florida International University (FIU) is spearheading the efforts for the recently established Global Initiative for Cannabinoid Research and Education.

"We are excited to devote a sincere interest and multi-disciplinary effort toward the study of cannabinoid science and the timely and much needed education for our community," Konin emphasized. To date, faculty from the areas of athletic training, nursing, analytical chemistry, epidemiology, occupational therapy, speech/language pathology, public health, and psychology comprised the initiative's team.

The stated mission reads as follows: "The Global Initiative for Cannabinoid Research and Education is committed to high-quality education, contemporary and evidence-based research and cre-

Continued on page 31

Cannabis Spotlight

Durée Ross

DURÉE & COMPANY

What benefits do you see for patients throughout Florida within this space?

Florida, although a large market, is still very young. There is great potential for growth here, but there is also a lot of competition. With that said, any brand coming to market (or already present in the space) needs a solid strategy for the right product offerings and relevant ways to engage patients who are becoming increasingly savvy in how they research, shop and purchase products.

What motivates you to be a part of the cannabis industry?

Being a part of the cannabis industry ties into Durée & Company's work in emerging markets. Well before the 2018 Farm Bill passed, we saw incredible potential and were already working in the industry. There is a significant need for ongoing education, branding and public relations so that companies in this space reach customers/patients no matter their comfort level or knowledge of cannabis products. Being able to directly impact a brand, be a part of their DNA, and create a path for success is what keeps us motivated and enriched in our work.



Durée Ross

What field are you in within the cannabis space?

Durée & Company is a full-service marketing and PR company, with a burgeoning emerging markets practice. The agency has worked with cannabis, medical marijuana treatment centers (MMTCs), MSOs, hemp and CBD brands/products, processing facilities, farmers, growers, cannabis cultivators, labs and more. We understand the industry up and down the supply chain and work with companies to identify goals, key messaging and competitive advantages that lead to successful outcomes for their brands.

How can people in Florida benefit from the company you represent?

Durée & Company has set itself apart by offering a select group of clients our proactive and strategic counsel. Never a one-size-fits-all PR strategy, we thoroughly understand the industry, the client, and recognize the continued need for education and anticipatory thinking. We keep a watchful eye on local and federal legislation and have a strong pulse on key expos and leadership conferences. We have proven relationships with influencers and thought leaders and utilize these relationships to garner publicity and awareness for our clients. As the industry continues its

Continued on page 26