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Hospice



Diane Psaras

Create a Culture of Compassion to Inspire Exceptional Care

BY DIANE PSARAS

Working in hospice offers some of the most purposeful, personal, and hands-on patient-care opportunities in modern medicine. Some nurses say it is one of the most rewarding nursing specialties because of the close, ongoing relationships they develop with dying patients and their families.

For many clinicians, hospice work brings them back to the reasons they chose a career in healthcare: personal connections, shared decisions, and one-to-one patient care.

For employers, the key question revolves around how to attract nurses to our unique specialty. Hospice employers cannot rely solely on the intrinsic rewards of this crucial nursing role. Keeping talent passionate and committed requires a deliberate focus on the things that matter most to them, including two-way communication, recognition for their work, and development and career growth opportunities.

What we've found, particularly through the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, is that the experience of a patient who is nearing the end of life can only be as good as the care that person receives from VITAS employees. As a leading hospice provider, we need to take the best possible care of our own employees so they can provide the best possible care for our patients.

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ImageFIRST Rises Through the Challenges of the Pandemic and Increasing Costs

BY DANIEL CASCIATO

ImageFIRST continued its growth in 2021. Over the past year, the company expanded its national footprint and are now located in more markets across the nation – making them the largest provider of medical linen in the United States, according to Jay Juffre, Executive Vice President of ImageFIRST.

"We were able to acquire a few companies and expanded our number of processing facilities as well, including a new facility in Lakeland, Florida," he says.

The pandemic hasn't had a negative impact on the business, he notes. On the contrary, it has allowed ImageFIRST to revolutionize how it has conducted its business.

"We started manufacturing fluid resistant gowns and came up with some additional creative ways to help our clients," explains Juffre. "We've always been very customer-focused and since there are products that are being limited in supply chains, we asked ourselves how can we better help our clients. Doing new things like accelerating manufacturing was the solution. We wanted to continue to be a resource for our clients."

Last month, ImageFIRST was selected to receive the 2021 Emerging Workplace Giving Partner of the Year Award, presented by ALSAC and St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. Through payroll contributions, a company match, and various

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Jim Cashman, CEO, and Jamie Niles, VP of HR, ImageFIRST

Broward Health Continues to Persevere Through the Pandemic

BY DANIEL CASCIATO

Once again, South Florida was a designated COVID-19 hotspot this past summer, and similar to previous waves, regional health systems, such as Broward Hospital, rose to the challenge presented by the virus.

"As we have done during previous waves, Broward Health was ready to handle this past wave. We never know how many patients will require hospital admission, how sick they will be when they arrive, or how well they will do during recovery," says Joshua Lenchus, D.O., interim chief medical officer, Broward Health. "Fortunately, our caregivers showed remarkable resilience as the wave peaked and have now seen a dramatic decrease from where we were two months ago."

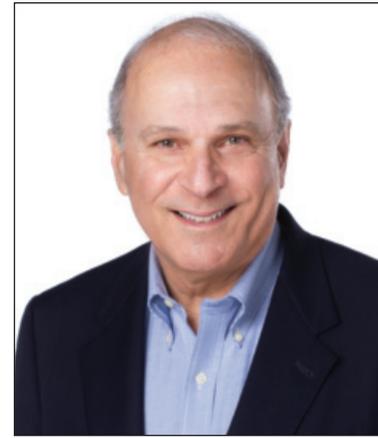
Like other health systems across the country, Dr. Lenchus explains that they have learned how to pivot its operations to respond, perfecting its surge capacity plans, identifying areas within the facilities to accommodate those who need hospitalization, integrating ever-changing testing platforms and medications, incorporating telemedicine to a significant degree, and adjusting visitation policies to ensure the health and safety of the employees, staff and patients.



Dr. Joshua Lenchus

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Education



Salvatore Barbera

EMHA Opens Opportunities in Variety of Fields

BY LOIS THOMSON

The Executive Master of Health Administration (EMHA) at Florida Atlantic University College of Business is intended for professionals who are currently working in the healthcare industry, but who are going to be in need of a master's degree if they are seeking to advance in the healthcare industry or be promoted within their organization. According to Salvatore Barbera, DHA, MSM, FACHE, associate program director for health administration programs, "The MHA is the degree of choice within the industry if you have committed to a career in health services administration, and our executive program was designed to meet that need."

He called it "a unique program, because it meets on weekends, and we found that's one of the attractive pieces about it. Students like it, and we realize we are attracting those who are working full-time." The program is taught both in a face-to-face traditional format as well as fully online. Barbera said the face-to-face component meets every third weekend on Saturday and Sunday. Online students work at their own pace off of an established curriculum. "What's been attractive about the program is that the students are able to take part in getting a master's and also not having it interfere with their work schedule. It's a great convenient feature for full-time professionals."

Not only does the EMHA give students

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Publisher's Note

Paraproisdokian ... No, I Can't Pronounce It Either!

Every once in a while, Carol completely forgets who she's married to and decides to improve my mind a bit. On a recent Sunday afternoon, she put down her book long enough to try to explain a Paraproisdokian sentence. Needless to say, her explanation fell on deaf (make that very deaf) ears, but many of the examples were hilarious. And between you and me, I think she was trying to get some points across as well.



1. Do not argue with an idiot. He will drag you down to his level and beat you with experience. (She rarely argues with me.)
2. The last thing I want to do is hurt you. But it's still on the list. (Carol loves lists.)
3. Light travels faster than sound. This is why some people appear bright until you hear them speak. (She always tells me to keep it brief.)
4. If I agreed with you, we'd both be wrong. (She rarely agrees or disagrees with me.)
5. The early bird might get the worm, but the second mouse gets the cheese. (I'm the early riser in the house.)
6. Hospitality: making your guests feel like they're at home, even if you wish they were. (We are an extremely hospitable couple.)
7. You do not need a parachute to skydive. You only need a parachute to skydive twice. (Or as Carol puts it, if you don't skydive at all – you never need the parachute.)
8. Dolphins are so smart that within a few weeks of captivity, they can train people to stand on the very edge of a pool and throw them fish. (I think Carol is the dolphin in our marriage.)

And after complaining at length about the chaotic state of our shared office (or more specifically my desk) Carol quoted, "A bus station is where a bus stops. A train station is where a train stops." And she called my desk — a work station!

Charles Felix



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What's New in Pediatric Surgery

Taking a stand on firearm safety and prevention

Firearm injuries are the second leading cause of death in children, behind motor vehicle accidents. Tragically, when a child attempts suicide with a firearm, they are "successful" 95% of the time, making firearm accidents and deaths a top priority for pediatric surgeons. The laws vary from state to state on the role that doctors can take on educating and discussing firearm choices with families, but we are now taking a stronger stance against this incredibly dangerous threat to children.

In Florida, for example, we are not allowed to talk to patients or families about firearms, so we'd like to share data on suicide attempts and the damage for those who survive.

So, the American Pediatric Surgical Association recently released a policy on firearm injuries, endorsing universal background checks including for private sales, which is a gap in the law. They are advocating for restricting assault weapon purchases by children and raising the minimum purchase age of firearms to 21. Finally, my colleagues and I want to encourage and advocate for schools to train their staff on bleeding control, in the wake of mass (and smaller) shootings.

Preventing opioid use in children stemming from post-op prescriptions

It's startling, but one in 8 children has reported trying opioids by high school. Sixty percent of teenagers who use heroin say they first started by misusing opioids, sometimes prescribed after surgery, including Percocet, Hydrocodone, and similar drugs. My colleagues and I are working to stop the problem before it starts – with that first post-op prescription, and education surrounding opioid choices for families.

A task force of surgeons recently published the first guidelines for opioid prescriptions after surgeries for children and adolescents, filling a gap that before had only published research relating to adults. This is meant to combat the practice of routinely prescribing opioids to children after surgery as they would to those over 18.

The recommendations in the new guidelines essentially promote replacing routine opioid prescriptions for children post-surgery with a schedule of Ibuprofen and Acetaminophen. This is the case for mild and moderate pain levels in the recovery period.

If opioids are necessary for pain control, such as in more severe and major surgeries, the guidelines recommend a prescription of three days, as any longer than that increases the risk of addiction. More major surgeries like this might include procedures that require opening the abdomen or thorax, and/or a larger incision.



BY CARMEN RAMOS-IRIZARRY, MD

But it's not just about changing the prescription, but rather the education surrounding it. It's all in the expectations and education of the patient and their family ahead of the procedure. We have to educate the parents, family, and the patient to provide expectations before and after. For example, if you have a patient with a hernia repair, you may say to them, 'This isn't going to be too painful, and you will

need Tylenol and Motrin at home, and I'll give you a scheduled regiment.' If you say, 'Oh, it will be painful,' some will go back to the ER saying they need narcotics. The new guidelines and a focus on proper education on pain management will eliminate the ER visit.

Finally, there is a necessity to educate the entire care team on the risk of opioid addiction from post-medical procedure prescriptions, particularly in Florida, which has high rates of opioid use in teenagers. Nurses, surgeons, and anesthesiologists should all be aware of the risk of prescription misuse. Florida health care providers can check a website to screen for prior misuse of narcotics, including who prescribed them and the last time the patient used them.

Responding to child abuse with a multi-disciplinary team

The Florida child abuse situation is bleak, as evident by the Children's Advocacy Center of Florida's 2018 statistics:

- 35% is sexual abuse
- 27% is physical abuse
- The rest is neglect
- Just over a third of abuse victims are ages 0-6
- 60% are female

While it's common for pediatric surgeons to treat child abuse victims in need of trauma-related surgeries, what's new and increasingly important is their ongoing involvement on the care team, along with nurses, pediatricians, social workers, the family, and child protective services. We are pushing for advocacy through this structured and multi-faceted team, rather than a more disjointed approach. Because we are very thorough in our trauma evaluation/physical exam, we identify and treat findings that are not immediately recognized by pediatricians.

My hope is that a standardized tool to screen for child abuse when children arrive in hospitals and trauma centers will help. We support data accrual on abuse screening and diagnosis into a trauma registry.

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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Let's Connect: ACHE of South Florida Spotlight



ACHE of South Florida Member Spotlight: Life Fellow Zeff Ross

BY VANESSA ORR



Zeff Ross

Although Zeff Ross, LFACHE, is now retired after working for almost three decades for Memorial Healthcare System, he is hardly resting on his laurels. The former executive vice-president of Memorial Healthcare System and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Memorial Regional Hospital is still passionate about being a lifelong learner and helping others to succeed in the healthcare industry.

"I stayed at Memorial for almost 30 years because of its culture and the constant challenges, as well as the difference that I could make for patients," he said. "I was always doing something new and learning something that helped me develop as a person. I also took the opportunity to help others develop during that time."

"There are a lot of avenues for people to learn from, and one of them is life experiences," he continued. "Younger people can learn from those of us who have been there; they don't need to reinvent the wheel. Building relationships and having someone they feel comfortable enough to call and ask for help is important, which is one reason why I advise them to get involved with the American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE)."

Now a Life Fellow, Ross joined ACHE while a student in graduate school. "I respected the organization's focus on lifelong learning, as well as the fact that it ensured the safety and quality of care to patients by promoting education, integrity, and leadership capabilities," he explained, adding that he attended numerous educational seminars and conferences as a member.

"I remember quite a number of very good courses, including one on negotiating skills," he continued. "I learned that it's not a win-lose situation when negotiating; everyone needs to leave the table feeling that they each won. That changed the way I negotiate, and it still makes a difference on how I approach different issues."

During his time as a member of ACHE, Ross served as a member and the national chair of the Ethics Committee and became a regent for the Southeastern Florida chapter. He also spent a good deal of time mentoring others, including working with younger members of the association on their resumes and interview questions during the annual ACHE meetings in Chicago.

"If I learned something from ACHE or in my life or work, I wanted to pass that information and education along," said Ross, who was also a very active participant in Memorial Healthcare System's formal mentoring program.

"Like anything else in life, you need a network of people to support you," he added. "If you join the local chapter, you not only have an 'in' with people who can help you, but you build lifelong relationships. It can also help you in your career; even as a CEO, I would go to the South Florida ACHE chapter meetings on the lookout for talent."

Ross decided to pursue ACHE's fellowship path to show his commitment to the field and to his patients.

"To me, the fellowship path signifies to others that I reached the top of the 'education ladder' in the profession," he said. "It shows that since 1978, when I joined, I haven't stopped in my mission of lifelong learning."

Throughout his tenure, Ross has received numerous awards, including the Lifetime Community Award from ACHE of South Florida; the Senior Careerist award from the ACHE Regent for Florida and the Spirit of Healing Award from the Memorial Foundation.

"These are my top three; the ones that mean the most," he said. "I reflect on why they were given to me, and it makes me realize some of my accomplishments and achievements—not just personal accomplishments, but ones like building Memorial Hospital West, that were important for the community."

"I don't know whether I deserved these awards, but I humbly accepted them," he laughed. "Looking back, I feel I made a difference."

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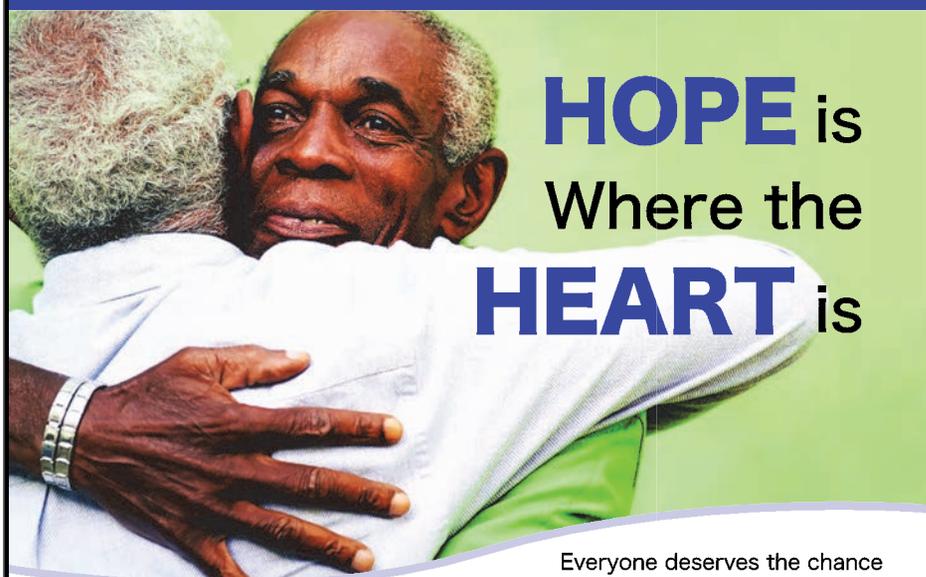
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Promising Option Emerges for Treating Cancers Throughout the Body

Cesium-131 is defining modern brachytherapy. It is emerging as an effective alternative for many cancer patients and offers an important option for Florida doctors and the patients they treat. Originally gaining prominence as a powerful, efficacious treatment for prostate cancer, Cesium-131 brachytherapy is now showing impressive results in other cancer treatment applications that previously had limited treatment alternatives. Cesium-131 brachytherapy is increasingly being used to treat a variety of hard-to-treat cancers throughout the body including brain, head and neck, lung, and gynecological cancers as well as other aggressive and recurrent tumors.

In Florida, Dr. Michael W. McDermott, Chair of the Division of Neurosurgery and Chief Medical Executive at the Miami Neuroscience Institute, Baptist Health South Florida, has extensive experience in the use of Cesium-131 brachytherapy for the treatment of brain metastases and recurrent atypical and malignant meningiomas.

Widely known for advancing neurosurgical techniques, Dr. McDermott noted some of the advantages, "If you just reoperate on recurrent meningiomas after prior surgery and radiation therapy, the likelihood of recurrence is high. There is no effective chemotherapy for recurrent meningiomas at this point and repeated external beam radiation is not a suitable treatment paradigm. Cesium-131 offers an important local treatment option. It has a short half-life and short



BY WILLIAM A. CAVANAGH

energy path which means a more conformal dose distribution within the resection cavity and delivers a reduced dose to the surrounding brain. With its permanent encapsulation in titanium, there is no chance of dissemination of the radioactive sources to other parts of the brain or body."

The preeminent neurosurgeon sees opportunity for patients. "It's a safe and effective alternative treatment for recurrent malignant meningioma and brain metastases. It's been previously under-utilized, and I am glad there is increased recognition of its utility, safety, and effectiveness. Patients can have surgery and Cesium-131 treatment in one procedure. Because the skull absorbs most of the radiation, it makes it safe for patients to be discharged and be around family members without any particular concerns," said Dr. McDermott.

Dr. Chad Zender is a nationally recognized expert in head and neck cancers who has seen the benefits of Cesium-131 brachytherapy. Dr. Zender, Associate Chief Medical Officer, University of Cincinnati Health, and Professor Department of Otolaryngology, University of Cincinnati College of Medicine spoke to Cesium-131's unique qualities.

"I think it's most important in patients who have had previous radiation or chemo-radiation that have a tumor that is amenable for additional therapy. It can be used in conjunction with surgery in the recurrent setting to help improve local control and decrease the damage to other tissues. Even in patients that have had prior chemo-radiation or radiation, this is an

additional targeted radiation that can deliver a meaningful radiation dose and doesn't result in the kind of damage we see from traditional re-radiation in our experience. Preliminary studies are exciting on Cesium-131 for head and neck and are showing promise which is why we are continuing to pursue its use in the head and neck in the current recurrent setting."

Dr. Zender commented on the value for patients. "From my perspective, Cesium-131 is a promising additional therapy that can decrease the chance of their cancer returning without compromising quality of life and function as traditional re-irradiation does. The head and neck are critical to our quality of life, and we must try to preserve functions like sense of taste, swallowing and facial expressions which are so important when interacting with loved ones. Anything we can do to help patients survive without compromising those important functions is going to be of benefit to the patients."

Cesium-131 has been extensively used to treat prostate cancer and has proven to be a highly customized and effective treatment for the rapid recovery of patients. Dr. Bernard W. Taylor is the longest tenured radiation oncologist at Texas Oncology of the US Oncology Network. He has been performing LDR Prostate Brachytherapy since 1996 and has used all the available sources in his career.

Dr. Taylor pointed to his unique viewpoint regarding Cesium-131 brachytherapy, "I had prostate cancer treated with LDR Brachytherapy using I-125, so I speak as a patient as well as a physician. For patients, it is important to also look at its impact and the other critical aspect which is patient quality of life. With Cesium-131, they are not going to have the long-term urinary side effects, which I experi-

enced, that they would have with iodine-125, which is 6 to 9 months, or the long side effects with palladium-103 and they will recover faster than they would with other sources."

Dr. Taylor had this message for Florida physicians. "There is always a fear to change your protocol as a physician when you are comfortable with an established approach. You shouldn't be fearful to change to Cesium-131 because of the advantages that I see clinically and because I learned firsthand that using Cesium-131 really didn't change my process at all. I think it offers the right energy level to take care of cancer, the shortened half-life so side effects are less and delivering the dose faster, which I believe improves outcomes for prostate cancer. We may never prove that clinically, but I believe it is better and it is certainly better for high-risk patients."

With over ten years of data on Cesium-131, researchers continue to expand study of its value in addressing cancers. Numerous trials and studies are underway looking at mounting treatment options involving Cesium-131 brachytherapy and its application for the treatment of a variety of cancers throughout the body. One that will be watched with interest given the rapid approach of an era of immuno-oncology, involves the addition of pembrolizumab (Keytruda) to the regimen of Cesium-131 brachytherapy with surgical resection. The trial begins the exploration of the opportunity for synergy between Cesium-131 radiation therapy and modern immunotherapy or immune checkpoint inhibitors.

William A. Cavanagh is the Chief Research and Development Officer, Isoray, and may be reached at (206) 595-8568 or b.cavanagh@isoray.com.

Cancer Patients Benefit When Pharmacies and Providers Connect

For cancer patients, time is perhaps the most precious commodity.

Years ago, a patient at our medically integrated oncology practice had just come from radiology and was now ready for her medication that was just prescribed by her oncologist. From her wheelchair with her husband by her side, she expected to receive her medication and be on her way.

The woman's insurance covered the specialized medication, and we had it in stock. But unless she could pay a large costly penalty out of pocket, we could not provide it to her because of a complex and broken system that often forces cancer patients to rely on mail-order pharmacies that could be thousands of miles away – rather than the pharmacist standing right in front of her.



BY MICHAEL REFF

A delay in treatment can be detrimental to a cancer patient.

That experience was the catalyst that led me to create NCODA, the leading nonprofit focused on the patient-centered medically integrated oncology practice.

After years of work, I believe we finally have a game-changing opportunity that will without question improve patient and clinician experience, provide better health outcomes, and lower cost of care. With the significant increase in oral oncolytics, the need to dispense prescriptions from the first to last fill quickly has become critical in overall patient success.

To address this challenge NCODA has forged a new collaboration with a promi-

nent pharmacy benefit manager (PBM), Prime Therapeutics, on an accreditation program that would allow pharmacies within an oncology practice to go beyond the first fill. Through Prime's new medically integrated pharmacy credentialing program, NCODA's Accreditation will be a preferred requisite as it upholds the gold standards, tools and resources that empowers medically integrated pharmacies (MIPs) to deliver the highest level of performance that brings sustainability and value to all stakeholders.

This collaboration with Prime Therapeutics will benefit millions of Americans across the country and is an important first step, one we are confident will transform the future of oncology pharmacy. For cancer patients, timing can be everything. Through this approach of dispensing medications from first to last within the MIP, we can put treatments in their hands the

moment they need them – allowing them to begin treatment immediately.

As early as 7 years ago, a collaborative and connected process like this wasn't even within the realm of possibility. It's my hope that in the near future, medically integrated oncology pharmacies will be so commonplace that people will question why it had ever been done differently. That's the power of innovation and the effect of bringing together smart, patient-centered stakeholders who recognize the value of a win-win-win situation for all.

This may not fix every problem in health care, but it can make a tremendous difference in the lives of cancer patients. That's the kind of breakthrough that benefits everyone.

Michael Reff is the Executive Director and Founder of NCODA. You can learn more at www.ncoda.org/accreditation.

Fundamental Reform Needed for Medicare Physician Fee Schedule

As the calendar turns to Autumn, physicians are once again staring down the barrel of significant decreases in Medicare reimbursement due to take effect in January. The annual exercise that was supposed to end with the elimination of the Sustainable Growth Rate, has ended in name only. The same flawed and unsustainable approach to setting physician reimbursement in Medicare in a budget-neutral vice remains. Evidence continues to mount of the dramatic implications that this flawed approach has had on care delivery and provides justification for fundamental reform in how our nation funds access to care for Medicare beneficiaries.

Since the release of the draft Physician Fee Schedule (PFS) over the summer, organized medicine has been unified in seeking relief from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and from Congress on the devastating impact these cuts will have. The proposed cuts, ranging from 10% to 20% depending on the specialty, would be drastic in any year. They are even more devastating this year given the multi-factorial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on physician practice which includes: increased practice expenses to protect patients and staff; the shutdown of elective procedures; inflationary impact on the cost of supplies; and workforce shortages that are driving up employment costs. Simply put, the clock is ticking on Congress to act to save access to community-based care for Medicare beneficiaries.

Where are the cuts coming from?



BY FRASER COBBE

Here is a breakdown of how these proposed reductions are being generated.

- E/M Outpatient Codes (-3.75%)
- Sequester Payment Cuts (-2%)
- Pay-As-You-Go Payment Cuts (PAYGO) (-4%)

In addition to these cuts, some organizations, like the American College of Radiation Oncology (ACRO), are highlighting the implications of CMS moving forward with clinical labor data updates in the 2022 Physician Fee Schedule which could cause additional cuts to certain specialties as much as 14%.

There are many physicians that believe Medicare reimbursement policy has been a major contributing cause to the continued elimination of the private practice of medicine as many physicians have shifted to employment with hospitals, health systems, and the corporate practice of medicine. While there are many factors physicians consider when deciding where to practice, there can be no question that declining reimbursement and uncertainty continue to add pressure to private practice medicine.

While immediate action from Congress to prevent the proposed cuts in 2022 is critically important and once again likely, it is time for CMS and Congress to have a broader discussion on the fundamental flaws in the physician fee schedule policy and make reforms that will support access to care for Medicare beneficiaries in the community setting.

Fraser Cobbe, Executive Director, Dade County Medical Association, can be reached at fcobbe@miamimed.com.

When It Comes To Patient Care, How Worthy Is Your Brand?

When it comes to brand loyalty, there are a few which clearly rise above the others. When it comes to cars, it's Tesla. Cell phones and tablets, Apple. Fast food, Chick-fil-A. Quick cup of coffee, Starbucks. No matter if you like, love or never have used the examples above, one common trait they all have in common is very strong brand and customer loyalty.

There is, however, one company which has their customers taking it to an even higher level. Harley-Davidson. This company's customers travel from all over the country to attend rallies, get tattoos of the company logo on their bodies and would never think about owning or riding on a different product. Now that is brand loyalty. You can be sure when those two inventors in Wisconsin were messing with small motors and bicycles a hundred plus years ago, they had no idea the cult-like following they would eventually create – a tattoo worthy brand. Before you start thinking, 'that could never happen with our organization', think again. What would it take to have a local, regional, or national brand so good that people simply could not live without it? Like Chick Fil A or Starbucks, people would be willing to drive a little farther and wait a little longer just to experience the best.

How deep does your team's loyalty run? How loyal are your customers / patients to your "brand"? You may not have staff and visitors running out and getting tattoos on their biceps right away, but what might it take to come close. Sit down with your leadership team and simply ask, 'what would it take to be the brand that people simply could not live without and what can we start doing today to help get us there?' After they figure out you are serious, it will be worth a discussion or two.

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



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NEWSLINE

A message from our President: A Month for Thanksgiving

While the last couple of years have been challenging, November is the month to say, "Thanks."

We have many things for which we can be thankful. That the vaccines to prevent or lessen the symptoms of COVID-19 were developed in record time using production processes already developed in the creation of other previous vaccines.

We can be thankful for not only the success in creating these COVID-19 vaccines, but their subsequent effectiveness and overall safety. Now, similar to flu vaccines, we know that COVID-19 vaccines effectiveness wanes with time and annual booster injections might be in our future (as it has been for flu vaccines for many, many years).

We can be thankful to the scientists who have worked tirelessly to develop other drugs now used to lessen the symptoms of COVID-19. Drug infusions and now pill regimens that have saved countless people who have contracted COVID-19.

We can be thankful for the men and women who went to work in hospitals, clinics, doctors' offices, and pharmacies despite the risk to themselves and their families.

We can be thankful for the healthcare professionals and average Americans who used their positions to advocate for the use of COVID-19 vaccines despite the threats and vile comments they received.

We can be thankful for those medical professionals who put off retirement to meet the challenges of the last two years.

We can be thankful for the Americans who continue to be thoughtful about their

own health and the health of others and continue to wear masks in public situations and to attempt to remain socially distanced and to use good hand hygiene.

We also can be thankful for our statesman politicians who continue to use their positions to advocate for what is best for Americans; their continuing efforts to cut through the political rhetoric and to talk about the science of vaccinations.

I am thankful that I am allowed the opportunity to take advantage of science by getting my annual flu vaccine (already done) and, as of one week ago, to take my booster dose of the Moderna vaccine to help keep me safe. I have a granddaughter and a grandson on the way and I need to be there for them! It is my responsibility to stay healthy.

While this is a month of thanksgiving, I am also aware that almost 740,000 Americans have lost their lives to this pandemic and for them I feel sadness. We cannot get them back and we also cannot fill the holes left in the hearts and minds of their children, grandchildren, wives, husbands, and parents.

Please, help me be thankful and let us try and end preventable deaths. Vaccines have been with us for a long time, and they have dramatically reduced the numbers of childhood deaths to formerly common and now not too common diseases. Reach out and ask your doctor for advice...be thankful you did.



BY JAIME CALDWELL

State-of-the-art Sports Technology Increases Positive Outcomes for Athletes and Non-Athletes

There is no question that medical technology continues to evolve and that's great news for all of us. What's exciting for athletes and anyone who is recovering from an injury or surgery is that we have so much more to rely on today including state-of-the-art technology and evidence-based education, training and management.

At Holy Cross Health we have launched a premier, state-of-the-art sports medicine program with the opening of the Lillian S. Wells Foundation Institute of Sports Performance and Orthopedic Therapy (ISPORT) in the Holy Cross HealthPlex in Fort Lauderdale. Here we offer the most comprehensive, multidisciplinary sports injury and performance enhancement program in South Florida.

Technology plays a transformational role in sports whether you are looking to take your athletic performance to the next level, recover from an injury or surgery or looking to prevent athletic related injuries.

Here is what you need know about some of the technology that is designed to meet a patient's needs in training and therapy:

Blood Flow Restriction (BFR): This involves placement of a blood pressure like cuff on areas of the extremity which limits the amount of the blood flow to the area that encourages muscle growth without heavy loading. BFR allows you to train at 20% effort and achieve the same benefits as if you were working at an 80% effort. This improves strength and muscle mass, prevents atrophy after injury and surgery, promotes healing and decreases pain. During the exercise, a patient will feel pressure around your extremity, similar to that of a blood pressure cuff when it is almost completely inflated. While there may be muscle soreness after exercise, there will be a significant decrease in joint pain within 24-48 hours after exercise.

DARI Motion: DARI Motion is a motion analysis that uses a patented and FDA approved algorithm to be able to record movements with the use of Automated Data Analytics of Motion (ADAM). The system detects movement that provides data on motion age, athleti-



BY FERNANDO J. MANALAC, JR., MD

cism and readiness to perform. This is a benefit to athletes who want to perform at their best with functional and sports specific testing, with scientifically validated kinematics to protect against injuries and with identified risk factors designed to each person's unique musculoskeletal profile. Through a full body motion analysis, corrective exercises are recommended to address top

focus areas.

Quick Board Training: This is an advanced training and diagnostic system that helps enhance an athlete's performance and helps with rehabilitation after injury. Exercises train and restore agility, speed, reaction, strength, stability, balance and coordination. These exercises can be customized for athletes, those with orthopedic injuries and for older adults who are at risk of falls.

VertiMax Platform: VertiMax uses advanced technology that allows athletes of all ages to train while loading specific areas of the body for improved sport specific performance.

Unlike traditional resistance bands, VertiMax technology allows resistance to remain consistent as the bands are stretched for up to 45 yards. That means that the athlete can complete more uninterrupted repetitions for greater distances. VertiMax has been used across multiple sports to improve performance and decrease injury.

Trazer: Trazer is a revolutionary computer-based technology that provides information about the performance of a person's brain, body and heart. Trazer uses motion capture and interactive game-like simulations that has been used for injury rehabilitation, improving sports performance, concussion rehabilitation and fall prevention. Trazer has been effective in athletic sports performance, ortho and neuro rehabilitation, concussion rehabilitation and senior health.

Dr. Fernando J. Manalac, Jr., is a non-surgical sports medicine specialist at Holy Cross Health Isport, Holy Cross HealthPlex in Fort Lauderdale. He can be reached at (954) 958-4800 or Fernando.Manalac@holy-cross.com.

Camillus Health Concern Secures Nearly \$1 Million from the FCC Telehealth Funding

BY LOIS THOMSON

Camillus Health Concern, Inc. (CHC) is a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) in Miami, Florida, that provides primary care, behavioral health, oral health, and social services to men, women, and children experiencing homelessness in Miami-Dade County. The organization's job just got a little more far-reaching with recent funding from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) COVID-19 Telehealth Program in the amount of \$983,464.91. The FCC's program supports health care providers by funding their efforts to provide care to their patients via telecommunications services, information services, and connected devices.

CHC is looking to use the funding to capitalize on the success of their Telehealth Outreach Pilot Program (TOPP) and expand their telehealth offerings by providing a targeted patient subset with connected smartphones, along with peripheral devices such as wireless blood pressure monitors and wireless glucometers. To support the expanded scope in operations, CHC will look to shift to a new, enhanced telehealth platform, increase their broadband capabilities and equip their providers with new hardware.

Michael Zantua, Director of Business Strategy & Operations, led the team that submitted the proposal for the FCC funding, and he explained how the funds will be used: "What this grant will do is take (the service) to the next level. Not only are we looking to provide phones, but also items like blood pressure cuffs and glucometers, in order to try to focus in on high-risk patients who have hypertension, are diabetic, or are even suffering from COVID."

Zantua is especially pleased with the outcome because it was his first major project after joining CHC. He said a few days after being hired back in February, "Francis (Afram-Gyening, CEO) asked me to 'quarterback' the application for the funding. Securing this funding was a team effort all the way.

"This is a big win for the organization, the funding will go a long way to bridge those gaps and access to care; so we're really happy that we have been able to secure funding to impact the lives of the patients we serve, but also to extend our telehealth platforms and take it to next level."

For more information, call (305) 577-4840 or visit www.camillusHEALTH.org.



Michael Zantua

West Boca Medical Center Opens New Interventional Vascular Imaging Suite

West Boca Medical Center increases its services in the community by offering patients advanced vascular and interventional imaging procedures in its new imaging suite and interventional radiology lab. The new lab will add the Siemens Artis Q system to enhance imaging and invasive services. The system features high-resolution capabilities, which enhance minimally invasive therapies for peripheral vascular disease, embolization, and diagnostic examination.



Some of the benefits of this new technology include:

- Superior image quality that provides better visualization of small vessels, devices, and tissue.
- Enhanced system efficiency to produce the highest image quality at the lowest possible doses.
- Improved interventional imaging for treatment of peripheral vascular disease.
- Ability to perform rotational imaging for 3D reconstruction and vascular road mapping.
- Integration of other imaging modalities, including CT and ultrasound, that provides a basis for planning therapies, such as embolization of tumors.

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Three Things to Know When Creating a Compelling Healthcare Video

As video creators, you know that there are many ways on how you can create a compelling video. But take note, not all videos are created in the same way. It depends on several factors that a video creator should consider, like the types of videos that their audience responds to or people relate to the most.



BY CHAD TINGLE

Now in terms of healthcare content, there are special considerations that need to be incorporated so you can make effective videos for your company.

To help you do that, here are five things you should keep in mind when creating healthcare videos for your company or your clients.

Speak to Your Audience

Remember this, you created a video for a purpose, and that purpose is to help your target audience understand the message you want to relay. So when producing your healthcare video, make sure that you put your audience's shoes on. For instance, your audience would be patients, patients' loved ones, doctors, hospitals and professionals, or even the company that provides the healthcare service.

You can include content about a patient's healthcare journey or how healthcare providers give their service. Whatever your content is, make sure that your audience would be able to relate.

You also need to consider the literacy and the age range of your audience, as well as their emotional state. In that way, you would be able to create a video tailored to your audience and to be able to speak to them in the same language, situation, or scenario.

Use 3D Animations

You can use the latest tools and processes to create beautiful 3D animations. Through this, you would be able to entice your audience and keep them engaged in a new policy, product, or service you are offering.

But why 3D? Well, aside from being highly customizable, it allows you to create videos that show multiple angles of a subject in a very realistic manner. Using

3D animations would save you from the challenges that live action productions usually encounter. And we're not lying when we say your only limit is your imagination because it is!

But don't get too excited to use all the high-tech and edgy 3D animations because, at the end of the day, it all boils down to two important things: your audience and the message you'd like to leave them.

If the 3D visuals and effects do not really coincide with an emotional subject, then you need to reassess whether what you are using is the correct visual medium. This is especially true for topics focused on patients and present life-altering situations. In this example, your healthcare video should make patients feel support and comfort rather than painfully shooting them with hard facts and data.

Be More Intentional with the Character Design

In terms of medical topics within healthcare, the best way to show your audience is through different characters rather than using words alone. It will also be easier for them to understand information by depicting it through illustrations and animations.

What's great about 3D is that you can portray hyper-realistic characters. If the video is patient-focused, then the more details you give your characters, the better. In this way, you allow the audience to see themselves, those who they care about, and the support that people can get through healthcare.

Conclusion

Creating healthcare videos is not just about how beautiful or compelling the content is but how you were able to make a difference and how much impact you've made to your audience.

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Dr. Lyssette Cardona Appointed CWO

Lyssette Cardona, M.D., has been appointed Chief Wellness Officer for Cleveland Clinic Florida.

Dr. Cardona joined Cleveland Clinic in 2002 and has worked at both the Weston and Abu Dhabi sites. She brings a valuable skill set and extensive experience to her new position, having served as Chief of Caregiver Wellbeing and Medical Director of Occupational Health at Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi from 2014-2020. In addition to her current role as Chair of Infectious Diseases at Cleveland Clinic Martin Health, she serves as Chair of Occupational Health and Wellness there and at Cleveland Clinic Indian River Hospital.



Dr. Lyssette Cardona

Family Medicine Physician, Matthew Goldman, MD, Joins Cleveland Clinic in Florida

Matthew Goldman, M.D., is now a practicing family medicine physician at Cleveland Clinic Florida Coral Springs. Dr. Goldman is a board-certified family physician, who has been with Cleveland Clinic in Ohio since 2017. Prior to joining Cleveland Clinic in Florida, Dr. Goldman was a family medicine physician at Cleveland Clinic Medicine Institute in Cleveland, OH. Additionally, he is a Clinical Affiliate Assistant Professor at Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine in Florida, as well as an Assistant Professor at the Cleveland Clinic Lerner College of Medicine in Ohio. Dr. Goldman earned his medical degree at Ross University School of Medicine in Miramar. He completed his residency in family medicine at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland.



Dr. Matthew Goldman

Lee Health Announces Dr. Ryan Brown as Lee Memorial Hospital's Chief Physician and Operations Executive

Ryan Brown, M.D., SFHM, FACP, has been named chief physician and operations executive for Lee Memorial Hospital.

Dr. Brown comes to Lee Health with more than 20 years of healthcare leadership experience.

Most recently, Dr. Brown held leadership positions with Atrium Health in Charlotte, NC, including specialty medical director for hospital medicine and medical director for acute care health informatics. He also previously served in leadership roles with Carolinas Medical Center-NorthEast in Concord, NC, and the Naval Hospital Corpus Christi Health Care System in Corpus Christi, TX.

Dr. Brown earned his medical degree from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and completed his internship and residency in internal medicine at the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, MD.



Dr. Ryan Brown

Four 2021 UM Hospice-Palliative Medicine Fellows Join VITAS Healthcare

Four physicians who recently completed fellowships in hospice and palliative medicine at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine have joined VITAS® Healthcare in leadership roles throughout Florida. This partnership with UM is a testament to the company's investment in and commitment to the advancement of end-of-life care as both an opportunity-rich career path and medical specialty:

- Angelica G. Torres-Morales, M.D., home care and inpatient unit physician for VITAS in Broward County
- Orly R. Hadar, M.D., VITAS inpatient and palliative care physician at the Cleveland Clinic in Weston
- Valerie Hart Quezada, M.D., team physician for VITAS in Miami-Dade and Monroe counties
- Kamal Wahab, M.D., associate medical director for VITAS in Gainesville

All four credit the personalized, patient-centered care they witnessed, along with the professional expertise of VITAS physicians and mentors who were involved in their training, as factors that influenced them to pursue full-time positions with the nation's leading provider of end-of-life care. The four 2021 physicians represent the most UM fellows from any graduating class to accept job offers in the company's 10-year sponsorship of the fellowship program.



Dr. Angelica G. Torres-Morales



Dr. Orly R. Hadar



Dr. Valerie Hart Quezada



Dr. Kamal Wahab

Holy Cross Health Adds Family Practice Physician

Paulna Lorimaire, M.D., has joined the Holy Cross Medical Group.

Dr. Lorimaire was most recently a resident physician with The Medical Center, Navicent Health in Macon, GA, where she also served on the Medical Staff Utilization Management Committee. Previously she was a resident physician at Family Health Center in Macon.

Dr. Lorimaire received a Bachelor of Science in Biology from the University of Central Florida and a Master of Science in Medical Sciences from University of South Florida. Dr. Lorimaire earned her medical degree from the American University of the Caribbean School of Medicine in St. Maarten.



Dr. Paulna Lorimaire



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Miami Dade College North Campus Hosts 5th Annual Pink Walk



Miami Dade College (MDC) North Campus once again partnered with The Women's Breast & Heart Initiative (WBHI) to host the 5th Annual Pink Walk on Sunday, Sept. 26.

Close to 400 participants attended this charitable event organized by WBHI to raise awareness, provide a platform for disease reduction strategies, and offer resources to help support prevention and early detection among college students, at risk women and other targeted communities.

"We are proud to have been a host and co-sponsor of this great event in association with The Women's Breast and Heart Initiative to spread knowledge and advocacy of Breast Cancer within our College and the community at large," said Fermin Vazquez, North Campus Interim President.

The event included vendors representing health, Cox Media Group, and lifestyle products and services, as well as food trucks. Also, in partnership with NOMI Health, attendees were able to receive COVID-19 testing and vaccinations on site.

Pink is a color emblematic of breast cancer, a disease mostly diagnosed in women ages of 15 to 39. In the U.S. alone, statistics show that one in eight women will be diagnosed with cancer over their lifetime. Early detection and disease deterrent lifestyles are key to saving and changing lives. The mission of the WBHI is to educate the next generation and to provide resources for at-risk women to beat the odds of breast cancer and heart disease.

Earlier in the year MDC also lent its support to WBHI on National Pink Day (June 23), to raise awareness during their Summer Breast Cancer Awareness Campaign by illuminating its National Historic Landmark Freedom Tower pink.

During the pandemic, mammography utilization decreased by as much as 80%. And although the number of cancer screenings has begun to rise, delayed, or missed screenings diagnosed at a later stage could result in a poorer prognosis.

Established in 2005, the Women's Breast & Heart (WBHI) Initiative is a non-profit organization based in South Florida with a mission to educate and provide resources to women and college students about the importance of breast and heart health through its disease prevention & early detection initiatives. For more information, visit flbreasthealth.com.

For more information about Miami Dade College, visit www.mdc.edu.

Fortis Thanks Its Caregivers!

BY CAROL NEWMAN

Nurses have always held a key role in the country's healthcare system, and the ongoing pandemic has put them on the frontlines of a battle. While COVID-19 continues to wage a war on America's health, they are still playing a vital role fighting to save lives.

Each day, nurses and other healthcare professionals show up for work to comfort and care for patients, uncertain of what their shifts will bring. We've all heard stories of these dedicated caregivers who work long hours away from their families and loved ones, risking their own health to help patients who have the virus. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), without nurses, there would be very limited response to the coronavirus. While it's important to salute nurses every day, this season we want to take this opportunity to say thank you to not only the nurses, but all the healthcare professionals who are working to keep us healthy.

Fortis graduate Leticia Hernandez, RHIT, RN, BSN and Practice Manager at Miami Hematology and Oncology Associates, shares her sentiments from the frontlines:

"We have always been on the front lines of disease and epidemics. We see and do so much more than what the public ever observes. As nurses, we step in head-first to confront viruses, cancers, diseases and trauma."

At Fortis College Cutler Bay, we are especially proud of our students who have graduated and are working as essential members of our healthcare community. Since January 2020, more than 80 students have graduated from our Associate Degree in Nursing program on their way

to becoming registered nurses. While most of these graduates had no idea how the world would be changing in response to the pandemic, they still felt the calling to become a nurse and give back to their communities in the greater Miami area.

In their own words, Fortis students have shared this sentiment.

"I love taking care of people and it's rewarding for us to know that we're there for the patient. For some patients we're the only family they have and the only one they see every day."

"I have an affection for people. I love being around people. I love taking care of them, helping them in many forms and capacities. Nursing seems to encompass this the most for me."

"I wanted to be a nurse because I want to save the world. It's a big dream—a very big dream."

In addition to our Associate Degree in Nursing program, Fortis College Cutler Bay has graduated the first class of its practical nursing program, which was launched in July 2020. Since the early days of the Covid-19 crisis, our Medical Assisting and Medical Assisting with Basic X-Ray programs have also graduated dozens of students who eagerly trained to enter the healthcare industry.

To these graduates, our students, our faculty and all the other healthcare professionals working every day to save lives, we thank you for continuing to go above and beyond. In this season of thanksgiving, we are giving thanks for you.

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.

Medical Graduates Will Care for Veterans at FIU's New Residency Training Program

The Florida International University (FIU) Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine (HWCOC) will launch a primary care internal medicine training program at the Miami VA Healthcare System.

This will be the only medical residency program in Florida to benefit veterans by utilizing a Veterans Affairs healthcare facility as its primary training site. Residents also will train at Jackson Memorial Hospital and other sites under development. The program, set to start on July 1, 2022, recently received approval from the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education. "This is a tremendous opportunity for FIU to serve those who have served us," said FIU Provost and Executive Vice President Kenneth G. Furton. "Graduates of this program will be uniquely prepared to manage the complex medical problems that veterans confront after returning to civilian life, including post-traumatic stress disorder, addiction and chronic pain."

In addition to newly minted doctors who graduate from HWCOC, the program also is expected to draw skilled physicians from across the country. The new FIU/Miami VA residency program has been approved to participate in the National Resident Matching Program, which culminates on Match Day (March 18, 2022) when graduating medical students are "matched" with residency programs nationwide. Residencies offer medical school graduates in-depth training within a specific specialty at a hospital or clinic.

This residency training program also is expected to benefit the South Florida community by attracting more doctors to the area amidst a growing national physician shortage, especially in primary care.

"Studies show the majority of young doctors decide to practice close to where they perform their residency training," said Dr. Juan Cendan, interim dean at the Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine. "We expect that many of the doctors we train will remain in South Florida." The three-year graduate medical education program has already started recruiting its first class of six residents.



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Certified Nursing Assistant: Shortage of a Valuable Member of the Healthcare Team

The need for Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs) in Florida is at a critical level as the population ages and comorbidities become more prevalent.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects approximately 174,000 job openings for CNAs each year between 2019 and 2029. The projected growth for CNAs is forecasted at 6.9% over the next few years in Florida. CNAs are in very high demand in Florida—second only to California in employing CNAs. Employers often search the CNA registry to fill these high demand positions, so becoming certified provides a distinct advantage.

The starting salary of over \$27,000 can be increased with experience and acquisition of skills such as phlebotomy. CNA certification falls under the auspice of the Florida Department of Health/Board



BY DR. TOMMIE L. NORRIS, DNS, RN,

of Nursing requiring a background screening and a testing fee of \$155. CNA students participate in both classroom and clinical experiences to become competent members of the healthcare team culminating in a CNA certification exam. Affordability is certainly a strength as the financial and time commitment is less than an academic degree. With the growing job market, the decision to become a CNA offers many opportunities.

Miami Dade College is meeting the challenge to remedy the CNA shortage in South Florida by providing an entry pathway for CNAs through continuing education. The Benjamin Leon School partnered with continuing education to meet the needs of the community and provide a career that can be accom-

plished in a short period of time while assisting these members of the community to be employed and improve socioeconomic status. This collaboration with continuing education is to offer CNA training at both the Medical Campus located in the heart of the health district and the south Homestead Campus with a goal to expand into other zip codes in the near future.

Nursing students are provided with contacts for employment in many areas such as hospitals, clinics, extended care, and community/home health. Professional opportunities for CNAs are brighter than ever with the career ladder presented to all candidates. The support and resources now provided to these students are coupled with community needs for immediate employment upon graduation.

MDC is developing pathways for CNAs to gain academic credit through prior learning assessment that includes work experience providing a career ladder to become a licensed practical nurse

(LPN) or registered nurse (RN). “Earn while you learn” can certainly be a goal for the CNA as employers seeking to up-skill employees may consider financial support while completing a nursing degree.

CNAs are a valuable member of the healthcare team working with registered nurses, physicians, nurse practitioners, and ancillary services. Working under the supervision of the RN or LPN, the role of the CNA includes assisting individuals with activities of daily living, monitoring vital signs, feeding, and assisting with ambulation are just a few of the skills provided by the CNA. CNAs have the opportunity to impact the lives of people based on the care provided in an environment that adds to their knowledge in a rapidly growing healthcare industry.

Dr. Tommie L. Norris, DNS, RN, is an AACN Leadership for Academic Nursing Fellow, Miami Dade College, and Dean, Benjamin Leon School of Nursing.



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Cover Story: EMHA Opens Opportunities in Variety of Fields

Continued from page 1

an opportunity to move up within their own organization, but it also gives them a broader perspective of the healthcare field. Barbera said the centerpiece of the healthcare system is hospitals, but "What we're seeing is the healthcare environment expanding and becoming a lot more diverse. I try to make sure students understand that there are other opportunities within healthcare that are not in hospitals, which are just as gratifying and rewarding. When they graduate, they are aware they have a multitude of healthcare opportunities they might not have ever thought of."

As examples, he mentioned that long-term care is a great opportunity for someone who is looking for a career in health administration. Another is home healthcare, which is growing significantly – not only because of the graying of America, but also because of what the pandemic taught us.

"Consumers love (home healthcare) because they can stay in their own home environment and have service and providers come to them. Physician practices need to be managed as well. Then you have general outpatient care, whether it be ambulatory surgery, urgent care centers – these are all opportunities

that require management to oversee what they're doing."

The 15-month program requires that students come in with a certain amount of experience in healthcare. Barbera explained, "We do that because we are cohort-based, so we have a collection of students who are in the same class and pretty much follow the program together. The benefit is that they learn from each other, and by the time they graduate they are very close to each other; so it makes a nice environment for teaching and for learning. They learn by discussing things, and that's the best way for these programs to function, where you have cohorts with similar-style students in them."

Barbera pointed out another important facet of the EMHA: "We started a faculty ambassador program where every student is assigned a faculty member. I'm one. I have students who are connected with me, and I will always be in touch with them to see how it's going, if they have any questions." He said it's been extremely effective, because it provides students – especially online students who need someone to connect with – with a direct link to the university. "They're doing the program at their own pace, but because of their busy sched-

ules, they don't have time to make that commitment. This makes them feel a part of the program."

Perhaps the most important reason for pursuing an EMHA is that, as Barbera said, healthcare is never going to go away. "Healthcare is here forever, so you can devote your education and your direct experience in an industry that you know is going to be around. The other thing about healthcare is it's extremely challenging and dynamic, because it changes on a daily basis."

He talked specifically about how things will be different in the post-pandemic environment, how some concepts healthcare providers and organizations had prior to the pandemic will have little value. "They're almost going to have to start new. They'll be thinking more along lines of virtual care, like telemedicine, telehealth. That's where a lot of changes are going to be taking place."

"So it's exciting. Never a dull moment in healthcare, it's an industry that's so dynamic, so diverse." And full of opportunities for professionals with an EMHA.

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FAU Offering Second Degree Working Professional Bachelor of Science in Nursing Program

BY VANESSA ORR

The United States is facing a critical nursing shortage; studies estimate that more than 1 million new registered nurses will be needed by 2030. In Florida, the situation is dire—the Florida Hospital Association and the Safety Net Hospital Alliance of Florida reports that the state will face a shortfall of 59,100 nurses by 2035.

In order to increase the number of nurses in the workforce, Florida Atlantic University (FAU) introduced the Second Degree Working Professional Bachelor of Science in Nursing program in 2019. Offered at FAU's Davie Campus, this program allows individuals who have previously earned a bachelor's degree or higher in other areas to pursue a Bachelor of Science in Nursing.

"A lot of people talk about having an interest in nursing, but they didn't pursue it because they took other career paths," explained Safiya George, Ph.D., APRIN-BC, FAANP, dean and professor, Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing, Florida Atlantic University. "The biggest barrier to them going back to school is that they can't commit to a full-time program; they have families to support and need to be able to work full-time to live."

The second degree program at FAU is offered part-time on weekday evenings and weekends, and students attend classes in person during the week, or watch live streams online. Skills labs and hands-on assessments are done in person, as are clinical rotations.

"While we haven't targeted any specific industries, we are seeing a lot of interest from social workers, people in banking and finance, teachers, and those with healthcare administration degrees who have the desire to be in actual patient care," said George.

The two-year program graduated its first cohort this past August, and expects to graduate approximately 80 students each year.

"As you can imagine, there are already more employment opportunities for nurses than there are nurses; some students in this last rotation already had employers



contacting them with opportunities," said George.

"Anyone who wants a job after they pass their licensing exam can find opportunities here in Florida, as well as in other states," she continued. "And if they decide to do something else, such as take a position in nurse staffing, those jobs are available even before they take the NCLEX-RN (National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses)."

FAU has a number of pilot programs available to help graduates land positions once they earn their licenses. "We work with one healthcare system that commits to hiring our nurses if they've done their rotations there," said George. "At a different healthcare system, students can submit an application to be hired as nurse externs, so they are learning patient care technician skills while in nursing school; when they finish, they can apply to become registered nurses on-site."

FAU also offers other options to help individuals get into the nursing field, from the freshman direct admit program for high school seniors, to a fulltime course for those with previous degrees that follows an accelerated track. In addition, the university offers a number of healthcare-related courses for the broader population, including a telehealth course that shows students how to implement that technology and connect with patients on a deeper level.

Not only is FAU seeing a lot of interest in the second degree program, but George said that she is seeing increased interest in



the field of nursing as well.

"We're really seeing a mix of things right now; while some nurses are burned out and retire or leave the field entirely, surprisingly, a lot of people want to get into



Safiya George

nursing now because of the pandemic—they realize the importance of improving patient outcomes," she said.

"They're the ones who say, 'Sign me up, I want to join the front lines,' because they are excited about what nurses are doing," she continued. "They see it as a way for them to make a difference, to help those other healthcare heroes who are on the front lines."

Spring classes for the Second Degree Working Professional Bachelor of Science in Nursing program begin Jan. 8, 2022, with applications closing Nov. 1. The fall 2022 application period opens Feb. 1 and closes April 9, 2022.

For more information, visit <https://nursing.fau.edu/admissions/index.php>.

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Admissions to Kindred Hospitals may be recommended by physicians, acute-care hospitals, rehabilitation hospitals, managed care providers, case management companies or by the patient's family. In all cases family tours are encouraged.

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VITAS® Healthcare Provides Personalized Care to South Florida

The VITAS Difference defines the way our hospice care teams support our patients, their families, and our communities.

Written by Betty Bel, Vice President of Hospice Operations for VITAS in South Florida

Every day from West Palm Beach to the Keys and all South Florida communities in between, dedicated employees from VITAS® Healthcare deliver comprehensive hospice care in a way that makes the VITAS Difference in the lives of patients and their families.

With commitment, compassion, and a can-do attitude, they live out the foundational VITAS values by putting our patients and their families first and doing whatever it takes to help them embrace quality of life near the end of life.

Through individual contributions and collective expertise, our employees ensure that patients' wishes for comfort, dignity, closure, and peace near the end of life are respected and honored.



What does the VITAS Difference look like in South Florida?

- In February in Homestead, members of the VITAS team covering Miami-Dade and Monroe counties gathered at the family home of WWII veteran José Pacheco for a recognition ceremony that included the presentation of a certificate of appreciation, veteran pin, and volunteer-crafted afghan during a touching bedside salute. Says Nancy Auster, RN, the VITAS admissions nurse who oversaw the ceremony: “His family kept saying that no one ever honored him the way we did...”
- Throughout the challenging summer of 2021, Broward County Bereavement Manager Mircea “Mitch” Husar launched a “Heroes’ Habits for Overcoming Stress” phone support group to help his hospice colleagues share ideas for easing and overcoming workplace stress—physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual—related to COVID-19. “As a group, we focus on our strengths and successes, on what works for each of us,” says Mitch.
- While undergoing training through the VITAS Association for Clinical Pastoral Education in spring 2021, three Broward County chaplains and one bereavement manager participated in a national pre- and post-class survey to assess spiritual care training’s impact on emotional intelligence.
- During May’s celebration of Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, Dr. Preeya Desh, a VITAS palliative care physician in Palm Beach County, joined other VITAS clinicians to offer insights, advice, and perspective on providing sensitive end-of-life care to patients whose religious traditions, cultural values, and approaches to illness and death often vary from US practices.

- Throughout all VITAS programs, thousands of dedicated employees work passionately to embrace and personify the VITAS Employee Promise and the VITAS Difference.
- The Employee Promise outlines key factors—Passion, Purpose, People, Possibilities, and Presence—that motivate compassionate professionals to join our company, bring their true selves to work each day, and remain engaged and inspired to fulfill our mission to improve the quality of life for patients and families near the end of life.

The VITAS Difference defines the way we work in a people-first culture, guided by:

- **Commitment** to fulfill all duties and responsibilities with the highest regard for professionalism, seamless interactions, and continuous growth and improvement
- **Compassion**, a central component of hospice care and exemplified as a virtue, a trait, and a behavior that is built on the concept of treating everyone with the same level of understanding, empathy, and respect that employees would want to receive in return
- **Can-Do Attitude**, apparent in every employee who embraces innovation, and leads change by remaining flexible, solution-focused, and determined to create excellent results every day...and even better results tomorrow



South Florida can be assured that VITAS, the nation's leading provider of end-of-life care and a Florida hospice provider since 1978, is available 24/7 to provide compassionate hospice care to patients and their families.



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HOSPICE & PALLIATIVE CARE IN SOUTH FLORIDA

Cover Story: Create a Culture of Compassion to Inspire Exceptional Care

Continued from page 1

Successful, supportive healthcare work environments must start at the top if they are to inspire and sustain compassion and commitment among employees. At VITAS, our executive leaders instill a strong sense of purpose that enables our teams to turn their passion for healthcare into something palpable and satisfying as they focus on quality of life near the end of life for patients and families.

Culture-building starts with leaders who are present, accessible, and approachable with an authentic desire to listen to and learn from their staff.

Culture itself must be intentional, sustained, and proactive. At VITAS, we developed the VITAS Difference: an engagement and culture-building program that demonstrates and celebrates each team member's contributions by living and breathing the behaviors and ethos that improve the lives of our patients and their families. The program's three pillars uplift every employee, celebrate everyday excellence, and drive every aspect of patient-centered hospice care:

- **Commitment:** a vow to build trust and maintain a servant attitude to all, manifest by employees who show up on time for shifts and patient appointments and who communicate consistently with patients and family members before, during, and after visits

- **Compassion:** a promise to provide heartfelt care by listening actively and carefully to others' needs, honoring the meaningful moments that our patients and their families invite us to share, treating everyone with empathy and respect, and making difficult situations better

- **Can-Do Attitude:** a mindset of going above and beyond to provide excellent care, consistently showing up with a positive attitude and collaborative spirit, and inspiring others to do the same

To embed sincere employee appreciation into everyday activities, we launched a recognition program in 2021 that spans the nation. We've been blown away by the response and responses. In the initiative's first three days, employees submitted 1,500 anecdotes and words of praise to recognize fellow employees for their extraordinary work and real-life examples of putting Commitment, Compassion, and Can-do Attitude into action. This peer-driven recognition raises up our people and doubles down on our culture.

Attracting and retaining staff is a healthcare priority. A supportive culture allows team members to turn their purpose into something tangible, pursue their passions, and explore exciting new career possibilities. To every employee across the organization, we embrace and stand by the VITAS Employee Promise to

foster a thriving workplace:

- Make everyday healthcare purposeful by tying it to the organization's mission, values, and community

- Communicate values and expectations clearly, regularly, and openly with all staff – just as we ask employees to do with our patients and their families

- Demonstrate authentic buy-in from the top and find opportunities to cultivate ambassadors from within

- Create calls to action – fun ways to get employees engaged, connected, and encouraged to translate the organization's values and beliefs into everyday behaviors

- Provide people with the resources and professional opportunities they need to stay motivated and feel appreciated and recognized

Behind every hospice patient success story is a team of compassionate and committed healthcare employees and professionals with a can-do spirit and a deeply held desire to make a meaningful difference.

Diane Psaras is executive vice president and chief human resources officer for VITAS Healthcare. The nation's leading provider of end-of-life care is hiring passionate healthcare professionals. Apply for a fulfilling career at [VITAS.com/careers](https://www.vitas.com/careers).

Meeting you where you are.

Since 1978, Trustbridge has cared for over 200,000 patients and families in Palm Beach and Broward Counties needing end-of-life care. If you or someone you know has been diagnosed with a life-limiting illness, you can rely on the compassionate professionals of **Trustbridge** to help you find the pathway that is best for you and your family. Our hospice and palliative care specialists will ensure your end-of-life wishes and goals are met and work with you to design a plan of care that is right for you and your family.

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- Bereavement Programs
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Our team of caregivers is here to help manage symptoms and support your emotional, social and spiritual well-being. What matters most to you matters to us. It's never too early to ask about hospice and palliative care.

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VITAS Elevates Quality of Life for Patients, Employees in South Florida

On March 13, 2020, the Trump administration declared COVID-19 a national emergency, unlocking billions in federal resources to reduce the spread of the novel coronavirus.

Weeks later, Governor Ron DeSantis signed Executive Order 20-91, outlining a “Safer at Home” policy intended to protect Floridians through temporary isolation.

While the full statewide shutdown lasted slightly more than a month, those of us in healthcare are still coping with lingering restrictions, a changing care landscape, and reasonable concerns from patients, their families, and our peers and partners in the industry.

Driven by compassion and a commitment to our community, South Florida providers and clinicians have continued to treat and support patients in person through the most restrictive periods of the pandemic.

VITAS Healthcare—the nation’s leading provider of end-of-life care, and a cornerstone of South Florida healthcare for more than 40 years—is no exception.

Our hospice and palliative care services support over 18,000 patients with advanced illness and their loved ones in 14



BY KATHLEEN CORONADO

states and the District of Columbia every day. More than 10,000 employees carry out our incredibly rewarding mission: to provide comfort and dignity to patients and their families as they face the end of life together.

Through education, resource sharing, and volunteer efforts, VITAS also supports numerous partner organizations and initiatives dedicated to improving quality of life for vulnerable people throughout the communities we serve: veterans groups, food banks, disaster relief initiatives, and many more.

Most VITAS teams—comprising a physician, nurse, aide, chaplain, social worker, volunteer, and bereavement specialist—care for patients wherever they call home. We’ve built a mobility-first care model using leading-edge technology and operational practices to ensure seamless care coordination and uninterrupted support for patients with advanced illness in any setting.

During COVID-19, VITAS has gone even further to protect our staff, partners, patients, and their families without sacrificing quality of care.

From the earliest days of the pandemic, VITAS has coordinated with the White

House COVID-19 Task Force and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, enabling quick adaptation to changing policies and safety guidelines.

We stocked up on personal protective equipment to keep our teams and patients safe during routine care in every imaginable setting. Additionally, we staffed every VITAS location with an infection control manager to oversee COVID-protocol compliance and respond to potential risks.

The advantages of our highly mobile, flexible approach to care became especially apparent during the pandemic and continue today. VITAS’ mobile technology and telehealth capabilities allow us to deliver complex modalities and symptom relief in heavily restricted settings, transition eligible patients to hospice 24/7, and involve physically distant family members in their loved ones’ care.

Our embrace of telehealth also ensures that patients, families, and staff at partnering facilities receive the psychosocial and spiritual support they require, whenever they require it, from VITAS chaplains and social workers.

VITAS employees and volunteers worked hard to keep up with beloved traditions and much-appreciated services amid COVID-19 restrictions:

- Special parades thanked our fellow healthcare workers and uplifted isolated care facility residents
- Music therapists and lovable Paw Pals

pet volunteers visited and entertained patients through windows

• A variety of Zoom and phone-in support groups (available in English and Spanish) continue to help families and community members through challenging times—and also facilitated a nationwide virtual celebration of Veterans Day

VITAS recognized and addressed the growing personal needs of our staff during this period by expanding employee benefits to include Teladoc appointments, an Employee Assistance Program, and extra paid time off.

Through it all, VITAS kept employees’ insurance premiums down, avoided layoffs, and continued to provide competitive merit-based pay increases companywide.

I’m proud to work for a South Florida healthcare provider that understands the importance of protecting and caring for its employees. Hospice and palliative care are people-focused specialties, and VITAS has never failed to support the people who provide that care.

If you’re looking for a fulfilling career centered on helping others in their most challenging moments, I encourage you to join our talented team of compassionate professionals.

Learn more about our mission and apply today at [VITAS.com/careers](https://www.vitas.com/careers). Kathleen Coronado is a general manager for VITAS Healthcare in Broward County

Is It Time to Focus on Quality of Life for Your Patients?

Rely on the experts in hospice and palliative care for guidance and support.

National Hospice and Palliative Care Month is the ideal time to remind our South Florida healthcare colleagues and partners of the value of our interdisciplinary medical specialty and its emphasis on conversations, comfort, and quality of life.

When your patients and their families face the challenges of an advanced illness, VITAS® Healthcare specialists can help by answering questions, exploring options, and facilitating conversations to identify patients’ goals, values, and preferences for comfort-focused care.

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Shayna Forgetta, PhD, MSW

Shayna Forgetta joined MorseLife Hospice and Palliative Care as a palliative care social worker in August 2021. She works alongside other members of the interdisciplinary team to provide emotional support to patients and families, both in-person and over the phone, and assists with obtaining needed resources, such as in-home aides and durable medical equipment. Shayna previously worked as a hospice social worker and also has experience as an HIV testing specialist. She obtained her master of social work from Florida Atlantic University in 2017 and her Ph.D. in public affairs from the University of Central Florida in 2021. Shayna has a passion for supporting those who are experiencing major life changes and difficult times.



Jennifer Trainor, APRN

With 11 years of palliative and hospice experience, Jennifer Trainor serves as a Nurse practitioner in MorseLife's home-based, interdisciplinary Palliative Care Program. She visits patients in their homes to offer symptom management, patient education, advanced care planning, care coordination and goals of care. She works collaboratively with a patient's primary care provider and specialists to support patient defined quality of life. Her experience as a Nurse Practitioner includes critical care, primary care and public health work in Haiti, Liberia and Ghana. She is ANCC board certified and Reiki Certified. She earned her master's as an Advanced Practice Registered Nurse from the University of Connecticut. Most recently, Jennifer provided hospice and palliative care at Christus St. Vincent Regional Medical Center in Santa Fe, NM before relocating to South Florida and joining MorseLife in January 2021.



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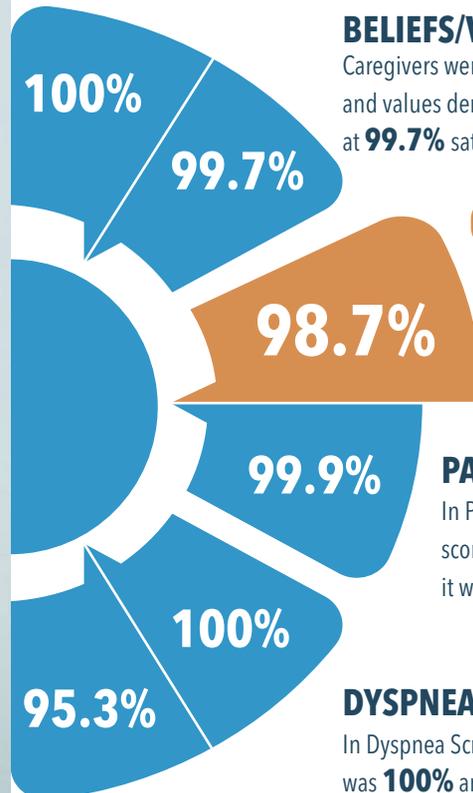
In Pain Screening, OpusCare's satisfactory score was **99.9%** and for Pain Assessment, it was **95.2%***.

DYSPNEA CARE

In Dyspnea Screening, OpusCare's satisfactory score was **100%** and for Dyspnea Treatment, a **99.7%***.

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In Bowel Regimen, OpusCare scored a **95.3%** satisfactory rate* when asked by caregivers.



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Cover Story: ImageFIRST Rises Through the Challenges of the Pandemic and Increasing Costs

Continued from page 1

other donations, ImageFIRST has donated over \$600,000 to benefit the children's research hospital since the partnership began.

ImageFIRST's goal has always been to help positively impact patient care and make life easier for the staff that is taking care of the patients.

"We manage the linen program so your staff can focus on the patient," says Juffre. "Many of our products are designed to increase patient satisfaction. Most health systems, hospitals, and doctors, have two top priorities: patient care and staff engagement. The linen is just a by-product of helping our clients achieve their number one and number two goals."

The rising costs of supplies this past year has impacted many healthcare facilities and has been difficult for everybody, Juffre acknowledges.

"Prices and inflation are going through the roof right now," he says. "These challenges are real. Inflation is at a 13-year high, everything is going up and the price of gasoline is also impacting the deliveries of supplies."

While price increases are inevitable at any company, ImageFIRST aims to only increase prices once a year, and they have been able to maintain that through 2021.

"One thing we're doing for our clients right now is eating all of the increased costs rather than unexpectedly increase the cost to our customer. We were able to hold our pricing firm for 2021 and delay any increases until next year," says Juffre. "We're doing that by becoming more efficient with routing and in our production facilities. Creating a partnership with our clients is key and part of that partnership is trying to ensure that our clients can take care of patients right now and not worry about unprojected costs."

Juffre says another one of their client's pain points is balancing patient care with patient safety.

"Something that most health systems want to do is maintain a good connection with their patients," he says. "With social distancing and mask mandates, it's been a challenge. What we're trying to do is be a resource to them so they can keep

everybody safe, and at the same time, make sure that patients feel comfortable. Some of our products are designed to do that, such as the gown line and scrub lines we manufacture."

This past year, ImageFIRST took its RFID technology to another level in terms of their ability to manage scrub programs and fluid resistant gowns. During the pandemic last year, the company started manufacturing its own line of fluid resistant isolation gowns.

"We added RFID chips to all our scrubs and isolation gowns to track what's coming and going, as well as to better manage our clients' needs," says Juffre. "RFID technology is big in the medical world, and we've always been on the cutting edge of that in terms of tracking inventory, especially as it comes to scrubs. Our ScrubVAULT® System helps them manage scrubs, mops, towels, and other products. It has been great for our clients."

The ScrubVAULT® System allows full accountability for the scrubs being used and by whom. Providers are able to better manage their inventory because the system relies on UHF RFID chip technology. This ensures providers have the scrubs they need when they need it, making it more beneficial to them and ultimately, also to their patients by freeing up staff to focus more on patient care.

Health systems right now should be looking for true partners that want to work with them through the rest of the pandemic and through these rising costs, adds Juffre.

"ImageFIRST has always been a company that truly wants to be the partner our customers can't live without," he says. "I encourage them to do that with all their vendor partners. Let's get through this together and let's make sure that patients get the best care they can."

For more information, visit www.imagefirst.com or call (800) 368-3676. Please note: New customers should call (800) 932-7472.

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Broward Health Imperial Point has expanded its cardiac services with the opening of a new cardiac catheterization lab and interventional radiology suite.

This state-of-the-art suite includes two procedures rooms, seven pre-and-post-procedure patient care bays, an isolation room, a room devoted to echo cardiograms, three diagnostic stress lab stations, and an expansive waiting room equipped with the latest patient monitoring technology.

“Our cardiovascular and interventional radiology suite is an investment in our community,” said Randy Gross, CEO of Broward Health Imperial Point. “With the new cath lab patients will have access to critical life-saving cardiac procedures close to home.”

Broward Health Imperial Point’s new cardiac suite is conveniently located on the ground floor, just steps from the emergency department, and is designed to provide a seamless experience for cardiac patients and their families. The expanded facility will have capacity to treat dozens of patients per month.

At the cath lab and interventional radiology suite, patients have access to screenings and diagnoses as well as treatment for cardiovascular conditions such as chest pain, heart attacks, heart failure, heart valve problems, cardiogenic shock and more. The most acute heart attack patients will be able to receive critical interventional care.

Among the procedures that will be performed are diagnostic left and right heart cath coronary intervention (angioplasty); cardiac implants - loop recorders; coronary intravascular ultrasound; thrombectomy; and IABP (intra-aortic balloon pump). Soon to be added to cardiac implants will be pacers and AICDs (automatic implantable cardioverter defibrillator).

Holy Cross Health Launches Premier Sports Medicine Program



John Bromfield, PT, assists a patient at the new iSPORT facility

Holy Cross Health has launched a premier, state-of-the-art sports medicine program with the opening of the Lillian S. Wells Foundation Institute of Sports Performance and Orthopedic Therapy (iSPORT) in the Holy Cross HealthPlex in Fort Lauderdale.

“At iSPORT, we provide evidence-based education, training and management with the most comprehensive, multidisciplinary sports injury and performance enhancement program in South Florida,” said Ross Wodicka, M.D., an orthopedic surgeon at Holy Cross Health. “Whether you are looking to take your athletic performance to the next level or are recovering from an injury or surgery, we are leading the way in the treatment and prevention of athletic related injuries. We want to enable everyone at any age to enjoy movement and embrace physical activity at their highest capacity.”

At iSPORT, patients have access to such comprehensive services as sports medicine physicians, sports psychology/neuropsychology, athletic training, physical therapy, occupational/hand therapy, group/team/individual training, concussion prevention and management programs, sports vision assessment and training, evidence-based interventions for decreasing injury risk, sports performance programs, nutritional services and sleep assessment.

To reach and maintain peak performance, iSPORT offers state-of-the-art technology, including DARI Motion Capture, Trazer, Bertec Essential Spark, Fit Light training, Quickboard training, Vertimax training, blood flow restriction therapy, GymRax suspension trainers, a power rack and a large turf functional training area.

Broward Health Medical Center Partners with Pediatrix and Obstetrix Medical Groups to Provide Maternity Care

Broward Health Medical Center has welcomed a new partner in obstetric and maternal-fetal medicine (MFM) services, Pediatrix® and Obstetrix® Medical Groups, affiliates of Sunrise-based Mednax®, Inc. As of October 1, 2021, Obstetrix began collaborating with Broward Health with supporting obstetrician-gynecologist hospitalist coverage and MFM services to provide the highest level of specialized maternal care.

“We welcome this partnership with Pediatrix and Obstetrix, leading national, multi-specialty groups of clinicians,” said Heather Havericak, CEO of Broward Health Medical Center and Salah Foundation Children’s Hospital. “Our collaboration will provide highly specialized care to assist families every step of the way during the birthing process and beyond.”

“Both Mednax and Broward Health Medical Center have a long history of promoting quality care for women’s health services and their future children,” said Kathy Porter, M.D., MFM specialist and practice medical director. “This new partnership shares a mission focused on further advancing a safe clinical environment that provides evidence-based care in a team format to support future mothers and other women’s health needs in our community.”

NOV
2021

SOUTH FLORIDA HEALTHCARE NETWORKING GROUP

ZOOM
MEETING

DATE: Thursday, November 11

TIME: On-line Networking begins at **8:00 am** Eastern Time (US & Canada)

For registration information, contact charles@southfloridahospitalnews.com

Around the Region... Around

FAU Nursing Advisory Board Welcomes Danny Ducello

Florida Atlantic University's Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing welcomes Danny Ducello, assistant chief nursing officer at JFK Medical Center, to its advisory board.

Ducello holds a Master of Science in Nursing from Walden University and is pursuing a Doctor of Business Administration degree with a concentration in health care management, also from Walden University. Prior to his career in healthcare, he worked in television production in Los Angeles. He was inspired to become a nurse after an incident that required him to have brain surgery and a year-long rehabilitation.



Danny Ducello

HCA East Florida Names Natalie Ransom as New Division Chief Nursing Executive

HCA East Florida is proud to announce that Natalie Ransom has assumed the position of Division Chief Nursing Executive. Ransom has been with HCA Healthcare for 24 years where she has held a variety of leadership roles. Most recently, Ransom served as the Chief Nursing Officer for North Florida Regional Medical Center. Prior to North Florida Regional Medical Center, Ransom held roles as Chief Nursing Officer and Associate Chief Nursing Officer at MountainView Hospital, Chief Nursing Officer at Southern Hills Hospital in Las Vegas, Nevada, and the Director of Medical and Surgical Services at North Florida Regional Medical Center in Gainesville, FL. Ransom earned her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Valdosta State University in Valdosta, GA, a Master of Science in Nursing from the University of Phoenix in Phoenix, AZ, and a Doctor of Nursing Practice from Capella University in Minneapolis, MN. She is also Certified in Executive Nursing (CENP) and Nurse Executive, Advanced (NEA-BC).



Natalie Ransom

Rishi Singh, MD, Named President of Cleveland Clinic Martin North and South Hospitals

Rishi Singh, M.D., has been appointed President of Cleveland Clinic Martin North and South hospitals, effective Jan. 1, 2022. Most recently, Dr. Singh worked at Cleveland Clinic's main campus in Ohio, where he has served as a staff physician at the Cole Eye Institute and professor of Ophthalmology at the Cleveland Clinic Lerner College of Medicine. He currently serves on the Board of Governors for Cleveland Clinic and as the executive physician champion for documentation excellence for Ohio. After earning his medical degree from the Boston University School of Medicine, Dr. Singh completed an internship at Tufts Medical Center in Boston, followed by his residency in ophthalmology from Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary, and a vitreoretinal fellowship at Cleveland Clinic.



Dr. Rishi Singh

Cover Story: Broward Health Continues to Persevere Through the Pandemic

Continued from page 1

Future outbreaks will be addressed in the same methodical fashion with which they have met previous waves, he notes.

"We developed task forces that focus on different operational aspects, which meet and inform the executive leadership team," says Dr. Lenchus. "Changes in operations are deliberated and then communicated prior to implementation. We incorporate the latest evidence-based and scientific interventions to provide the best treatments available to our patients and community. Lessons learned really have provided us a fresh view of our incredible workforce – folks who have performed heroically in the face of a constantly shifting landscape that has taken an enormous emotional and physical toll on them. Wellness has never before been more important or integral to keeping them healthy."

From the beginning, Broward Health followed the guidance from the Federal and State governments to help ensure the safety and welfare of the employees.

"We continue to advocate mask usage, hand hygiene, and physical distancing. Broward Health was an early adopter of different medications used to treat those infected with COVID-19, including monoclonal antibodies," says Dr.

Lenchus. "And, we have consistently underscored the importance of vaccination, from setting up numerous sites for our employees, their families, and the community through our messaging to the public at-large."

Although he expects COVID-19 is likely to be with us for some time, Dr. Lenchus is increasingly hopeful that we are gaining the upper hand with each wave encountered, especially as we learn more about disease prevention and treatment tools for the virus.

He offers some practical advice to the general public.

"Broward Health is here to serve the community, as it has been for more than 80 years," he says. "Do not postpone medical care. Regularly see your doctor. Maintain a healthy lifestyle and diet. Wear your mask. Wash your hands with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Physically distance yourself from others, especially if they are or may be sick. Vaccinate yourself and encourage those around you to follow these protective measures. Working together, we can get COVID-19 under control."

For more information, visit BrowardHealth.org.

E-mail Your Editorial Submissions to editorial@southfloridahospitalnews.com

WALK A MILE (OR MORE) IN CRYSTAL'S SHOES!

A national virtual event to promote colon cancer awareness

Saturday, December 4, 2021

Location: Anywhere you want!

Crystal has been battling Stage 4 colon cancer for over two years. Yet, she remains fiercely dedicated to educating others about her symptoms and the importance of early screenings, in an effort to save lives.

Join us as we collectively celebrate and pay tribute to her message of solidarity, advocacy and friendship!

To promote further awareness of her mission, and in her honor, her close friend Matthew will attempt to complete a 100-mile ultramarathon that day!

Registration: \$5

Donate.ColonCancerCoalition.org/CrystalsShoes

All proceeds will benefit the Colon Cancer Coalition. Your efforts will help get people screened, and support programs for early onset colon cancer.

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

Cleveland Clinic Martin Health Foundation Receives a \$50,000 Gift to Continue Glioblastoma Research

Family and friends of Lenny Schelin, Jr. recently presented Cleveland Clinic Martin Health with a gift in the amount of \$50,000. The funds will continue to help support research into glioblastoma, an aggressive form of malignant brain tumor.

Schelin Jr. passed away in 2018 at the age

of 33 from glioblastoma. An avid fisherman, The Lenny Schelin Jr. Memorial Tournament helps keep his legacy alive.

"Lenny always wanted to be remembered and I can't think of a better way than to provide relief and hope for the ones that are afflicted with this horrible disease," said his mother, Debbie Johnston.

Following a check presentation at Cleveland Clinic Tradition Hospital, neurosurgeon Oszkar Szentirmai, M.D., provided an update on the glioblastoma research taking place, including new cellular research.

"This is a big stride in treatment and finding opportunities to lengthen the life of so many," Johnston said. "Hopefully this will lead to a cure. We couldn't be more happy that this is part of Lenny's legacy."

Dr. Szentirmai is grateful for the trust they have placed in the research at Cleveland Clinic Martin Health. "Without their support, we could not have made the progress we have in learning more about this disease."



Jewish Family Home Care Achieves Accreditation with ACHC

Jewish Family Home Care proudly announces it has achieved accreditation through Accreditation Commission for Health Care (ACHC) by continuing its compliance with performance standards.

Jewish Family Home Care, a not-for-profit organization, opened in 2015 and is one of Broward County's largest home care agencies that provides service for more than 400 clients throughout the county. JFHC is a multi-reach home care agency that offers non-medical home care services such as home health aides, companions, sitters, housekeepers and certified nursing assistants, regardless of a client's religion.

"Accreditation through ACHC reinforces our dedication to maintaining the highest health standards," said Teresa Duvall, CEO of Jewish Family Home Care. "This is what we strive to do daily for our clients and is a part of our mission- to provide exemplary and vital senior services in a warm, supportive and compassionate environment."

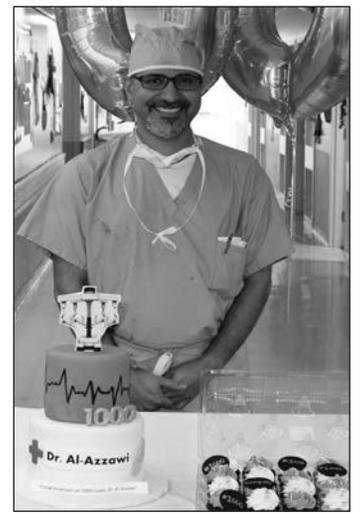


Teresa Duvall

Dr. Hayder Al-Azzawi Completes 1,000th Robotic Surgery at Good Samaritan Medical Center

Colorectal surgeon, Dr. Hayder Al-Azzawi, hit a major milestone by completing his 1,000th robotic surgery case at Good Samaritan Medical Center. Dr. Al-Azzawi performs robotic-assisted colorectal procedures at Good Sam, using the da Vinci XI Surgical System by Intuitive. In addition, Dr. Al-Azzawi performs robotic-assisted colorectal procedures at Palm Beach Gardens Medical Center.

The da Vinci allows doctors high imaging views in 3D, which is magnified more than 10 times to what the human eye can see. The robot also allows the doctors to use instruments giving the surgeon a far greater range of motion with smoother precision and accuracy for the patient.



Dr. Hayder Al-Azzawi

Health Care District's C. L. Brumback Primary Care Clinics Awarded \$1 Million Federal Grant for Medical and Office Equipment

To expand access to quality patient care, the C. L. Brumback Primary Care Clinics plan to relocate three of their nine brick and mortar clinics to more spacious and modern health centers. The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), an agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, awarded a grant of \$1,010,224 this month to fund new medical equipment and furnishings for these sites that are located in medically underserved areas of Palm Beach County.

"We are grateful to HRSA for this generous grant funding," said Belma Andric, MD, MPH, Chief Medical Officer for the Health Care District of Palm Beach County, which operates the Brumback Clinics. "The relocations will allow us to serve more patients each day at sites with additional exam rooms and the space to expand future healthcare services." Plans are underway to relocate the western Boca Raton clinic to a proposed larger, leased medical office adjacent to West Boca Medical Center. The project includes relocating the Delray Beach clinic to a proposed leased site across the street on Congress Avenue with nearly 3,000 more square feet of space. The Lantana clinic would also be relocated to a proposed leased site over two and a half times larger in Lake Worth near JFK Medical Center. The relocation projects are expected to take up to 18 months to complete. The grant will cover the cost of such items as medication refrigerators, EKG machines, IT equipment, and patient exam tables to equip the additional space and replace outdated equipment and furniture worn from years of use and repair.

Lee Health Announces Substantial Expansion Plans in Cape Coral

Lee Health is investing nearly \$150 million to expand Cape Coral Hospital and bring additional health care services to the City of Cape Coral. The Lee Health Board of Directors recently approved plans to expand the intensive care unit (ICU) at Cape Hospital, add additional treatment bays in the Emergency Department and purchase a 22.7-acre parcel of land in the city. Other new projects are also underway.

The 12-bed expansion of the ICU increases the number of available beds from 22 to 34. The expansion of the emergency department creates six additional treatment bays and a 12-bed observation unit, which allows patients to be monitored for up to 24 hours without being admitted to the hospital.

Lee Health anticipates using the newly acquired land in the city to build an innovative health care facility similar to Lee Health Coconut Point, which opened in Estero in December of 2018.

In addition to the planned expansions, Cape Coral Hospital is poised to become a teaching hospital as Lee Health will soon launch its internal medicine residency program at Cape Coral Hospital. This program, in partnership with the Florida State University College of Medicine, will provide top-tier training and bring more highly-skilled doctors to our area. This is Lee Health's second physician residency program, and the family medicine program based at Lee Memorial Hospital has proven effective at retaining highly-trained doctors in Southwest Florida. When it reaches full capacity, the internal medicine residency program will house 36 residents.

The Lee Health Board of Directors also approved a plan to construct a new building on the southeast corner of Palm Tree Boulevard and Cape Coral Parkway. Known as Bimini Basin, this project will include a large medical office footprint and apartment units located on top of the medical space. This project brings access to high-quality medical care to an area of Cape Coral that is currently underserved.

The popular outpatient facility at Surfside is also growing. With a 14,000 square foot expansion, Surfside is adding to its list of convenient services to provide health care close to home.

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Holy Cross Health's Stonish Pierce Named to Modern Healthcare's Top 25 Emerging Leaders

Holy Cross Health has announced that Chief Operating Officer (COO) Stonish Pierce has been named to Modern Healthcare's class of 2021 Top 25 Emerging Leaders. Modern Healthcare annually honors emerging leaders age 40 or under who have made significant contributions in the areas of innovation and financial, operational and clinical excellence early in their careers.

Pierce became COO in January 2021, having previously served as vice president of specialty services for Beaumont Health. Within three months at Holy Cross, Pierce launched the hospital's inaugural OB hospitalist program, coordinated a \$20 million multiyear campus improvement plan and consolidated and revamped the Incident Command Center. During COVID-19, he led efforts to accelerate delivery of vaccines to urgent care partners and worked with clinical leaders to re-establish open visitation to help with patient-centered care goals.



Stonish Pierce

Holy Cross Health's Alicia DeLuca Named to the Association for Healthcare Philanthropy 2021 40 Under 40 List

Alicia DeLuca, major gift officer at Holy Cross Health, has been named to the Association for Healthcare Philanthropy (AHP) 2021 40 Under 40 list.

In her position at Holy Cross Health, DeLuca focuses on securing major gifts and building strong relationships with donors. Holy Cross has always been a special place for Alicia, since she was born at the hospital and her grandparents were eucharist ministers serving Holy Cross patients for 33 years.

"Alicia's passion, energy and care for others comes through in everything she does," said Mark Doyle, CEO and president of Holy Cross Health. "This is a well-deserved recognition. We are blessed to have her on our team."



Alicia DeLuca

Nicklaus Children's Hospital Earns 2021 Chime Digital Health Most Wired Recognition

The College of Healthcare Information Management Executives (CHIME) is pleased to announce that Nicklaus Children's Hospital has earned 2021 CHIME Digital Health Most Wired recognition as a certified acute level 7 hospital.

"Nicklaus Children's is proud of the way we leverage technology to advance the quality of pediatric care we deliver," said Dr. David Seo, Vice President and Chief Information Officer. "Our commitment to the children we're privileged to serve is strengthened by the implementation of technology that enhances safety, communications and care. We are honored to be recognized by CHIME."

Holy Cross Health Diabetes Education Service Merits ADA Recognition

The American Diabetes Association Education Recognition Certificate has been awarded to Holy Cross Health for its quality diabetes self-management education and support service.

Holy Cross Health's robust diabetes education and prevention program supports a journey to improve overall health and well-being. A Certified Diabetes Care & Education Specialist, or CDCES, (formerly known as a Certified Diabetes Educator, or CDE) assists participants in learning how to properly self-manage their diabetes. The Holy Cross Health's Diabetes Self-Management Education & Support program provides training and support on the Association of Diabetes Care & Education Specialists' (ADCES) 7-Self Care Behaviors: healthy eating, being active, taking medications, monitoring, reducing risks, problem solving and healthy coping. The program includes individual one-on-one session and group education. Holy Cross Health also offers free monthly diabetes support groups led by certified diabetes care and education specialists that is open to family members, caregivers, community members and those who are newly diagnosed or having been living with diabetes as well as free online cooking segments designed to provide support to those striving to live a healthier life.

Northwest Medical Center and Plantation General Hospital Recognized Nationally for Excellence in Women's Care

Northwest Medical Center in Margate and Plantation General Hospital in Plantation, part of HCA Healthcare's East Florida Division, are proud to announce they cumulatively amassed more than 20 awards for excellence in labor and delivery, obstetrics, and gynecology, and gynecological surgery. The national recognition received by the two facilities is for demonstrating exceptional quality in women's care, according to research released by Healthgrades.

Holy Cross Health Earns National Recognition for Heart Failure and Diabetes Care

Holy Cross Health in Fort Lauderdale was once again nationally recognized by the American Heart Association for its continued success in using the Get With The Guidelines®-Heart Failure and Target: Type 2 Diabetes programs.

Holy Cross Health received the American Heart Association's Heart Failure GOLD PLUS with Honor Roll and Target: Type 2 Diabetes Honor Roll for applying the most up to date evidence-based treatment guidelines to improve patient care and outcomes in the communities served.

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HEALTHCARE CANNABISNEWS™ FLORIDA

Back Cover Story: Is CBD Toxic to the Liver?

Continued from page 36

poses the risk of E-cigarette or Vaping Use Associated Lung Injury depending on the route of CBD administration, product source and third-party lab testing.

It is important to acknowledge that CBD does provide health benefits to the human body. As misinformation begins to spread, the use of CBD for various health advantages will inevitably diminish out of fear for liver toxicity. The endocannabinoid system (ECS) is found in all mammals and consists of receptors (CB1 and CB2) endogenous cannabinoids, and enzymes that facilitate their production or break them down. The ECS is responsible for regulating many of our homeostatic control processes.

When the liver gets damaged, inflamed, or dysfunctional, the body starts to release more endocannabinoids to solve the problem. A healthy liver is correlated with a modest activity of the endocannabinoid system. In fact, this particular organ has a relatively low concentration of the ECS components. However, inflammation in the liver causes endocannabinoids to be very active in this area.

Unfortunately, an overactive endocannabinoid system plays a role in the development of fatty liver disease (1). CBD modulates the CB1 and CB2 receptors by stopping particular compounds that make these receptors disrupt the liver. CBD ensures the proper functioning of a system that balances us. So

while it won't cure fatty liver disease, it can prevent its development. And should disease occur, it may be able to decrease inflammation to in the organ, protecting it against further damage.

Furthermore, CBD users are being presented with unreliable information, potentially causing some patients to turn to more conventional medication such as opioids. The untrustworthy nature of many CBD-related studies is tampering with lives, public health, the economy, business owners, the entire hemp industry, and so on.

The spread of misinformation regarding CBD use is critically hazardous for two primary reasons; CBD users will be deterred by unreliable publications which express potential toxicity at abnormal doses, and the hemp industry will be shattered by a devastating drop in CBD use.

Nevertheless, in order to combat such damaging circumstances, more research must be conducted to determine a more practical dosing system (potentially basing dosage on weight, height, gender, genetics, etc.) and at which dose CBD may pose a threat towards liver toxicity.

Dr. Michelle Weiner, Spine and Wellness Centers of America, can be reached at (305) 974-5533 or mweiner@spinewellnessamerica.com.



Florida Medical Marijuana Physicians Group

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For registration information,
contact charles@cannabisnewsflorida.com

Back Cover Story: Cannabis Spotlight: Jesse Channon

Continued from page 32

How did you get started within the cannabis industry?

I was recruited by Columbia Care in 2019 to leverage my strengths, experience and history of business growth. I was familiar with cannabis before I joined, but quickly learned that it is a far more complex and sophisticated science than I ever could have imagined. It's been a really inspiring journey to see, from beginning to end, the process of growing such high-quality cannabis and sharing it with others who share in the passion or are just excited to try it for the first time.

Are you personally a MJ card holder?

No, we relocated to Georgia from New York and the medical program has not come online yet.

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

I think a recreational program is on the horizon, yes. Patients and their medical needs will always be prioritized, but we are well positioned to support the influx of customers once an adult-use program comes online. Our Cannabist locations are designed to support patients (and eventually customers) of all experience levels. When Florida eventually goes recreational, I think we'll see an increased demand for more ranges of products and brands, which we'll be excited to provide.

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Red White & Bloom Names Alcohol Industry Finance Executive Chris Ecken as CFO

Red White & Bloom Brands Inc. has appointed Christopher Ecken as its Chief Financial Officer.

“We welcome Chris Ecken as a key addition to the breadth and depth of our management team,” stated Brad Rogers, CEO of Red White & Bloom Brands. “Chris’ extensive experience as a financial executive at a major NYSE-listed player in the alcohol beverage industry – a highly regulated industry similar to cannabis — will be a tremendous asset. His rise through the ranks and track record of accomplishments at each level is testament to his financial acumen, visionary leadership and strategic mindset. We anticipate his specialized skills will help shape sustainable long-term growth, the shift to cannabis industry safe banking, and an upward trajectory toward a listed exchange for Red White & Bloom.”



Christopher Ecken

Ecken brings decades of finance experience, including the last 25 in executive finance at Brown-Forman, a producer of some of the world’s most recognizable alcohol brands. Ecken has served in leadership roles overseeing and administering a full spectrum of finance functions, including strategy and forecasting, operational management, and execution, risk management and controls, revenue management, and M&A due diligence. Most recently he held the title of Senior Vice President, Director Global Analytics, after successful execution of the roles of SVP Director Global Financial Planning & Analytics/Commercial Finance; VP Director Global Business and Strategic Analytics; and VP Finance Director – North America; VP Finance Director Latin America; as well as other positions

Verano Opens New MÜV Dispensary in Pinellas Park, the Company’s 38th Retail Location in Florida

Verano Holdings Corp. announced the opening of its newest MÜV™ dispensary located at 7263 Park Boulevard North, Pinellas Park, Florida.



Verano’s 38th MÜV Florida dispensary is centrally located on the Pinellas Peninsula, in one of the state’s most densely populated counties. The new MÜV storefront is accessible from both Park Boulevard North and Belcher Road, as well as from 74th Street North through neighboring businesses. Patients can, based on preference, order ahead at muvfl.com for express pickup in-store, or take advantage of home delivery service that is available across the state within a 20-mile radius of MÜV storefronts.

“Pinellas County has a lot to offer, which explains why nearly one million residents have made their homes here and why it has been an area of focused development for us,” said John Tipton, President of Verano. “The opening of each new MÜV dispensary furthers our resolve to make premium medical cannabis and care available to all patients across the State of Florida.”

MÜV offers one-on-one consultations both in-store and virtually, at no cost to patients. MÜV’s comprehensive product selection includes chocolates and lozenges, flower, pre-rolls, an array of vaporizer pens, concentrates, metered-dose inhalers, topicals and oral sprays, along with patented encapsulation formulations in its EnCaps™ capsules, tinctures, 72-hour transdermal patches and transdermal gels.

Trulieve Expands Access to Medical Cannabis in Miami with Three New Locations

Trulieve Cannabis Corp. announced the reopening of three medical marijuana dispensaries in Miami, Florida: Trulieve Miami-South Beach, Trulieve Miami-Olympia Heights, and Trulieve North Miami Beach. The locations were formerly branded as Harvest House of Cannabis.

New Trulieve store openings mean an unrivaled product menu and in-store experience for customers along every step of the process, supporting the Company’s goal of expanding patients access to medical cannabis across the state. Trulieve strives to exceed expectations of Miami’s diverse and discerning patient base, whether through an exceptional in-store experience, quick pick up via online ordering, or convenient statewide delivery.

“Trulieve celebrates the diverse and rapidly growing patient population in Miami,” said Chief Marketing Officer Valda Coryat. “We look forward to broadening our community connections in the Miami area and providing an inclusive environment where patients and caregivers can turn for the medical cannabis products they rely on, the brands they trust, and a consistent experience, no matter which location they visit.”

Trulieve has partnered with and supported several Miami-area organizations in recent years and looks forward to continuing its community support, physician partnerships, and cannabis education initiatives. The Company’s Miami-area partnerships and programs include Miami Pride, Epilepsy Florida, Pridelines, Florida for Care, CannaMoms, and American Legion.

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Enjoy Hemp Expands Line Launching Uplift and Relax Delta-8 THC Syrups/Drink Additives

Enjoy Hemp has launched Delta-8 THC Syrup. Enjoy Hemp's Delta-8 Syrup transforms any beverage into a high-potency, THC-infused and flavor-enhanced experience that is truly one-of-a-kind. Enjoy Hemp offers the most potent and all-natural Delta-8 THC experience on the market with the only vegan, all-natural, and gluten-free line of products that are fully third-party laboratory tested for potency and purity.

Each bottle of syrup is infused with 500mg of Enjoy Hemp's Delta-8 THC and comes with approximately 13 servings of 40mg per dose. Utilizing water-soluble nanotechnology, Enjoy Hemp's Syrup absorbs up to five times faster than other Delta-8 THC products and kicks in within as little as 15 minutes. Plus, it lasts up to six to eight hours. The syrup can be ingested on its own or infused with any beverage including cocktails, water, and exotic sodas!

Columbia Care Partners with International Superstar Pitbull to Launch N2P, A New Line of Full Spectrum CBD Wellness Products

Columbia Care Inc. and international superstar Pitbull announced the launch of N2P – a new line of high quality, full spectrum CBD products for those seeking to incorporate CBD into their health and wellness routines. N2P seeks to change the negative perception of CBD products and to shine a positive light on the potential of these products, which is what N2P stands for: negative to positive.

“We are committed to changing the conversation around CBD and providing a line of products that people can trust and expect that they’ll receive the best experience possible,” said Jesse Channon, Chief Growth Officer of Columbia Care. “We’ve partnered with Pitbull because of his passion for CBD and high-quality excellence. Together, we’re working to introduce premium, full spectrum CBD products for customers who are enthusiastic about health and wellness, but also for those who are curious about CBD and have been hesitant to try it – we want everyone to be able to change a negative to a positive.”

The N2P product line is formulated with quality in mind. Derived from natural, U.S.-grown hemp, these products are specially designed to tap into the plant’s full potential to help support everyday wellness, such as promoting recovery from exercise, soothing comfort from day-to-day stresses, and supporting natural sleep cycles. The initial product offerings will feature lip balms, salves, tinctures and sour gummies. Chocolate products will be released later in 2021.

Trulieve Celebrates Reopening of Longwood, Florida Dispensary



Trulieve Cannabis Corp. announced the reopening of a dispensary in Longwood, Florida. The location is Trulieve's 94th in the state of Florida and was formerly branded as Harvest House of Cannabis.

The new dispensary supports Trulieve's goal of expanding and ensuring direct, reliable access to medical cannabis across its home state of Florida. It joins the Company's 93 medical marijuana dispensaries statewide, including several in nearby Orlando, Deltona, and Kissimmee.

Trulieve Expands Access to Medical Cannabis in Jacksonville with Opening of Sixth Area Location

Trulieve Cannabis Corp. announced the reopening of a dispensary in the Arrowhead area of Jacksonville, Florida. The location is Trulieve's 102nd in the state of Florida and was formerly branded as Harvest House of Cannabis.

As part of the company's mission to expand access for patients statewide, Trulieve will continue opening stores throughout Florida as the registry and patient demand grows. This dispensary joins the Company's 101 medical marijuana dispensaries statewide, including five additional locations in greater Jacksonville.

Trulieve Announces 93rd Florida Location with the Reopening of Kissimmee Dispensary

Trulieve Cannabis Corp. recently announced the reopening of a dispensary in Kissimmee. The location was formerly branded as Harvest House of Cannabis.

The dispensary is Trulieve's 93rd location in Florida and opens one week after closing for renovation and rebranding. On October 1st, Trulieve announced the closing of its acquisition of Harvest Health and Recreation Inc., at which time all Harvest locations in Florida were closed for rebranding to Trulieve.

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RWB Launches Phase I of Cultivation Expansion in \$1.3 Billion Florida Market

Red White & Bloom Brands Inc. has initiated phase one of an aggressive three-phase development strategy for its two cultivation centers in Florida to ensure the Company produces sufficient inventory for the existing and several new dispensary openings planned for the first quarter 2022. Red White & Bloom Florida LLC, a Red White & Bloom Brands subsidiary, acquired a 45,000 sq. ft. greenhouse with 4.7 acres in Apopka, Florida in July 2021. Phase one of the company's initial plans for cultivation in Florida, the build-out of Apopka, is now complete. In addition,

the site received regulatory approval to commence operations on Sept. 29, 2021. In anticipation of receiving the cultivation license, RWBFL had prepared mother stock in advance, and these plants arrived at the greenhouse the morning of Sept 30, 2021.

The flower production in the initial Apopka licensed area is capable of producing 85 g per plant, with projected annual revenue from this area is in excess of USD \$10,000,000 and operations having commenced on Sept 30, 2021. Additionally, the newly designed grow will supply phase two of the

Florida plans with the activation of thirty 16' x 40' customized, self-contained growing pods. With a targeted Q4 launch, the pods are anticipated to yield almost 10,000 pounds of dried flower per year representing a current medical market value of USD \$30,000,000. Phase three of the Company's initial launch in the State will be the activation of the 113,000 sq. ft. indoor grow facility in Sanderson, Florida. Projecting a Q4 2021 harvest schedule in the Apopka facility, the company has added additional cultivation specialists specifically for the

Florida project from the highly-talented local labor market.

"We brought this site into production ahead of forecast and ahead of budget and I'm very proud of our Florida team," said Brad Rogers, CEO of Red White & Bloom. "Despite being relatively new players in the Florida market, I feel we have the most talented team of PhDs and horticulturalists, and an incredible grow infrastructure to bring the highest quality products, rich in terpenes and cannabinoid content, to some of the best retail locations in the state starting in Q1 2022."

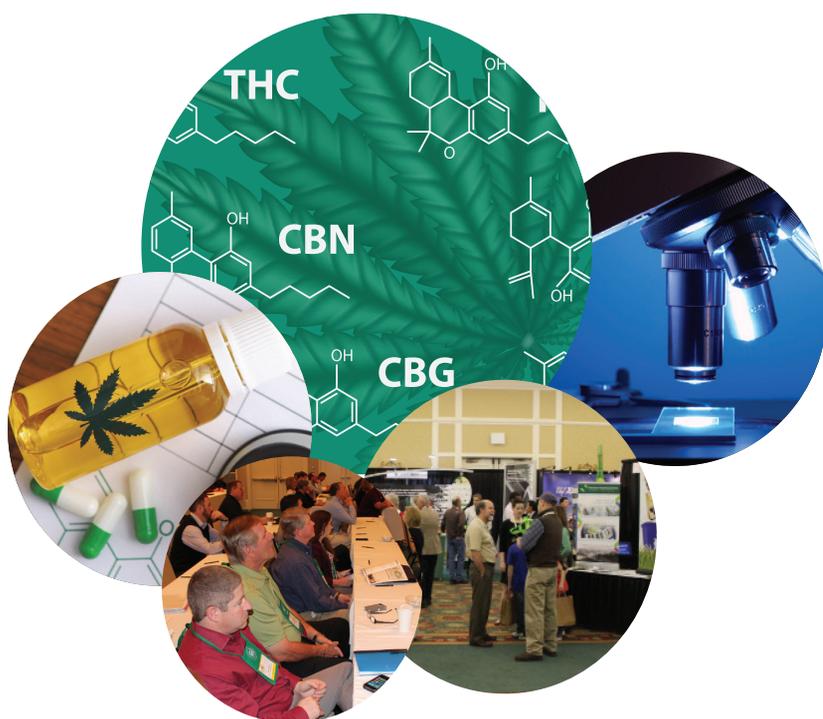
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Level-funded Health Plans

I just returned from MJBizCon, the largest cannabis conference of the year. This year, I heard from dispensary owners across the country that many haven't been quoted level-funded health plans. It's open enrollment — a time many business owners are reviewing their health plan options — so I thought this would be a good time to discuss these. I spoke to several dispensaries whose benefits were offered



BY SUMMER
WESTERBUR

through a payroll company. They are frequently limited to a few fully-insured plans and lack the ability to shop the market. It's important to have an independent health broker who has access to all plans, especially considering today's health insurance premiums.

Level-funded health plans were historically offered to large businesses; today carriers offer plans to employers with ten employees. Moving from a fully insured

health plan to self-funding can seem daunting for smaller employers. The good news is that there is a hybrid solution called level-funded health plans for employers that want to move away from fully insured health care but are not yet ready to completely self-insure. Without going into too much detail, they look like a fully-insured health plan to the employee.

Your broker can help you design copays for doctor visits, pharmaceuticals, and other benefits. With a level-funded plan, an employer pays a health carrier the same monthly amount to cover the estimated cost for expected claims, the premium for stop-loss insurance that covers health care costs over a set dollar amount, and plan administration costs. If total claims costs are higher or lower than expected, the carrier makes adjustments at

the end of the plan year in the form of a refund to the employer for lower claims or a premium increase on the stop-loss insurance renewal for higher claims. Stop-loss coverage is an essential part of this arrangement because it limits an employer's financial responsibility for claims over a certain amount, either on a per-employee basis or for the entire covered population.

Some carriers offer fully customizable benefits. It is possible to create copays for lab and x-ray, emergency room visits, and more. In the fully-insured market, these are frequently applied to a member's deductible, so level-funded health plans allow us to customize an employee benefits package to fit the employer's needs. Wellness plans and teledoc visits can be included with these plans.

Level-funded plans are more complicated to quote and set up, but they can offer a multi-year strategy rather than shopping rates at renewal every year. Carriers will often accept fully-insured group applications through the last day of the month for

fully-insured plans and quotes can often be obtained within hours whereas level-funded plans require employees to complete a medical questionnaire and have deadlines for submission. It's also important to have an accurate census when quoting because a census change can drastically alter the rates. If this is an option you're interested in for January 1, you should be looking at your options now.

As always, please feel free to reach out with any questions. I have helped employers design employee benefits packages since 2004.

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.

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HEALTHCARE CANNABISNEWS™ FLORIDA

Back Cover: NCAA Drug Testing for Cannabis – Why Does It Matter?

Continued from page 36

short-term memory impairment and a decreased focus on goals and personal achievement. Cannabinoids are banned by the NCAA and can result in suspension.”

The changes in policy coincide with an increased acceptance within our society of cannabis use and a relaxation of policy within other organizations such as Major League Baseball (MLB), National Football League (NFL), and the National Basketball Association (NBA). What remains puzzling is the language being used that bans all cannabinoids, especially CBD, since there is not a specific test sensitive to detecting anything other than THC in the urine samples. Since CBD is now legally sold over the counter almost everywhere and has been reclassified as a federally scheduled 5 drug, it is a mystery why it remains banned by the NCAA.

Despite the elevated threshold and reduced penalty, the NCAA made it very clear that these changes are not an endorsement of cannabis use. The Association also didn't want to place the threshold too high and imply that the NCAA condones cannabis use and did not cite any performance enhancing effects of any cannabinoid.

It is estimated that there are nearly 500,000 student athletes playing an NCAA sport each year. The purpose of the drug testing program is to ensure equitable competition among the participants so the playing field is even and undo any enhanced supplementation that would benefit one's performance above and beyond natural training prac-

tices and habits. At the recreational level, the estimated 1/5 million NCAA athletes come from a pool of millions of athletes. Therefore, the policies that the NCAA embraces will be essentially adhered to by many others in preparation for their next steps in sport participation.

It is essential for the NCAA to address this topic sooner versus later so that they apply best practices and standards that are in line with the federal and state (as well as International) legislation and guidelines, clarify their language to accurately test for and ban what is intended to be screened for, and update their stances based upon the current literature relative to what the different cannabinoids function to do and if/how testing is used for detection. Any penalties that remain in place should reflect a reasonable rationale that would support fair play. Otherwise, testing need no longer be performed for such a purpose, and if testing is continued it should be done for the sole purpose of detecting cannabis use disorders and left to the respective medical staffs of each school to intervene with a student-athlete's health and well-being.

Dr. Jeff Konin is a Clinical Professor in the Department of Athletic Training in the Nicole Wertheim College of Nursing and Health Sciences at Florida International University (FIU) where he directs the Global Initiative for Cannabinoid Research and Education. To learn more about FIU's cannabinoid research and education initiative you can visit their website at <https://go.fiu.edu/GlobalCannabis>.



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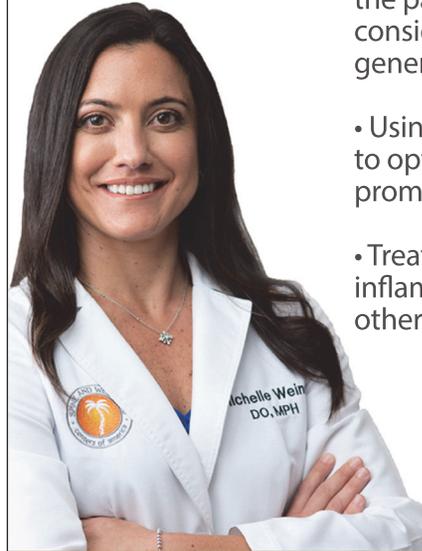
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CANNABIS NEWS FLORIDA™

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CANNABIS DEVELOPMENTS

2019 Cannabis Business Award's Publication of the Year

Is CBD Toxic to the Liver?

BY MICHELLE WEINER, DO, MPH,
AND DOMENICK NICHOLAS MAGLIONE

In recent years, the use of cannabidiol (CBD) as medicine has risen at astronomical rates, providing medical patients with a more traditional approach to treating various health complications. In contrast to the progression of CBD use nationwide, there have been many concerns regarding CBD's toxicity to the human liver. In an effort to mitigate public health risks brought upon by an increase in CBD use coupled with resulting potential liver toxicity, many research studies have been conducted to identify whether CBD is a safe alternative form of medication.

Unfortunately, a great deal of these studies have failed to conduct reliable research due to many protocol, experimental, and conclusive flaws. In April 2019, a study titled "Hepatotoxicity of a Cannabidiol-Rich Cannabis Extract in the Mouse Model" was published in *Molecules* journal despite the numerous study flaws. In this study, extremely high doses of isolated Cannabidiol (CBD) extract were administered to six individual mice. The administered dose of CBD given to a small organism such as a mouse was notably high, more than 100 times the dose of Epidiolex, a CBD schedule 5 pharmaceutical indicated for infantile seizure disorders in children. CBD was administered as an isolate (contributing to heightened potency) and formulated with hexane, a Neurotoxin. The study reported that 75% of the mice had died (this would suggest that 4.5 of the six mice had died). This study had generated much attention from the media, resulting in a distribution of flawed science especially related to liver toxicity.



Dr. Michelle Weiner



Domenick Nicholas Maglione

In addition to flawed publications, the current state of CBD use and administration is illogical and elementary. For instance, CBD is typically never dosed based on distinct properties such as genetics, meaning patients could be receiving far beyond a reasonable dose. This then poses yet another issue; CBD is inaccessible for many patients due to its cost. Some patients may be paying hundreds of dollars for a 1000mg CBD product like a tincture, when in reality, an ideal dosing system could reveal that those same patients may need less for sufficient treatment, therefore making CBD medication more affordable. Expensive CBD products may also be pushing patients away and more towards unregulated products, which

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Dr. Jeff Konin

NCAA Drug Testing for Cannabis – Why Does It Matter?

BY DR. JEFF KONIN

In 1986, the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) adopted a drug testing policy that included testing for cannabis, or as it was labeled at the time, marijuana. The policy stated that a positive test would result in one full year suspension from athletic eligibility and the suspension would follow a student athlete if he or she opted to transfer schools. For a majority of the time, the threshold for a positive test was 5 nanograms per milliliter. In June of 2019, the THC threshold used for NCAA drug testing was increased from 15 to 35 nanograms per milliliter, and the penalty for a positive test was adjusted to a 6-month suspension, or essentially 50% of participation. The increased threshold was supported by "wanting to be fair and to eliminate penalizing students who test positive as the result of passive inhalation of smoke."

The official banned language states: Cannabinoids - Marijuana, Synthetic cannabinoids (Spice; K2; JWH-018; JWH-073), Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC). According to the NCAA Drug-Testing Program 2020-2021 all cannabinoids are banned with no allowed medical exception request. The language further reads as follows: "Cannabinoids include cannabis and cannabidiol (CBD). Cannabis use is linked to anxiety, panic reactions, respiratory damage,

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Cannabis Spotlight

Jesse Channon
CHIEF GROWTH OFFICER
OF COLUMBIA CARE

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

The cannabis industry is evolving really quickly. It's a great time for patients to start exploring the power of the plant and all its various forms, whether they are actively medicating or just starting to learn more. I think one of the great things about the Florida market is how accessible medical cannabis is to patients. We have 14 dispensaries across the state that serve a growing number of patients.

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

The pace of growth of this industry keeps me excited. There is so much opportunity for innovation at every single level, and I love being part of teams that bring those ideas to fruition. I was thrilled to bring my tech background and apply it to an emerging industry where some of these advancements didn't exist including our Virtual.Care platform for virtual appoint-



Jesse Channon

ments; Forage, the industry's first cannabis product discovery tool which will be coming to Florida soon; and the CNC card, the industry's first credit card.

What field are you in within the cannabis space?

In my role, I lead teams focusing on digital capabilities, dispensary growth and corporate branding, as well as launching new technologies and product commercialization initiatives.

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

The days of transactional dispensaries are over. Our new retail brand, Cannabist, which all of our Florida Columbia Care dispensaries will be converting to by the end of this year, was designed to elevate the patient journey by inspiring, informing, and providing quality products to consumers of all experience levels. We believe Cannabist will set the tone as the new industry standard and make sure the cannabis community feels supported and engaged every time they walk through our doors.

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