
 <p>PROFILES IN CARDIOLOGY</p> <p>See pages 27-33</p>	 <p>Education: The Nature of Business School Based Health Management Education</p> <p>Page 12</p>
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Hospital News[™] and HEALTHCARE REPORT

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THE REGION'S MONTHLY NEWSPAPER FOR HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS & PHYSICIANS
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Education



Dean Safiya George

New Nursing Sim Center and Clinical Lab Open on FAU's Davie Campus

BY VANESSA ORR

Students entering the healthcare professions can learn a lot through reading and lectures, but there's nothing quite like hands-on experience to teach them about the reality of caring for others as a career.

To this end, the Florida Atlantic University Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing's Davie Campus recently opened a state-of-the-art Advanced Nursing Simulation and Clinical Learning Laboratory to provide its students with the opportunity to learn high-tech, high-touch care before working with real patients.

"The lab is designed to immerse our students in near-to-life or true-life clinical scenarios to enhance what we're teaching in the classroom," explained Dean Safiya George. "Students work with low-fidelity and high-fidelity mannequins, and with each other, on scenarios that give them the opportunity to think on their feet while engaging in critical thinking skills."

"The ultimate goal of the lab is to help them learn to think like nurses and to develop the critical reasoning, communication skills and assessment skills they

Continued on page 16

Cardiology

Fighting for the Underdog: New Chief Executive of Miami Cardiac & Vascular Surgery – Tom C. Nguyen, MD, Cardiothoracic Surgeon

BY ADRIENNE SYLVER

For Tom C. Nguyen, M.D., life is about opportunities, second chances and paying it forward. After all, it's what he received when he fled Vietnam as a political refugee at the age of 4. Now, as an internationally recognized cardiothoracic surgeon, he vows to always fight for the underdog and the sickest of the sick, particularly when patients are told that they have no options left.

"Everyone deserves a second chance," he says. Dr. Nguyen was recently named chief medical executive and Barry T. Katzen Endowed Chair of Baptist Health Miami Cardiac & Vascular Institute. He is also the director of Minimally Invasive Valve Surgery. He comes to South Florida from the University of California San Francisco (UCSF), where he was chief of Cardiothoracic Surgery and the Charles Schwab Distinguished Professor of Surgery. While at UCSF, he transformed the cardiothoracic surgery program as co-director of its Heart and Vascular Center.

Dr. Nguyen's passion is minimally invasive surgery and valvular heart disease. He has spent more than 20 years researching the mitral valve and has published more than 300



Dr. Tom C. Nguyen

Continued on page 33

Aldousany of KIDZ Medical Trains the Next Generation of Pediatric Cardiology Providers

BY VANESSA ORR

Pediatric cardiologist Dr. Abdulwahab Aldousany has been caring for children with heart conditions for nearly four decades. His expertise and commitment to his field has certainly impacted many lives, but he is equally enthusiastic about training the next generation of pediatric cardiologists. Dr. Aldousany, who leads the team of pediatric cardiologists at KIDZ Medical Services locations in Miami, Boca Raton, West Palm Beach, and Naples, was also recently appointed to the Governance Council of the Nicklaus Children's Hospital Heart Institute.

And while trainees certainly learn from Dr. Aldousany's vast experience, he shares that to be successful, they need to heed one especially important piece of advice. "I tell them to treat their patients as if they were treating their own kids with heart disease," he said. "Think of what your children need, and then do the same for your patients."

Whether a patient requires episodic care - such as in the case of tachycardia - or needs treatment for a chronic condition, such as a missing heart chamber that affects



Dr. Abdulwahab Aldousany

Continued on page 22



Kaylee Gallegos and her mother Risa Teate

Broward Health Champions a Healthier Community

After celebrating its 85-year legacy of caring for the community, Broward Health is preparing for its next chapter by updating its brand and unveiling new mission and vision statements that reflect its aspirations for a dynamic future. The changes come after almost two years of intense research and planning.

"Broward Health is always evolving to ensure our patients have the most advanced care and our brand needed to reflect that evolution," said Shane Strum, President & CEO of Broward Health. "We are committed to our patients having the best possible experience and for Broward Health to become the premier health system for regional physicians, nurses and clinicians to practice medicine. The new brand helps us take necessary steps to achieve those goals."

New Mission and Vision

Broward Health kicked off the new brand at the start of the year with the announcement of new mission and vision statements, with Strum saying that no brand can be authentic unless the culture of that organization is integrated. "We needed our colleagues to believe in the brand as much as our patient population."

Broward Health's bold new vision is "to be the Champion for a Healthier Community." The healthcare system's refreshed mission statement is:

Continued on page 11

FREE MED MAL EXPERT REVIEW



HOW HEALTHY IS YOUR MED MAL POLICY?

It's no longer just a matter of signs hinting at a hardening market. Indisputable evidence is now at the forefront. Malpractice rates are going up across the board. Weaker malpractice carriers are being placed into receivership or sold. Juries in Florida are making shockingly high awards. And this is only the beginning.

ISN'T IT TIME YOUR MED MAL POLICY GOT A CHECKUP?

Risk Strategies will perform a no-obligation comprehensive review of your current malpractice coverage. Few doctors and administrators have an in-depth knowledge of their coverage or insurer and may not be asking all the right questions. For instance, do you know the following about your coverage:

- Are the policy exclusions outlined and clearly defined?
- Do you have full or just limited rights to consent to any lawsuit settlement?
- Is defense coverage offered outside or inside the limits of liability?
- What are the "tail" provisions upon termination of the policy?
- How is your corporation, professional association or other entity covered?

These are just a few of the questions you should be asking in this volatile market. It's not too late for a no-obligation medical malpractice insurance review, just contact Risk Strategies at **800.966.2120** or matt@dannagracey.com.



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Publisher's Note

Hobby Hoarder: My Sad Tale of Domestic Decluttering

Once upon a time in the cozy town called Boca, there lived a man named Charles (me), who was blissfully surrounded by the relics of his bygone hobbies. Charles' garage resembled a time capsule of forgotten interests – from dusty decades-old stamp albums, battered coin collector magazines to several file cabinets filled with old cameras and accessories. All of which looked like they'd seen better days.



Well, Carol (my spouse) had finally reached her breaking point. She declared, with a determined glint in her eye, that it was past time for me to bid goodbye to my old hobbies and embrace a much more minimalist lifestyle. Little did I know that my beloved collections of stuff (probably more aptly named junk) were about to face the scrutiny of her ruthless decluttering campaign. And I guess after 52 years of marriage and accumulating, moving, and storing, all my hobbies had finally met their match.

The saga began with Carol presenting me with a brand-new box of garbage bags and a determined voice, "It's cleaning out day, whether you like it or not." Caught off guard, I couldn't even think of a good excuse especially after she flashed a photo of the garage roach which had sparked her sudden decision.

Armed with a trash bag and an iron will, Carol began holding up each item and asking the age-old question, "When was the last time you looked at this?" When I would balk, she'd then ask, "Did you even know this was in the garage?" And so, I reluctantly parted ways with my dusty old collections, consigning much to Goodwill and even more to the garbage dump.

The battle of hobbies raged on, with Carol gloating over the ever-growing pile of my outdated gadgets, dusty relics, and usually brief and forgotten passions. In the end, I found myself surrounded by a decluttered, newly organized garage but couldn't help but feel a twinge of nostalgia for the eccentric treasures I'd reluctantly bid farewell to.


And thus, the tale of Charles and Carol, the hobby hoarder and the decluttering queen, came to an amusing close, leaving our little abode a "harmonious" blend of memories and minimalism.

Charles Felix



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Live Symposium

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Summit Director:
Guenther Koehne,
M.D., Ph.D.

This two-day symposium is designed to provide an overview and opportunity to learn about the most recent advances in the treatment of acute myeloid leukemia, acute lymphoid leukemia, multiple myeloma, non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, Hodgkin's disease, allogeneic stem cell transplants and CAR T-cell therapies. Updates on evolving immunologically and molecular-based system therapies will be profiled and discussed.



Use #MCIImmunotherapySummit to join the conversation.



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Speakers

Catherine Bollard, M.D.
Children's National Hospital

Marcel van den Brink, M.D., Ph.D.
Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

Adam Cohen, M.D.
University of Pennsylvania

Charles Dimitroff, Ph.D.
Florida International University

Patricio Duarte, M.D.
University of Buenos Aires

Aleksandra Filipovic, M.D., Ph.D.
Imperial College London

Guenther Koehne, M.D., Ph.D.
Miami Cancer Institute

Leo Luznik, M.D.
Johns Hopkins University

Matthew Matasar, M.D.
Rutgers Cancer Institute

Marcelo Pasquini, M.D.
Medical College of Wisconsin

Raajit Rampal, M.D., Ph.D.
Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

Michel Sadelain, M.D., Ph.D.
Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

Craig Sauter, M.D.
Cleveland Clinic

David Scheinberg, M.D., Ph.D.
Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

Robert Soiffer, M.D.
Dana-Farber Cancer Institute

Eytan Stein, M.D.
Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

Wendy Stock, M.D.
University of Chicago

Richard Stone M.D.
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Saad Usmani, M.D., MBA, FACP
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COVID-19 Resurgence: Lessons Learned on Effective Community Response

As the world grappled with the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, Miami-Dade County stood as a microcosm of the complexities and lessons intertwined within the global crisis. The resurgence of cases in our cities serves as a reminder of the lessons gleaned.

Among these lessons is the significance of public health infrastructure. The pandemic underscored the critical importance of a robust healthcare system capable of swift and effective responses to unforeseen health crises. Building and sustaining this infrastructure involves not only bolstering medical resources but also investing in research, preparedness, and ensuring equitable access to healthcare services for all communities, regardless of socioeconomic status.

Another crucial lesson revolves around the importance of science-driven decision-making. Throughout the pandemic, scientific understanding continually evolved, guiding policymakers and the public through a maze of uncertainties. Embracing and heeding the advice of public health experts and scientists remains pivotal, emphasizing the need to communicate accurate information transparently and effectively. From mask mandates to vaccination campaigns, aligning with scientific consensus proved indispensable in curbing the spread of the virus.

Community resilience emerged as perhaps the most relevant lesson amid adversity. Miami-Dade demonstrated remarkable solidarity and adaptability in navigating the challenges posed by the pandemic. From frontline workers risking their lives to essential businesses adjusting their operations, the strength of our community shone through. This resilience showed our ability to unite in the face of adversity and reinforce the importance of supporting one



BY CARMEL J. BARRAU, MD

another during crises.

Furthermore, COVID-19 shed light on the disparities deeply entrenched within our communities. Vulnerable populations, including low-income communities and minorities, bore the brunt of the pandemic's impact. Addressing these disparities demands a concerted effort to bridge the gaps in access to healthcare, education, and resources. Building a more equitable society requires proactive measures to ensure

no one is left behind during times of crisis.

The pandemic also emphasized the significance of global cooperation in combating infectious diseases. Viruses know no borders, and international collaboration is essential in addressing future health threats. Miami-Dade's interconnectedness with the world highlights the need for solidarity in sharing resources, knowledge, and expertise to mitigate the spread of diseases across continents.

As we confront the resurgence of COVID-19 cases in Florida, these lessons serve as guiding principles. We must fortify our healthcare systems, remain steadfast in following science-based guidance, foster community resilience, address societal disparities, and reinforce global cooperation. Vaccination, alongside continued adherence to preventive measures, remains our most potent tool in combating the virus and safeguarding our communities.

In conclusion, the pandemic has been a harrowing chapter in our collective history. However, the lessons learned provide an invaluable roadmap for navigating the challenges ahead. By applying these lessons, Miami-Dade can stand resilient and united in facing the resurgence of COVID-19, ensuring a healthier and more secure future for all its residents.

Dr. Carmel Barrau is President, Dade County Medical Association, Inc.

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Powering Predictive Staffing in Healthcare with AI

Predictive staffing helps ensure the right people are available at the right time to provide the right care.

The healthcare labor shortage is still affecting staffing levels for provider organizations — and creating financial strain. Predictive staffing optimizes staffing levels and may help organizations better provide timely and safe care while saving money.

This methodology uses historical data, such as specific dates, the season or time of year, weather, and other factors to help determine the number and types of clinicians and other workers a healthcare organization needs to staff on certain shifts.

Nursing, medical technologist, and medical assistant roles tend to be the most conducive to predictive staffing, but it can also be used with some physician roles. While predictive staffing itself is not a new concept, artificial intelligence (AI) presents opportunities for healthcare providers to use the methodology more efficiently — and to begin exploring other ways to implement AI technology throughout their organizations.

Benefits of Leveraging AI for Predictive Staffing Models

Predictive staffing models play a crucial role in helping providers schedule the optimal number of clinicians for each shift. Right now, most predictive staffing models require someone like a charge nurse to



BY ALFREDO CEPERO

manually examine prior data, create a model, and use the model to determine how many people are needed for a given shift.

AI presents an opportunity to streamline the process by creating data-based models that humans then use to make final staffing decisions. Using AI for predictive staffing can also help optimize staffing based on demand, potentially creating a positive impact on operat-

ing margins.

The benefits are not limited to planning schedules. They can also help manage operating expenses by optimizing staffing levels on a given shift, decreasing the need for costly contract labor, and identifying the correct levels of float pool and per diem staff. This not only benefits the finance function but also enables the organization to retain the right number of full-time employees to appropriately staff each shift. Maintaining optimal staffing levels may also help prevent staff burnout or moral injury, create a better overall work environment, and reduce time spent on administrative tasks, all of which enables clinical staff to practice at the top of their licenses.

While using AI for predictive staffing is still in its infancy, there are several other ways AI is poised to transform business processes. Specifically, healthcare may leverage AI to transform staffing and scheduling processes by:

- Integrating AI-powered predictive staffing models with scheduling technology that identifies open shifts and enables nurses or other clinical staff to claim available shifts via a mobile app. This can be particularly attractive to millennials and Gen Z because it mirrors the “gig economy” approach typically associated with rideshare and hospitality work. It can also help support staffing needs for a variety of specialties such as surgical technicians, respiratory technicians, pharmacy technicians, radiology technicians, environmental services (EVS) workers, and more. Physician staffing agencies could also leverage these scheduling tools.

- Meeting growing staffing demands at retail or urgent care clinics as consumer site-of-care demands shift. These clinics are primarily staffed with advanced practice providers (APP), such as nurse practitioners (NPs), physician assistants (PAs), and advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) during certain times, and with physicians during others. If a clinic is exper-

riencing unusually high demand, an AI-powered model could identify real-time or upcoming staffing needs, send push notifications to available staff to ask if they're interested in picking up shifts, and enable clinicians to add themselves to the schedule.

Why Now Is the Time to Adopt AI

The healthcare industry tends to be slow to adopt new technologies. Leaders that hesitate to adopt AI may face financial and cultural risks such as:

- Continued excessive spending on unnecessary staffing and contract labor costs
- Persistent labor shortages
- Higher rates of clinician burnout or moral injury

For organizations that want to experiment with AI, but don't have the risk tolerance to test it for patients or diagnoses yet, predictive staffing offers an excellent first use case. Because predictive staffing models do not require sensitive patient information, integrating AI in this area presents a lower risk from both a data privacy and ethical standpoint.

As your organization prepares to implement AI for predictive staffing, remember that the model is only as good as the information on which it is trained. Organizations ready to take this first step should recognize the commitment involved in continuously training the model, feeding it new data, and regularly validating it. This may require some additional process improvements to other technology infrastructure and systems to simplify data entry.

AI-powered predictive staffing is an excellent opportunity for organizations with a lower risk tolerance to integrate AI into their operations, but there are still many important steps and considerations that we recommend taking. It's essential to make sure leadership understands the capabilities and limitations of the AI, that you have considered the necessary IT infrastructure and types of data needed, and that your employees understand the model isn't there to replace people or jobs.

Alfredo Cepero, Principal, Assurance Market Leader, BDO, can be reached at (305) 420-8006 or acepero@bdo.com.

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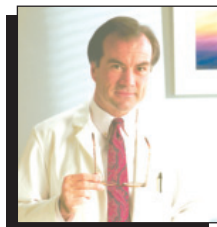


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A Healthy Florida Needs Healthy Florida Hospitals

Just three weeks into the legislative session, the Florida Senate already passed two bills in the large omnibus “Live Healthy” health care package. A hugely positive development, the quick and unanimous passage signals strong support for bolstering Florida’s health care system for decades to come.

The two bills – SB 7016 and SB 7018 – to grow Florida’s health care workforce, increase Medicaid reimbursement for labor and delivery services, continue Hospital at Home programs, and incentivize innovation through investments in technology are significant, and hospitals applaud their passage and the Senate’s leadership. One area of concern is the creation of Advanced Birthing Centers (ABCs). Because Florida hospitals recognize the difficulty in predicting a low-risk pregnancy, FHA is working to address safety concerns related to ABCs in an effort to support the state’s commitment to improving maternal health and reducing maternal mortality.

Getting the Live Healthy package across the finish line to the governor’s desk and signature is front and center for Florida hospitals.

Along with Live Healthy’s provisions, Florida hospitals have several additional priorities, all of which are essential for strengthening the health care infrastructure in rural and urban communities and continuing to meet the growing need for physical and behavioral health care. These include:

- Creating new state licensure for rural emergency hospitals to align with federal policy that allows rural hospitals to maintain Medicare reimbursement while limiting services to emergency and out-patient services.
- Recurring funding to support rural hospitals’ capital improvement projects.
- Expanding the state’s Community Mental Health Models.
- Supporting increased transparency around Florida’s Medicaid Managed Care Plans by producing reports on key contract requirements.
- Holding payers accountable by requiring adherence to federal standards for prior authorization requests, reducing health plan denials by statutorily defining a clean claim, and preventing plans from altering medical necessity determinations after claim submission.
- Preserving access to critical Medicaid services through enhanced hospital Medicaid reimbursement rates to sup-



BY MARY C. MAYHEW

port maternal care for moms and babies in labor and delivery.

- Addressing the state’s skyrocketing medical malpractice premiums and cost issues contributing to the physician shortage by reinstating caps on noneconomic damages in claims for personal injury or wrongful death arising from medical negligence.

Florida hospitals have risen to the occasion to meet the increasing demand for high-quality, advanced health care that comes with the state’s exponential population growth. And they will continue to do so.

It is critical that hospitals continue to receive the support of lawmakers and key state officials.

Florida’s hospitals are a key factor in the state’s economic success story because of their direct economic contributions and because of the work they lead to create a healthier Florida where every resident can fully participate and engage in school, work, family life, and their community.

Hospitals are often the largest employers in a region. They provide stability and job growth as well downstream economic impact by purchasing goods and services from other local businesses. These are vital contributions, and hospitals are rightly described as economic engines.

Hospitals are also key to children’s educational success, to seniors’ quality of life, and to employees’ engagement and productivity. Without good health, children cannot maximize their educational opportunities. They are absent from school and drop out when not physically and mentally healthy. Seniors are less engaged in their families and communities. The workforce is less present, less productive, and less successful. And the cycle of poverty is harder to disrupt.

Florida’s hospitals are indispensable for the state to prosper, to thrive, to attract the best and brightest, and to be the economic powerhouse that it is. When lawmakers support hospitals, with meaningful investments like Live Healthy, they are supporting a strong economy, healthy children and seniors, a present and productive workforce, and the opportunity for every resident to succeed and thrive.

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

Let’s Connect: ACHE of South Florida Spotlight



ACHE of South Florida Member Spotlight: Elizabeth Rochaine



Elizabeth Rochaine

BY LOIS THOMSON

Elizabeth Rochaine’s journey into the world of health-care administration is a testament to her passion for people. Currently serving as the Chief Operating Officer at Wellington Regional Medical Center, Rochaine’s career began in audiology. While pursuing her masters at Vanderbilt University, she observed inefficiencies in clinics and, unsatisfied with the status quo, pursued a dual masters, combining audiology with an MBA in Healthcare.

In her role as COO, Rochaine has the responsibility of overseeing the hospital’s day-to-day operations, implementing CEO Pam Tahan’s strategic vision, and ensuring Wellington delivers optimal services to the community. Rochaine thrives on the dynamic nature of healthcare operations, embracing the challenge of improving existing programs and enhancing patient experiences.

Although she initially loved the patient-facing aspect of her work, Rochaine realized that by stepping into an administrative role, she could indirectly impact far more lives. Her commitment to the hospital’s mission and the thrill of facing new challenges every day fuel her dedication.

This marks Rochaine’s second stint at Wellington, having served as Assistant Administrator six years ago. Active in the American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE), she is Board Certified in Healthcare Management, having earned the prestigious Fellow designation in 2022. Rochaine emphasizes the importance of giving back, serving on the Board of ACHE of South Florida as the Sponsorship Chair Elect, fostering partnerships to support educational programs.

Rochaine’s enthusiasm for ACHE extends to its mission of disseminating information and facilitating learning about healthcare policies and management. She sees it as an opportunity to connect with diverse professionals in South Florida, navigating the unique healthcare landscapes of Palm Beach County, Miami-Dade, and Broward.

For Rochaine, involvement with the community is key, and she finds Wellington’s community-based environment aligning seamlessly with her passion. Her goal is to contribute to the healthcare footprint in Palm Beach County, recognizing the distinctiveness of each region within South Florida. As she actively engages with ACHE and pursues her mission, Elizabeth Rochaine embodies the spirit of transformative leadership in healthcare administration.



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To Treat or Not To Treat a Brain Aneurysm

Advanced diagnostics and treatments help decide

Approximately 6.7 million people in the United States are estimated to have an unruptured brain aneurysm, and most don't know it.

A brain aneurysm occurs when a blood vessel in the brain weakens and the vessel wall balloons out. Causes include high blood pressure, fatty deposits in the arteries, head trauma and congenital defects.

Fortunately, most of these aneurysms are small and do not require treatment. These are usually found incidentally during brain imaging for other conditions.

However, some 30,000 aneurysms will rupture each year, and about half of these cases will be fatal. That leads to the question, when do we treat an aneurysm.

Watchful waiting

Depending on its type, size and location, an aneurysm may merit a watchful waiting approach. The team of specialists at Weston Hospital developed a way to safely monitor patients with unruptured aneurysms who have no symptoms. The approach minimizes the use of a diagnostic test called a cerebral angiogram that has a rare risk of stroke.

We typically perform a noninvasive test called a magnetic resonance angiography, or MRA, for the initial evaluation, which is followed six months later with another MRA to determine if the aneurysm is growing. Depending on the growth rate observed, the patient may be followed with a yearly MRA.

An MRA allows the blood vessels and blood flow in the brain to be viewed with a high degree of detail. The Weston Hospital team uses an advanced 3 Tesla MRA that is stronger and more sensitive, enabling us to see smaller defects.



BY MICHAL OBRZUT,
MD

Innovative treatments

For unruptured aneurysms that require treatment, there are many more options today than in years past. Now the majority of patients can be treated endovascularly, avoiding open surgery. Endovascular surgery is performed from within the blood vessel using thin, long tubes called catheters to reach the site of the aneurysm.

We can insert tiny coils or use a mesh or wire tube to close off an aneurysm in a vessel wall, use a liquid bioadhesive to seal an abnormal or damaged vessel, and divert blood flow to prevent further harm. Weston Hospital was the first center in South Florida to use an advanced flow diversion device that reduces the risk of blood clots from forming.

The flow diverter has new shield technology that acts as a 'cloaking device' from platelets, a component of blood responsible for forming clots to stop or prevent bleeding. This allows us to reduce the use of blood thinners and lowers the risk of stroke.

In cases where a patient requires open surgery, the team at Weston Hospital may perform microsurgery using advanced imaging techniques. The procedure is called microvascular clipping, and it entails making a small incision in the scalp and placing a metal clip over the aneurysm to prevent blood from flowing into the aneurysm.

To learn more about neurological care at Cleveland Clinic in Florida, visit ClevelandClinicFlorida.org/Neuro or call (877) 463-2010.

Dr. Michal Obrzut is Section Head of Neurointerventional Radiology, Cleveland Clinic Weston Hospital.

When It Comes to Patient Care, Go from Good to Great

Over the past three months, I have had the opportunity to stay at three (independent) five star hotels/resorts. These were all business meetings, but because they were over a few days, I got the opportunity to really take in the customer service and overall talent of the staff. Based on those stays, I can tell you this. There is a big difference between good and great. Let us start with the professionalism. From the valet to the bell desk, to the housekeepers, to management. Everyone I encountered was a consummate professional. They did their jobs well and paid great attention to detail when they were doing it. The teams were all friendly. Not only was a smile part of their uniforms, but they also went out of their way to 'beat the greet' with a hearty "good morning", "hello", or "how are you today?" They all solved any problems that came up during my stays. Everyone was remarkably polite. And they looked to go above and beyond when given the opportunity. You can stay at a very nice hotel, but the difference between those and these three examples is night and day. So, what on this list can't you train your team on to take your patient experience from good to great? Professionalism? Friendliness? The ability to solve problems as they arise? Politeness? The fact is, if you make the time, your team can be trained to do all of this when dealing with patients and their families. I often wonder why the staff on the concierge floor of a hospital is always slightly more responsive and polite than in the other areas of the building. The great thing about this approach is, your team will always feel better when they take things to another level when it comes to patient experience, and it costs you no extra in payroll to help them deliver exceptional service. Look to develop a five-star approach to patient care. Your reputation will bring more new patients and staff than you can imagine.



BY JAY JUFFRE

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

Asset Protection and the "Shiny Object" Sale

How my profession takes advantage of your profession

Asset protection for physicians is an important topic to understand. Equally important is knowledge of who and why someone needs asset protection planning. There are inexpensive and expensive ways of securing asset protection. Your sales agent may show you the more costly and possibly unnecessary ways of achieving your goal. Your job is to meet with an asset protection specialist versed in physician needs and solutions.



BY HOWARD
WOLKOWITZ

Florida has some of the strongest asset protection laws in the country. Florida law provides homestead protection and protects tenants by entireties assets, head of household wages, retirement accounts, annuities, life insurance, disability insurance, and more.

Titling of assets is one of the keys to asset protection

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Joint Tenancy with the right of survivorship

Tenancy in Common

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Asset protection Trust

LLCs

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Annuity cash value in Florida is protected.

Retirement Plans

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IRA in Florida is protected under State statute.

SEP IRAs are protected under ERISA.

State Statutes that are free and valuable include:

Homestead Protection.

Head of household wages through a qualified wage account.

Disclosure: I had to quit all affiliations with insurance company sales forces and terminate my securities license to write freely and provide information that physicians can utilize without spending money on "shiny object" sales. Since I am not a lawyer, I am not going into more detail now, but you can email me with questions. You can reach me at howard@lifeinsurance.com or visit my website at lifeinsurance.com.

What's Next?

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Changing the Landscape: How TGH Is Leading Health Care Innovation and Improving Patient Care

Tampa General Hospital (TGH) serves as an economic engine, entrepreneurial focal point and academic center of excellence driving innovation across Tampa Bay and beyond. As Florida's leading academic health system for more than 50 years, and one of the largest hospitals in America, TGH combines education, research and clinical care that leverages cutting-edge technologies, and deploys innovative approaches to provide next-generation therapies and treatment.



port them,” said Scott Arnold, executive vice president, CIO and chief of innovation for TGH.

CareComm is a testament to technology's increasing influence in how TGH delivers care. The program's blend of data sources and intelligence creates a treatment road map that can be easily understood by the CareComm Command Center's multidisciplinary team. The next step, according to Arnold, is to become predictive in nature

— identifying potential risks and taking the appropriate actions to prevent further illness before it happens.

As TGH works to bring the highest-quality care possible to Florida, the organization launched its TGH at Home program in 2022. Dr. Peter Chang, senior vice president and chief transformation officer at TGH, explained the concept: “We want to base our services in the home because it further puts the patient at the center of care. The home is where the patient has their support system, which makes it a critical component of providing customized care. In this instance, the patient gets the highest-quality care that would be available in the hospital, but the delivery point is their very own living room.”

TGH also continues to invest in innovative technologies, products and strategies that will allow it to maximize its impact and care. The TGH Ventures initiative provides the academic health system with the opportunity to help bring new technologies and investments to scale. “We not only invest in startups but also have experience in forming joint ventures with private equity firms,” explained Jennifer Crabtree, TGH's vice president of corporate communications and chief of staff. “It's important to note that our approach is not one-size-fits-all. We carefully consider each opportunity and never reject possibilities outright. Instead, we ask ourselves, ‘How can we make this work?’ We believe in finding creative solutions and forging strong partnerships.”

For more information about how TGH is leading health care innovation and improving patient care, visit TGH.org.

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These policies are available for sole practitioners, physician networks, and hospital and group-based surgeons. Discounts and guarantee issues are available on a case-by-case basis.

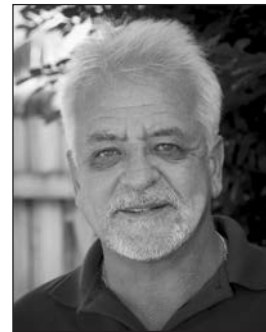
The effective rollout date was July 1, 2023.

Look for more information exclusively showcased at South Florida Hospital & Healthcare News.

For more information, email howard@lifeinsureassure.com

The Musty Menace: Moldy Air Conditioning Systems Their Health Implications

As the sweltering heat of summer rapidly approaches, air conditioning systems become a vital refuge from the oppressive temperatures. However, unwelcome odors emanating from these systems can sour the relief they provide. Musty odors, often indicative of mold and mildew growth within air conditioning units, not only compromise indoor air quality but also pose potential health hazards to occupants.



BY MICHAEL TEBOR, ASCS, CIE, CMR – STATE LICENSED MRSA1924

ness, fatigue, and skin irritation. Long-term exposure to mycotoxins has been linked to neurological and immunological effects, although further research is needed to fully understand the extent of these implications.

Preventing and addressing musty odors resulting from moldy air conditioning systems is essential for maintaining a healthy indoor environment. Here are strategies to mitigate these issues:

Clean the HVAC System:

Inspect and clean the air conditioning system and associated ductwork. Scheduled annual inspections and maintenance of air conditioning systems will help identify and address potential mold growth before it becomes a pervasive issue. Cleaning, replacing or upgrading your air filters, ensuring proper drainage of condensate and minimizing ductwork leakage can help reduce the conditions conducive to mold and mildew development.

Control Humidity: Managing indoor humidity levels is crucial for preventing mold growth. Using dehumidifiers and air curtains in areas prone to moisture accumulation, such as lobbies, and common areas, can help reduce the likelihood of mold formation. Additionally, ensuring proper ventilation in bathrooms, kitchens, and laundry areas can help expel excess moisture from indoor. Inspecting and adjusting the outdoor air/fresh air intakes for proper operation can also be crucial to maintaining proper indoor relative humidity levels.

Understanding Musty Odors in Air Conditioning Systems

Musty odors in air conditioning systems are typically caused by the growth of mold and mildew. These fungi thrive in dark, damp environments, making the interior of an air conditioning unit an ideal breeding ground. Moisture from condensation, accumulated dust and organic matter within the system provide the necessary nutrients for mold and mildew to flourish. As air passes through the contaminated unit, it carries musty odors into the occupied spaces, affecting indoor air quality and potentially causing discomfort and health issues for occupants.

Health Implications of Moldy Air Conditioning Systems

The presence of mold and mildew in air conditioning systems can have a range of adverse health effects. Individuals with allergies, asthma, or other respiratory conditions are particularly susceptible to the airborne spores released by mold and mildew. Prolonged exposure to these spores can exacerbate existing respiratory issues and lead to the development of new ones. Common symptoms associated with exposure to mold and mildew include coughing, wheezing, nasal congestion, throat irritation, and exacerbation of asthma symptoms. In more severe cases, individuals may experience respiratory infections and other systemic health effects.

Furthermore, mold and mildew produce mycotoxins, which are toxic substances that can be released into the air. Inhalation or direct contact with mycotoxins can result in a variety of health problems, including headaches, dizziness,

Michael Tebor is Vice President of Air Duct Aseptics, a NADCA certified air duct cleaning company with more than 30 years' experience specializing in providing Certified Duct Cleaning and indoor air quality solutions to Florida's top health care facilities. Michael is a Certified Air Systems Cleaning Specialist (NADCA), a Certified Indoor Environmentalist (ACAC) and a Certified Mold Remediator (ACAC). He is also a state licensed Mold Assessor. Our companies skill sets experience and multi-disciplinary approach to problem solving sets it apart in the industry. Michael Tebor can be reached at 888-707-7763 and www.ADAflorida.com

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Cover Story: Broward Health Champions a Healthier Community

Continued from page 1

“Exceptional care. Extraordinary compassion. Everyday excellence.”

Clear and concise, these statements serve as a guiding star for the system’s almost 11,000 employees and physicians and bring into sharper focus the system’s aspirations of not only providing high quality patient care but also having a lasting impact on the community it serves.

“Healthcare is changing faster than ever before, and Broward Health is not afraid to embrace that change, to innovate and to be a leader in our market,” said Marcy Mills-Matthews, acting senior vice president and chief human resources officer at Broward Health. “We want the new mission and vision to remind our employees of our aspirations and why we work in healthcare. We want to encourage empowerment, passion and tenacity in our team.”

Brand Reveal

Following the release of the system’s new mission and vision, a website refresh and internal celebrations at each hospital for all caregivers, physicians and staff took place that revealed the system’s new logo and color palette. The logo – The Impact Star – is comprised of five layered, individual stars, that incorporate five colors inspired by the South Florida environment we call home, emulating the blues of our ocean and sunny skies. The five stars are also reflective of Broward Health’s five star values, which have been updated.

The brand rollout continues in February with the launch of a comprehensive marketing campaign, including digital and traditional advertisements featuring real patients and caregivers.

It was imperative to the system that the campaign be authentic, featuring real stories of hope and success.

“Broward Health’s marketing has long been known for using real patients to tell our story,” said Jennifer Smith, vice president of corporate communications and marketing, Broward Health. “We refused to deviate from that precedent, because what we do every day at Broward Health is real. Our dedicated doctors, nurses and staff sincerely care about each other and everyone who walks through our doors. We want patients and our employees to see the success stories captured in this campaign and be inspired by how Broward Health can impact their own tomorrows.”

Peek Behind-the-Scenes

One of the patients you’ll see highlighted in the campaign is 25-year-old Kaylee Gallegos, who had bariatric surgery by Chi Zhang, M.D., at Broward Health Imperial Point.

While Down syndrome and mental delays are not by themselves restrictions for bariatric surgery if patients have the proper support system, several doctors declined to take Kaylee as a patient. Dr. Zhang, part of the Broward Health Physician Group, did not feel her Down syndrome should exclude her from the health benefits of bariatric surgery. Gallegos underwent psychosocial evaluation, demonstrated high functional understanding of bariatric surgery and it



Bobby Impaglia demonstrating his golf skills

was confirmed she had family support capable of meeting her post-operative needs. She had robotic gastric sleeve surgery in March 2023, and lost 60 pounds in nine months. Her mother, Risa Teate, said since the surgery, her daughter looks good, feels good and has more energy than she ever had.

Eleven-year-old Avinash “Avi” Ghirow was diagnosed with leukemia in December 2020. He underwent two-and-a-half years of treatment for leukemia and even participated in a clinical trial under the care of Broward Health Physician Group pediatric hematologist-oncologist Hector Rodriguez-Cortes, M.D., at Broward Health Medical Center.

This experience inspired Avi to want to become an oncologist when he grows up so he can treat cancer patients with the same tender loving care he received. This desire mirrors that of one of his featured caregivers, Dana Tabib. A nurse manager in pediatric hematology-oncology, Tabib is a cancer survivor who was first diagnosed at age 7 and dedicated her life to caring for other children with similar diagnoses.

Bobby Impaglia, a South Florida PGA golf professional, collapsed on the golf course in the middle of teaching a golf lesson while suffering a near-fatal cardiac arrest. He was transported to Broward Health North, where Broward Health Physician Group interventional cardiologist Andre Landau, M.D., found blockages in several arteries of Impaglia’s heart, including the one that causes widow maker heart attacks. After successful surgery in which stents were placed in the arteries, Impaglia recovered quickly and says he was back on the range within a week.

More to Come

As the campaign continues to be revealed, you’ll see more stories like these about patients and caregivers.

Plans are also in the works to revitalize Broward Health’s medical campuses with new paint, signage and other assets that reflect its new brand.

“As we continue to build on our accomplishments, Broward Health is well positioned for even more growth and expansion to ensure that everyone in our community has the right care within reach,” said Strum. “No matter who you are or why you’re at Broward Health, know that we will see you ‘Well Into Your Future.’”



Avinash “Avi” Ghirow with nurse Dana Tabib

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The Nature of Business School Based Health Management Education

There certainly is a boom in demand for Health Management and Policy Education at the University of Miami, as well as other institutions. The demand for business school-based health sector education is especially noteworthy.

The University of Miami has a history of business school-based health management going back 45 years with our Health Executive MBA (HEMBA) program. It is interesting

how this discipline has evolved as we were one of the very first business school-based programs in the country. To this day, there are only a small number of programs that are business school based nationally.

This program holds the distinction of being the only program in the country that is quadruplically accredited. It has the business school accreditation, the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), the health management accreditation, the Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Management Education (CAHME), as well as two global accreditations, the EFMA Quality Improvement System (EQUIS), and the Association of MBAs (AMBA).

The program is a member of a very prestigious group of business school-based MBA programs in health care, the Business Alliance for Health Management, a consortium of approximately 20 programs globally including such schools as Harvard, Yale, University of Pennsylvania-Wharton, John Hopkins, etc. Given the reputation of our program, we draw students with an average of nearly 15 years of professional experience, whether physicians, nurses, other clinicians, individuals in tech,



BY DR. STEVEN G. ULLMANN

finance, law, architecture, etc. Our students represent the wide spectrum of the health care industry, and given the three-day weekend once a month format, we have students come from as far away as Brazil, Taiwan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, etc. The program has over 1,000 alums.

In the last few years, we have seen a growing demand for business school-based health management education at other

student levels as well. We have responded. A number of years ago, we established the Master's in Health Administration Program (MHA), a program founded by Dr. Karoline Mortensen, and now directed by Dr. Danielle Ellerbe. This program shares the accreditation designations of the Health Care Executive MBA program. This program draws students generally at an earlier point in their careers or intended careers.

One of our programs which has been growing significantly in recent years is our MD/MBA program, a program which was introduced twelve years ago. This program initially required a one year step out from the MD curriculum. The student would do three years of medical school, would do a one year step out to do their healthcare focused MBA, and then return for the final year of medical school. With the Miller School of Medicine completely revamping its medical curriculum, establishing "Next Generation" medical education, we have been able to incorporate the healthcare focused MBA program within the four-year MD curriculum, thereby not requiring any additional time in school. Most students go into their residency programs upon graduation with a leg up in

their knowledge base and an enhanced appeal to residency programs. A number of graduates from the dual degree program have also chosen to enter the healthcare business environment. The interest, reflected in applications and enrollment in the program, has increased significantly.

And then there are our undergraduate programs. When first introduced ten years ago, initial interest and resultant course enrollment in our business school-based Health Management and Policy courses was minimal but now, enrollments have increased more than ten times over. And the interest is not just from undergraduate students studying in the business school, with their anticipation of going into the healthcare business environment, e.g. hospitals, insurance, pharmaceuticals, medical devices, long-term care, etc. No, now many of our students are pre-medical, pre-therapy, pre-dental, and nursing students. Clinical academic program advisors are strongly suggesting that those who are going to enter the clinical world understand healthcare management and policy as the aspect of this field will serve the student well in their applications, entrance examinations, and interviews. But even more importantly, this is oftentimes the only exposure these students have to the elements of healthcare management before they enter the complexity of the real world of healthcare as professional clinicians.

These are aspects of the field which are generally not taught in their clinical programs but are very much a reality of the clinical practice. Whether it is with respect to the understanding of the workings of our healthcare system, insurance, managed care, Medicare, Medicaid, integrated delivery systems, value-based purchasing, marketing of their practice, budgeting, finance, staffing, human resource management,

or strategy, the opportunity to learn and be prepared with a set of tools puts the graduate in a much better position to be effective and successful. A number of our students have also gone on to enter federal government healthcare policy internships and professional positions.

Our Health Management and Policy department faculty lead by our chair, Dr. Micheal French, have international reputations regarding their research, creating a body of knowledge which impacts the healthcare sector and is in turn brought into the classroom. A number of the faculty engage in healthcare consulting, which, when brought into the classroom environment as examples, allows students to see how concepts are applied directly.

Further, with two former Secretaries of Health and Human Resources, Secretaries Donna Shalala and Alex Azar, and the President of the University of Miami, Dr. Julio Frenk, former Ministry Health of Mexico, all on our faculty, students learn and have access to the greatest minds in healthcare policy.

Ultimately, our students, whether they be in our Healthcare Executive MBA, our Master's in Health Administration program, our MD/MBA program, or our undergraduate programs, attain knowledge and the ability to apply that knowledge, and ultimately access to excellent professional opportunities and graduate education. We at the University of Miami Herbert Business School Health Management and Policy program take great pride in the accomplishments of its faculty, students, and alumni.

Dr. Steven G. Ullmann, Professor and Chair, Department of Health Management and Policy, Director, Center for Health Management and Policy, at Miami Herbert Business School, University of Miami, can be reached at (305) 284-9920 or sullmann@miami.edu.

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MDC Simulation Hospital, Certificate and Degree Programs Help Students Gain Skills, Knowledge

BY VANESSA ORR

Since establishing the Miami Dade College Simulation Hospital in 2019, the MDC medical campus has continued to add new features to train the more than 4,000 students that use it each semester. The college has also added a number of new certificate programs to help students advance in their careers and to provide new entry points for those considering a career in healthcare.

“Though it opened a few years ago, our simulation hospital is still a hot topic, with people including the governor of Brazil requesting a tour,” explains Bryan Stewart, Ph.D., NREMT, campus president, Miami Dade College Medical Campus. “And we’ve continued to add features that provide more support for our students, including a new artificial intelligence (AI) mannequin.”

The simulation hospital features eight medical surgical rooms, two OB rooms, two pediatric rooms, nine debriefing rooms, one operating room, one simulated ambulance, 10 exam rooms and one apartment, as well as 17 high-fidelity human patient simulators. Faculty are able to launch more than 100 different scenarios, giving students the opportunity to solve real-world issues, learn to handle stressful situations and develop the necessary criti-



cal thinking skills required in a medical setting before working with actual patients.

All of the students in the Miami Dade College’s LPN, associate’s in nursing and bachelor’s in nursing programs use the simulation hospital at some point during their tenure, and often work in tandem with students in some of MDC’s 28 Health Sciences programs as well. For example, nursing students may work with respiratory therapy, EMS or physician assistant students, just as they would in their careers.

During the pandemic, the simulation hospital also enabled MDC, which has the largest nursing program in the state of Florida and one of the largest nursing programs in the country, to continue to train



students when hospitals were not able to offer clinical rotations.

New Certificates and Degrees

According to Stewart, the medical college has recently added new programs, including some with stackable credentials, in order to provide students with more entry points to a healthcare career as well as a chance to advance in their fields. These include a Central Sterile Processing program to serve as a prerequisite to the Surgical Tech program established last year.

“We are about to add an endoscopy program, which will act as another stackable certificate for surgical tech,” says Stewart. “This will give students another advantage

in the job market.”

The college is also adding a Dental Assistant Technology Management certificate program in conjunction with its dental assisting program that provides students with the opportunity to enter the dental profession as something other than a dental hygienist. A new Healthcare Service Specialist certificate, which includes a series of courses that prepare students to become proficient on the latest software used in medical offices, will provide

students with a new entry point and the opportunity to gain direct employment as a health services specialist.

“We’ve also added a Health Service Management degree because we noticed that a lot of our previous graduates were looking for additional leadership and management skills to move up in the hospital setting,” said Stewart. “What’s great about that is that once you’re employed at a hospital, they often have tuition reimbursement plans to help pay for advanced degrees.”

All of the MDC’s new programs are currently recruiting for fall enrollment.

To learn more, visit www.mdc.edu/medical.



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HEALTHCARE EDUCATION HEALTHCARE EDUCATION

Holy Cross Health Internal Medicine Residents Celebrate Next Steps

A group of residents who completed their Graduate Medical Education (GME) at Holy Cross Health in Fort Lauderdale in the last few years are ready for the next step in their careers as physicians. Some residents will pursue Internal Medicine (IM) subspecialty fellowships and others will begin their careers as primary care physicians, hospitalists or will apply for an IM specialty match in the future.

One of the goals of the program is to retain talented former residents at Holy Cross Health or other hospitals or medical practices in the South Florida community. IM physicians Jason Ceavers, M.D.; Maya Lucas, M.D.; Kritzia Pineda, M.D.; Rafael Gutierrez, M.D.; and endocrinologist Sebastian Perez-Martinez, M.D., have joined Holy Cross Medical Group.

Four doctors matched nearby at University of Miami/Jackson Health System to pursue specialty fellowships — Yaisa Moreno Hernandez, M.D., and Claudia Marcano Ocasio, M.D., in Pulmonary Disease and Critical Care Medicine; Eduardo Villa, M.D., in Nephrology; and Robert Briski, M.D., in Hematology/Oncology.

Three residents opted to join private practices as IM physicians throughout South Florida. In August 2024, German Lopez, M.D., will start at University of Miami/Jackson Health System in Doral and Karen Caraballo, M.D., will begin at Mount Sinai Medical Center in Miami Beach. Holy Cross Health is also proud to share that former IM resident Ryan Lamarca, M.D., is currently an independent nephrologist in eastern Fort Lauderdale.

Others who are moving on are Shane Quo, M.D., who is headed to HCA Healthcare/USF Morsani College of Medicine Bayonet Point Hospital in Hudson, FL for a Gastroenterology fellowship; Ricky Criado, M.D., is going to AdventHealth Orlando for Cardiology; Sarvani Gijupalli, M.D., matched at University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio for a Geriatric Medicine specialty; Alexander Lanes, M.D., will take the Windy City by storm during his Nephrology fellowship at McGaw Medical Center of Northwestern University in Chicago; Sean Patrick Prince, M.D., 2022 Chief Medical Resident, is bound for Wright State University in Dayton, OH to focus on Gastroenterology; and Alan Wong, M.D., led with his heart with a Cardiology fellowship at The Christ Hospital in Cincinnati, OH.

Taylor Bracco, M.D.; Sal Farsi, M.D.; and Edgar Bustamante, M.D. are making their rounds as hospitalists with the Sound Hospitalist Group at Holy Cross Health.



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Developing Entry-Level Healthcare Leaders for the Next Decade in Healthcare

The healthcare industry is rapidly evolving alongside the development of artificial intelligence, the expansion of an aging population, and increasing healthcare shortages. This is soon to be accompanied by the retirement of many of our nation's healthcare leaders (Lee et al., 2019, Smith & Bhavsar, 2021). To address these challenges, it is imperative that clinicians expand their roles to fill leadership vacancies that will be forthcoming. Physician Assistants/Associates (PAs) have a unique opportunity to fill these leadership gaps. PAs already play a key role within the industry providing support and guidance on many interdisciplinary care teams. PAs are filling the voids, not only in primary care and the surgical suite, but also in the boardroom. Physician Assistant (PA) students represent the future of our profession. Developing creative and visionary PA students that can address the industry's shortfalls and challenges must be a priority for every PA program.

The Physician Assistant Program at South University, West Palm Beach, is mentoring PAs in transformational leadership skills to address these evolving challenges in healthcare. The PA program sup-



BY JAN MCCALED, MPA, PA-C,
AND LYSA DIGGINS, MMS, PA-C

ports student and faculty competency development within the leadership realm by encouraging and supporting membership in our state and national professional organizations. South enables both students and faculty the ability to attend conferences and specialty training to further develop their leadership acumen. The American Academy of Physician Assistants [AAPA] (2021) highlights the competencies required for modern PA practice including those required to lead. By encouraging our students and faculty to embrace these opportunities, we honor the depth and breadth of modern PA practice as set forth by our national organizations.

In addition, South's model of service-based learning focuses on many leadership

competencies including; professionalism and ethics, quality improvement, interprofessional collaboration, and understanding evidence-based practice and its intersection with social determinants of health. The PA program aligns the master's Capstone project with these crucial leadership domains. Using an experiential learning strategy, the Capstone project allows students to partner with agencies within the local community that support priority populations.

After choosing a national health initiative from Healthy People 2030 (2024) students use classroom skills to assess their community partner's needs. The PA faculty assist the students in navigating through a real-world, but low-stakes, quality improvement initiative. Thus, assuring the demands of high-stakes patient care will be successfully navigated in the future. The project has engaged several community partners including the Palm Beach County Food Bank, Roosevelt Middle School, Resilience Recovery Resources, Compass Community Center, and CPR Florida.

Ideally, every PA program should establish a plan to address the increasing depth and breadth of the PA profession. Entry-level PA leaders must have comparable training and competency to other healthcare professionals seeking to fill the

upcoming leadership voids. It is essential that students enter the profession prepared to prioritize local community healthcare needs with a sustainable and innovative approach. South University welcomes new ideas and partnerships that support this mission and vision. With the ongoing support of South University's dynamic leadership team, we will continue to graduate entry-level PA leaders.

Jan McCaleb is the Assistant Program Director at South University West Palm Beach PA Program and Lysa Diggins is the Director of Didactic Education.


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HEALTHCARE EDUCATION HEALTHCARE

Cover Story: New Nursing Sim Center and Clinical Lab Open on FAU's Davie Campus

Continued from page 1
need to take care of patients so that they can help patients achieve better health outcomes as part of the healthcare team," she added.

The simulation lab, which opened Dec. 18, includes four individual simulation rooms containing high-fidelity mannequins, touch-screen patient monitors and cameras and microphones so that faculty can communicate with students during each scenario. The lab also contains an area for students to practice health assessments with low-fidelity mannequins, as well as a nurses' station, medication cart and crash cart.

The lab will be used by BSN students and nurse practitioner students on the Davie campus, as well as the roughly 40 new students who will be entering campus this fall in the accelerated BSN nursing track.

"Healthcare in general is becoming more complex as people are living longer, having more comorbidities, and multiple chronic diseases," said Dean George. "As we prepare our students to better understand the pathophysiology behind everything in terms of human body and disease, we also want them to understand how to interact with technology. Every healthcare system utilizes technology and we need to make sure that our students have access to it in a safe environment while still learning."

Dean George adds that the simulation lab also allows students to hone their skills in high-stress environments. "Things change, things happen, and in an emergent situation, nurses need to be able to make critical decisions in a timely manner," she said. "They need to understand how to look for cues before emergencies arise, and know how to prioritize tasks when taking care of more

than one patient at a time. By experiencing these scenarios in a practice lab, students become more confident and competent, and learn to make decisions that ultimately lead to improved patient outcomes."

According to Dean George, studies have shown that access to high-fidelity nursing simulation also correlates with how well students perform on the NCLEX, the national exam that nursing students need to pass to become licensed.

Now that the Davie Campus simulation center and lab is open, FAU also plans to update the small nursing simulation lab on the Boca campus with construction predicted to begin this spring. "We've outgrown the simulation center since it was built several years ago," said Dean George. "We've got about 1,200 students who use the space, which only has two simulation rooms and no control room. Our goal is to continue fundraising in order to build a state-of-the-art facility on that campus."

She notes that while being able to interact with technology is important, as a college grounded in caring science, FAU also remains committed to making sure that it graduates caring, compassionate nurses.

"It is up to us as a college of nursing to provide the highest level and quality of clinical labs and nursing simulation centers as possible so that our students can develop the clinical reasoning skills and critical thinking skills they need," she said. "But it's even more important to us that they become caring and compassionate nurses that we know they have the potential to become with the right resources, training and support."

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Cardiology

Holy Cross Health Invests in the Future of Cardiac Care *New state-of-the-art cath and electrophysiology labs highlight the investment*

Every February, America's hearts are at the forefront, literally and figuratively. The statistics tell the story. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, heart disease is the leading cause of death for men, women and people for most racial and ethnic groups in the U.S. In fact, one person dies every 33 seconds from cardiovascular disease in the U.S.

During American Heart Month in February, the Jim Moran Heart and Vascular Center at Holy Cross Health in Fort Lauderdale is celebrating the investment that has been made to bring the latest, leading-edge, top-quality cardiac care to patients.

That investment in cardiac advancements is elevating Holy Cross Health's cardiac care and is highlighted by the opening of new Cath labs and electrophysiology labs. This will continue to allow Holy Cross to bring the latest technologies, the latest clinical trials and the latest therapies to patients. The Cath labs feature the newest state-of-the-art imaging and additional devices that will enhance the patient experience and the quality of care we can provide by allowing us to integrate new



BY ADRIENNE WOLFSON, MSN, BHA, RN CCRN

technologies in the field of interventional cardiology for coronary artery disease. Our new Philips lab can perform IVUS (Intravascular Ultrasound Imaging) and IFR (Instantaneous Wave-free Ratio) which measures the resting pressure between coronary stenosis in the cardiac cycle.

The other field that is growing quickly is the field of structural heart disease, where we will be able to care for all valvular heart disease as well as congenital heart defects. This has been a transformational collaboration between the physicians, the hospital and the community. Additionally, we will be opening a new Cardiac Imaging Unit (CIU) that provides services such as TTE, TEE, Cardioversions and insertion of loop recorders. This unit will be all inclusive offering Pre, During and Post procedure care; a "One-Stop-Shop".

Holy Cross Health, with a robust team of experienced interventional cardiologists who are on-call 24/7 to perform emergency and scheduled cardiac procedures, has gained national attention from *U.S. News & World Report* and American Heart

Association among others as a leader in heart and cardiovascular care. *U.S. News & World Report* named Holy Cross a High Performing hospital for Diabetes, Heart Attack, Heart Failure, Hip Replacement, Knee Replacement and Stroke on its list of 2023-2024 Best Hospitals. This is the highest distinction a hospital can earn for the U.S. *News Best Hospitals Procedures & Conditions* ratings. Additionally, Holy Cross Health received the American Heart Association's Get With The Guidelines® - Heart Failure Gold Plus quality achievement award for its commitment to improving outcomes for patients with heart failure, meaning reduced readmissions and more healthy days at home.

In addition, Holy Cross Health was the first in the state to use the iCT 256-slice scanner to offer Cardiac CT Angiography (CCTA), which allows physicians to detect early-stage life-threatening illnesses; perform a Paravalvular Leak Closure using a transapical approach, an option for patients who are not eligible for open heart surgery; and use the Prime ECG Vest, which may provide physicians with additional data beyond a traditional electrocardiogram in some cases.

Holy Cross Health was also the first in the tri-county area to offer the Medtronic MyCareLink™ Patient Monitor, a remote cardiac monitoring system that transmits



Photo Credit: Holy Cross Health

data to clinicians from anywhere in the world with a cellular signal. Plus, we were the first organization in Broward County to achieve The Joint Commission's Advanced Certification in Heart Failure; perform Transcatheter Aortic Valve Replacements on high-risk patients; offer Induced Hypothermia, which increases the chances of survival of cardiac arrest and improves neurological outcomes following cardiac arrest; and implant Reveal LINQ™, the smallest, wireless, long-term, cardiac monitor available.

Adrienne Wolfson is Executive Director Nursing Administration, Holy Cross Health.

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Cardiology

Caring for the Heart Is a Calling Conviva Care Center's Dr. Laura Verde is Passionate about Caring for Seniors

BY CAROL NEWMAN

The passion to care for others was always there. Laura Verde recalls that as far back as age 3, when asked what she wanted to be when she grew up, the answer was always the same: "I want to be a doctor."

A native of Brazil, Dr. Verde went directly from high school to medical school at 17 years old. She practiced general medicine care in Brazil and, during that time, applied to cardiology programs. At 26 she moved to the United States, retook qualification exams for internal medicine residency and was offered the chief resident position at East Carolina University (ECU).

Following her training, she took a job with Asheville Cardiology in North Carolina. ECU—now known as the East Carolina University Health System—recruited Dr. Verde to come back to their practice. She became a member of the Conviva Care Center family in July 2023, and is now part of a team that provides personalized care for seniors at Conviva Care Centers throughout Florida.

The specialist's keen interest and fascination with the intricate workings of the heart drove her to pursue a cardiology specialty. It is among the most intriguing of all specialties, she said.

At Conviva she sees patients with histories of coronary disease, heart attacks, stent implants, bypasses and heart failure. Many live in senior communities, and because of their condition(s), become frustrated by the inability to take part in various social activities.

"We give them the best care we can, so they can continue to be with their friends and enjoy those activities," Dr. Verde said. "If they are limited by their coronary disease or heart failure, we can help them actively manage those conditions."

Additionally, Dr. Verde advises all her patients to maintain a good diet, exercise, and nurture relationships with friends, family, and community.

She said working with seniors was a unique and interesting transition. As an invasive cardiologist, she's performed numerous heart catheterizations in both hospital and outpatient settings—caring mainly for a general adult population. But the senior population is a lesson in experience, wisdom and learning. As a lover of history, her favorite patients are from the Greatest Generation—especially veterans of World War II. She enjoys talking with them as they recall their life experiences—both good and bad.

"There is so much to learn from them," she said.

Dr. Verde has been in the health care



Dr. Laura Verde

profession for 27 years, and her most memorable experience was a story from a WWII veteran.

"He lied to enlist in the Navy at the age of 16, and his ship was sunk in the South Pacific," she said. "He lost the tips of two fingers and spent two days and nights in a small air pocket. On the second night, a shipmate screamed for his mother, and after all these years, he still hears the voice of that sailor at night. I'm the only one he's shared that story with besides his immediate family."

Developing those types of relationships is important, and each day Dr. Verde takes the meaning of "personalized" healthcare to another level.

"Taking time to listen and not treat them as just another patient is essential," she said. "We treat medical conditions, but for many patients just talking to someone is a social highlight, and it's good to be a part of that dynamic."

Dr. Verde chose to work for Conviva, because it affords her more time to know and understand patient needs. This sensitive and thoughtful interaction leads to developing strong, trusting relationships.

"I also love working with my peers, because they are not just outstanding doctors but really good people," she said. "They, and the support staff, made me feel like I was a part of the family from day one."

She is a member of the American College of Cardiology and the American Society of Echocardiography. Two years in a row, she was named Cardiology Resident of the Year at East Carolina University.

Dr. Verde says that medicine is not a profession, but a calling. One she's answered by dedicating her life to patient care.

"The satisfaction of caring for others outweighs the hard work, and I feel like being a doctor is the best profession in the world."

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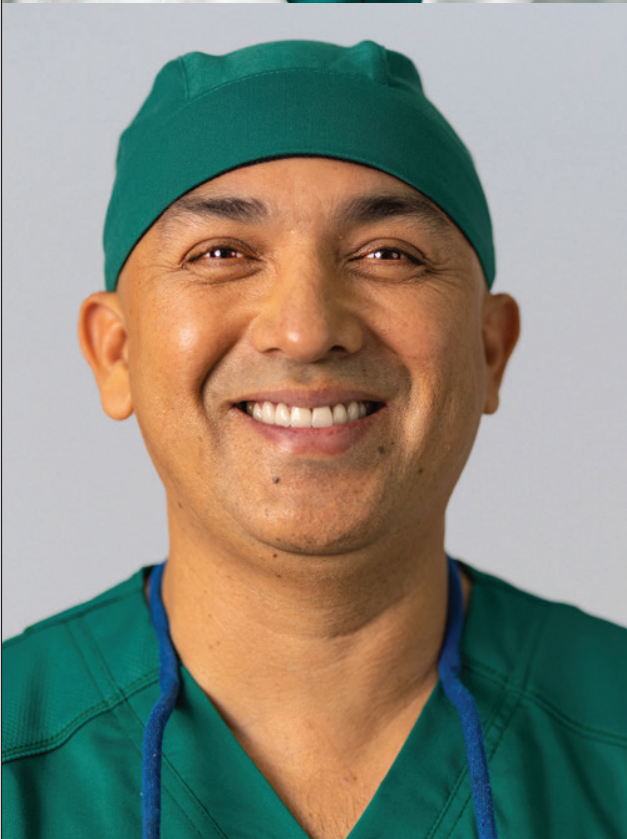
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Cardiology

Cover Story: Aldousany of KIDZ Medical Trains the Next Generation of Pediatric Cardiology Providers

Continued from page 1

them for the rest of their life, he knows the difference that this level of personalized care can make.

He also noted that pediatric cardiologists need to be particularly good with their hands. “You need to be able to put in a venous or arterial line; if there is fluid around the heart or lung, you need to be able to get it out. But that skill doesn’t happen just because you finish your fellowship,” he said. “It takes years of practice, and this level of expertise comes with experience.”

Board certified in pediatrics, pediatric cardiology, and neonatal-perinatal medicine by the American Board of Pediatrics, he is also certified in adult congenital heart disease by the American Board of Internal Medicine. But according to Dr. Aldousany, one of the most crucial factors in pediatric care, and in medicine overall, is keeping up with all of the changes taking place as the field continues to evolve.

“Every day, there are new medications, new techniques, and new surgical procedures to learn; for example, there are new

pacemakers and new ways of pacing the heart, as well as 3D echo machines where before they were only two-dimensional. Medications are also evolving quickly,” he said. “It’s our responsibility to stay on top of it all to deliver the best care for our patients.”

Dr. Aldousany joined KIDZ Medical Services - a South Florida healthcare practice that provides specialized neonatal, pediatric, and women’s health services - in 2000, after spending 10 years with Miami Children’s Hospital (now Nicklaus Children’s Hospital), where he had also completed his pediatric residency. Dr. Aldousany received his medical degree from the University of Baghdad in Iraq and completed fellowships at the University of Tennessee Medical Center and the University of Chicago Medical Center.

Despite all the time spent caring for his patients and serving in clinical leadership roles, Dr. Aldousany still makes time to serve as a mentor. “I teach them, and they teach me,” he said of his students.

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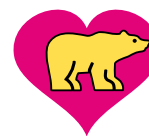
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A New Era of Cardiac Care at Jupiter Medical Center

BY SUE MACDONALD

The all-new Johnny and Terry Gray Surgical Institute at Jupiter Medical ushers in a new era of expert medical care for residents throughout Palm Beach County and the Treasure Coast.

Introduced to the community at a ribbon-cutting ceremony in late 2023, the stunning 90,000-square-foot surgical institute offers leading-edge technologies and capabilities, including advanced cardiac treatments — all of which are bolstered by a growing roster of expert cardiologists, cardiothoracic specialists, and cardiac surgeons who provide the latest in innovation.

The fast-growing cardiac specialty is welcomed news to South Florida residents during February, which is celebrated nationwide as National Heart Month. Patients and their families who choose to live in the area for its lifestyle and amenities can now experience leading-edge cardiac care without traveling long distances.

“The unprecedented growth in facilities, technologies, and expertise at



Dr. Vivek Patel

Jupiter Medical Center allows us to meet a core goal of providing unparalleled cardiac care,” says Dr. Vivek Patel, a cardiothoracic surgeon who was raised in Palm Beach Gardens and returned to the Treasure Coast to join the Jupiter cardiac care team in June of 2023. “This systematic, forward-looking growth of the cardiac program delivers the newest techniques and

minimally invasive treatments so that our patients can live to their fullest potential.”

New Technologies, Capabilities & Treatments

Among the new services and capabilities at the new surgical center:

- 16 “smart operating rooms” that feature all of the technology to support complex surgeries, bolstered by two hybrid operating rooms that can accommodate both minimally invasive and complex procedures

- State-of-the-art, image-guided video technology with sophisticated visualization capabilities for the most delicate

procedures

- Four operating rooms featuring the latest in robotic surgical systems to accommodate more than 35 surgeons specializing in cardiac and thoracic surgery as well as gynecology, gynecologic oncology, thoracic oncology, gastrointestinal oncology, general surgery, urology, and urogynecology

- Digitally integrated, state-of-the-art communication technologies that enable surgeons to transmit patient images from the operating room to other specialists for real-time consultations and treatment plans

- User-friendly communication technologies that send real-time updates and clinical information securely and privately from the team in the operating suite to patients’ waiting families

- 16 pre-operative and 10 recovery rooms

- Dedicated cardiac rehabilitation unit

- New disinfection technology that uses visible light to continuously kill harmful airborne and surface bacteria/viruses in the OR

Upgrades and improvements through Jupiter Medical Center’s campus are designed to support patients requiring the most complex care, including stroke and cardiac intervention. New proce-

dures at both the Robson Heart & Vascular Institute and the Atrial Fibrillation Center of Excellence enable Jupiter clinicians and specialty teams to treat a variety of heart and vascular diagnoses, including:

- Transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR), and transcatheter aortic revascularization (TCAR), a less-invasive treatment for carotid artery disease

- Endovascular aneurysm repair (EVAR) to repair abdominal aneurysms without an open incision

- Open-heart surgery (when minimally invasive techniques are not appropriate), including “off-pump” cardiopulmonary bypass surgery (or grafting), often known as CABG (instead of using a heart-lung machine, the patient’s own heart continues beating and circulating blood and oxygen throughout the body during a CABG procedure)

Jupiter Medical Center: Meeting the Community’s Needs

What are the advantages to these minimally invasive procedures? Shorter times in the operating room, little to no scarring, less blood loss, decreased pain, shorter hospital stays, faster recovery, and fewer complications.

Continued on following page



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A New Era of Cardiac Care

Continued from previous page

Launch of the Johnny and Terry Gray Surgical Institute is in direct response to significant growth throughout the Jupiter community and corresponding patient demand. More than 15,000 traditional and minimally invasive surgical procedures are performed at Jupiter Medical Center annually, a statistic expected to grow numerically and in complexity.

The benefit for patients is close-to-home access to more innovative, minimally invasive treatments across all specialties. Heart patients who previously spent weeks in the hospital after complicated surgeries are now returning home in a matter of days.

Construction of a companion parking garage also eases the stresses of hospital visits for patients and their families. Accessing the Surgical Institute is easy and convenient, supported by priority entry for patients and a system that pairs each patient with a volunteer to make sure each visit is smooth and welcoming.

For information about the Johnny and Terry Gray Surgical Institute or to find a physician, visit jupitermed.com.

MD ASAP Cardiac Rapid Response Clinic at Holy Cross Health Bridges Gap in Cardiac Care

Holy Cross Health now offers a solution to bridge the gap in cardiac care. The MD ASAP Rapid Response Cardiac Clinic at Holy Cross Health in Fort Lauderdale accommodates patients who need to be seen in a timely manner for non-emergency cardiovascular concerns.

Supervised by Charles Russo, M.D., FACC, the clinic is supported by Darla Erlich, DNP, and Allison Hamlett, NP, to provide care to those with intermittent heart problems that do not require a visit to the Emergency Department (ED). Heart failure specialists Joshua Larned, M.D., and Elias Collado, M.D., also provide coverage.

Patients can be seen quickly – typically within 24 hours – Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the clinic on the ground floor of Holy Cross Health in Fort Lauderdale. If patients' physicians are booked or out of town – and if they want the benefit of immediate access to a physician with extensive cardiovascular expertise – this model offers an alternative to the ED, urgent care or going for prolonged periods without addressing the issue.

Cardiovascular disease (CVD) remains



(l-r) Allison Hamlett, NP, and Darla Erlich, DNP Photo credit: Holy Cross Health

the leading cause of death in the United States, accounting for 928,741 deaths in 2020, according to the American Heart Association. In 2020, coronary heart disease (CHD) was the leading cause (41.2%) of deaths attributable to CVD in the United States, followed by stroke (17.3%), other CVD (16.8%), high blood pressure (12.9%), heart failure (9.2%) and diseases of the arteries (2.6%).

MD ASAP patients will be screened, evaluated and referred for work-up via Echo,

stress-testing, CT calcium scoring and the like, as needed.

"Because we are not a longitudinal clinic, my colleagues can rest assured we will return patients to their primary cardiologist," said Dr. Russo. "We are providing screening and follow-up. We may see a patient once or twice and then route the patient back to the appropriate physician."

Physicians in private practice may refer patients with new onset cardiac symptoms or abnormal testing. Emergency medicine providers may refer patients who need to be seen soon after ED discharge. Urgent care providers can refer patients who require further cardiac evaluation. Patients may also self-refer.

Patients will ultimately be seen for long-term care by either their established cardiologist or a Holy Cross Medical Group cardiologist.

The clinic team may be reached at (954) 542-2650. Learn more about the MD ASAP same day care locations at HolyCrossASAP.com.



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Hypertension Center Earns Gold Plus Recognition from American Heart Association

BY KAI T. HILL

The University of Miami Comprehensive Hypertension Center (UMCHC), part of UHealth – University of Miami Health System and the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine, has received the Gold Plus distinction from the American Heart Association (AHA).

AHA awarded the distinction as part of its Target: BP™ initiative, a collaboration with the American Medical Association in response to the high prevalence of uncontrolled blood pressure. Gold Plus distinction is awarded to health care organizations that attest to at least four of six evidence-based blood pressure activities in the categories of equipment calibration and validation, staff knowledge and skills and systems of care.

A Critical Need for Blood Pressure Care

Nearly half of the adults in the U.S. are grappling with high blood pressure, or hypertension. Less than half have their blood pressure under control, underlining the urgency of both diagnosis and effective management.

Maria Delgado-Lelievre, M.D., assistant professor of medicine for the Miller School and founding director of UMCHC, emphasizes the pivotal role of blood pressure management in achieving superior cardiovascular health.

“High blood pressure is a leading risk factor for heart disease and stroke that can often be prevented or managed if diagnosed and treated properly,” she said.

While the Gold Plus recognition is a testament to the level of comprehensive, evidence-based care at the UMCHC, Dr. Delgado-Lelievre says the achievement reflects the dedication and collaboration of the entire organization.



Dr. Maria Delgado-Lelievre



Dr. Yiannis S. Chatzizisis

The Pillars of Effective Care

Dr. Delgado-Lelievre shed light on the four pillars that underpin UMCHC’s innovative approach:

- **Genetic and family history assessment:** UMCHC delves deep into a patient’s genetic and family history, recognizing the significance of inherited risk factors.
- **Risk factors and epigenetic factors:** Understanding how environment and behavior affects genes is vital in determining a patient’s cardiovascular risk.
- **Biochemical analysis:** Salt sensitivity and abnormal potassium level identification provides a holistic view of a patient’s biochemistry.
- **Physiological study of blood pressure variability:** UMCHC’s understanding of the physiological aspects of blood pressure variation is key to a comprehensive assessment of cardiovascular health.

AI, Computer Simulations and Extended Reality in Cardiovascular Care

In a comprehensive review published in the *Journal of the American College of Cardiology: Cardiovascular Interventions*, Yiannis S. Chatzizisis, M.D., Ph.D., professor and chief of cardiovascular medicine at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine, and colleagues show how artificial intelligence (AI), computational simulations and extended reality – collectively called AISER – are providing new tools to improve cardiovascular care.

“AI, simulations and virtual reality are changing the landscape of cardiovascular interventions,” said Dr. Chatzizisis, senior author of the review.

The paper, “Artificial Intelligence, Computational Simulations, and Extended Reality in Cardiovascular Interventions,” published online on October 23rd, 2023.

Continued on following page

When Advanced Cardiac Disease Does Not Respond to Optimized Therapies

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Profiles In Cardiology

ADVANCED SURGICAL PHYSICIANS

Andrew J. Shapiro, MD, FACS

Dedicating his life to service, Andrew J. Shapiro, M.D., FACS, is a board-certified General Surgeon at Advanced Surgical Physicians, U.S. Army veteran, and proud philanthropic partner for many causes in Palm Beach County including his time volunteering to raise and train canine companions at New Horizons Service Dogs. Dr. Shapiro has also served on numerous committees at Wellington Regional Medical Center including the Medical Executive Committee and the Peer Review Committee. Dr. Shapiro is also passionate about medical education and has worked with both general surgery residents and medical students, serving as the Surgery Clerkship Coordinator for the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine regional campus in Palm Beach County.

This past August, Dr. Shapiro completed his 1000th robotic surgical procedure with the cutting-edge da Vinci® robot. Dr. Shapiro's mastery of this technology cements his status as a leader in the field of minimally invasive surgery and he plans to continue striving towards greater heights for medical advancement and patient care.



Kyle S. Eldredge, DO

Kyle S. Eldredge, D.O., is a board certified General Surgeon practicing in Palm Beach County's western communities. Dr. Eldredge worked as a paramedic for four years before graduating from the Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine. Dr. Eldredge completed a fellowship in Robotic Minimally Invasive Colorectal Surgery at Emory University and continues this important work today.

His practice, Advanced Surgical Physicians, based in Wellington, FL, performs minimally invasive surgery (MIS) utilizing the daVinci Robot. Used for various procedures ranging from hernia repairs, gallbladder surgery and colon surgery, the robot allows for the procedures to be performed through small incisions thereby mitigating patient trauma and resulting in less pain, fewer complications, less blood loss and less scarring than with traditional surgery.

A passionate advocate for technological innovation and excellence in patient care, Dr. Eldredge is proud to serve Palm Beach County residents with one-on-one care and the medical expertise they deserve.



Renowned Cardiothoracic Surgeon Joins Cleveland Clinic in Florida

Juan Pablo Umaña, MD, has joined Cleveland Clinic in Florida as Chair, Division of Thoracic & Cardiovascular Surgery.



A renowned cardiothoracic surgeon, Dr. Umaña made an indelible contribution to global heart care early in his career. His specialty interests include mitral valve repair, tricuspid valve repair, aortic valve repair, valve-sparing aortic root replacement, Ross procedure, minimally invasive aortic root replacement, minimally invasive aortic valve replacement, transcatheter aortic valve replacement, transcatheter mitral valve repair, aortic dissection and cardiac tumors. He has presented on complex procedures including mitral valve repair for patients with mitral annular disjunction and aortic valve-sparing root replacement with valve reimplantation.

After completing a research fellowship in liver transplantation in Birmingham, England, Dr. Umaña pursued his general surgery training at Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center in New York City. During that time, he also conducted research on mitral valve repair as a cardiovascular research fellow with the Columbia University College of Physicians & Surgeons.

Hypertension Center Earns Gold Plus Recognition from American Heart Association

Continued from previous page

AI to Improve Cardiovascular Diagnosis and Therapy

While it would be easy to separate each technology into a separate bucket, the review makes the case that AISER tools are intertwined into the continuum of care. The first step is leveraging AI to assist with diagnosis.

"AI tools such as machine learning and deep learning can rapidly, precisely and accurately analyze imaging data to guide care," said Dr. Chatzizisis. "Experts perform a similar function, but experts are not available in every hospital. Also, experts can have different opinions. These technologies can take some of the subjectivity out of diagnosis."

Post-diagnosis treatment also benefits from advanced technology.

Digital Twins Mimic a Patient's Anatomy

Having captured digital imaging information, cardiovascular teams can then create computer simulations of each patient's unique anatomy—digital twins.

"Having done the stent procedure planning with the AI, we can then practice it through computer simulations on the digital twin, which is particularly helpful for complex procedures," said Dr. Chatzizisis.

Extended Reality and Medical Education

The next step is extended reality, which allows physicians and students to immerse themselves in the digital twin. Augmented reality allows participants to scrutinize anatomical structures while retaining real-world visual cues.

These powerful new tools help train medical students, residents, fellows and other early-career clinicians by allowing them to visualize the blood vessels, the blockage and the stent, including how it is deployed and interacts with the blood vessel.

A New Center Focused on Technology

Dr. Chatzizisis recently opened the Center for Digital Cardiovascular Innovations to help advance these technologies at the Miller School of Medicine. This multidisciplinary center unites biomedical engineers, computer scientists, physicians, and biologists in a hub that collaborates with industry and other research centers and attracts philanthropy and federal funding.

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Profiles In Cardiology

MEMORIAL DIVISION OF CARDIAC SERVICES

Alvaro Vargas Pelaez, MD

While Dr. Alvaro Vargas Pelaez is a board-certified cardiologist, his approach to patients has its roots in primary care, where understanding an individual's habits, behavior, and lifestyle are critical components of any treatment plan. "I enjoy helping people overcome obstacles on their way to better health. Whether that's giving up smoking, losing weight, increasing exercise, or decreasing stress, I need to know my patients and build trust in stages to facilitate change. It's a delicate dance between listening and counseling."

Inspired by a father who has practiced 'old school' cardiology in their native Colombia for more than 40 years, Vargas is interested in Latino health and has become a certified English to Spanish medical interpreter. He believes increasing access and understanding through language is an effective way of overcoming healthcare disparities that may lead to high blood pressure, high cholesterol, coronary artery disease, heart failure, arrhythmias, and valvular heart disease, among other cardiac conditions.



Mariella Velez Martinez, MD

The importance of family is one of the dominant themes in Dr. Mariella Velez Martinez's life. It was her grandmother's illness that inspired a career in cardiology and a mother's cancer diagnosis that made caregiving more personal. That experience also added a perspective Velez believes has made her a better doctor.

Since joining Memorial Cardiac and Vascular Institute in August of last year, the fellowship-trained physician has brought a family focus to treating advanced heart failure and transplant patients. "I feel a connection to those in my care, know their loved ones, and the ins and outs of their day to day. Having those personal relationships are very important to the care I provide." Velez says the most gratifying moments come from seeing her patient's conditions improve, whether that's post-transplant for those requiring surgery or during the course of treatment for those that don't.



MEMORIAL DIVISION OF CARDIAC SURGERY

John Nicholas Melvan, MD, PhD, FACS, FACC

Dr. John Nicholas Melvan is a board-certified cardiothoracic surgeon that was a resident at Emory University's School of Medicine. Relatively new to Memorial Cardiac and Vascular Institute, he sees parallels between Emory's place in Atlanta's community and Memorial's footprint in South Florida. "Both systems have an academic focus and are committed to growth, excellence, and continual improvement. There is also collaboration between like-minded individuals with the same goals."

Dr. Melvan, who performs both traditional surgeries and transcatheter procedures, was attracted to Memorial's "long history of excellence, transparency, and quality outcomes." Dealing with some of the sickest patients in the hospital, he says it's important to have the resources to attack the most challenging cases and deliver next-level care. "Ours can be lifetime management of the patient's cardiac problem(s). We're sometimes planning for the second and third operations while doing the initial procedure."



Tae Song, MD

Dr. Tae Song is a cardiac surgeon specializing in a wide variety of heart problems, including coronary artery disease, heart valve issues, and diseases of the aorta, as well as mechanical circulatory support and heart transplant. He is encouraged by the opportunity to grow Memorial's programs, which he believes can use regional leadership as a springboard to national prominence. "It's a relatively underserved population we're reaching, the sickest of the sick in the community, and the impact we can have is significant."

Dr. Song completed fellowship training in cardiac surgery and transplant at Harvard Medical School's program at Mass General, where he trained under Dr. Jose Garcia, now a Memorial Cardiac and Vascular Institute colleague. For eight years, Song was a cardiac surgeon at the University of Chicago, prior to relocating to South Florida in January. At Memorial, he has been impressed by the collaborative spirit among physicians and the common goal of always doing what's in the best interest of patients. A native of South Korea, Dr. Song also appreciates the diversity of the population and the winter weather of his new home.



MEMORIAL DIVISION OF ADVANCED HEART FAILURE AND TRANSPLANT

Jose P. Garcia, MD

Dr. Jose Garcia is the chief of Memorial's Adult Heart Transplant Surgery and Mechanical Circulatory Support programs, a position he accepted in May 2023 with a goal to increase the number of transplanted hearts and (ventricular assist) devices implanted. While still early in his tenure, the data indicates the mission is being accomplished.

"We've done 21 transplants and implanted 13 devices in the last year, all with outcomes that meet or exceed national averages," said Garcia. "Our referrals are up, we're having success with higher-risk cases, and are utilizing technology that makes more hearts viable for our efforts." Garcia points to a commitment by Memorial to provide the necessary resources for the growing program, including the addition of physicians, staff, and an eight-bed ICU at Memorial Regional Hospital. The dedicated unit is for those on mechanical support, which makes them immediately eligible for transplant when an appropriate heart becomes available.



MEMORIAL REGIONAL HOSPITAL

Joshua Saef, MD

Dr. Joshua Saef is an adult congenital cardiologist that joined the Memorial Cardiac and Vascular Institute in September of 2023. Coming from the University of Pennsylvania, where he completed fellowship training in adult congenital heart disease, Cleveland Clinic Foundation in Ohio, and Washington University School of Medicine in St Louis, he said, "I've been hugely impressed with the culture at Memorial. Everyone is approachable and there's an appropriate level of multi-disciplinary collaboration, with relationships between physicians benefiting patients."

Dr. Saef works with patients born with cardiac issues of any kind, and also frequently with women whose existing heart issues are exacerbated by pregnancy. "My goal is to utilize my knowledge to protect patients, in many cases sustaining them through adulthood's challenges, and maximizing the quantity and quality of their lives."

I enjoy getting to know patients over time, understanding their day-to-day life challenges, and being able to help them achieve the best possible outcome."



JOE DIMAGGIO CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

Orhan Kilinc, MD

Dr. Orhan Kilinc is a pediatric electrophysiologist with fellowship training in pediatric cardiology and electrophysiology. His approach is to pay attention to the patient's needs and ensure treatment is done for the child, not to the child, since it's important that everyone in the family understands the heart rhythm condition.

Children's heart disorders are more variable than those found in adults, and Dr. Kilinc says the variety of cases can be a 'pandora's box' that requires a tailored approach. "We share the decision-making process with parents, wanting them to understand what is happening, and how it can be managed. I want them to feel comfortable and confident in the plan we'll create together. At the end of the day, my job is to do everything in my power to help children feel better and get back to living their lives."



Tarah Popp, MD

Dr. Tarah Popp utilizes fellowship training from two academic medical centers in her role as a pediatric imaging specialist, but says those lessons aren't the only ones that made her a better doctor. "Becoming a mom helped me understand things more from the family's perspective," said Popp, a mother of two. "It helped me develop extra compassion and the patience to always go the extra mile for those in my care."

The treatment of pregnant moms is a particular passion for Dr. Popp. Her expertise in fetal echocardiography enables her to make non-invasive diagnoses of pediatric heart issues that range from simple to complex heart lesions. Additionally, Dr. Popp reads transthoracic echocardiograms and performs transesophageal echocardiograms to help guide the work of cardiovascular surgeons and interventionalists. She also follows children in clinic with a variety of congenital and acquired heart defects. Dr. Popp attended medical school in Germany, graduating in 2011, and has been part of the Memorial Healthcare System for nearly five years.





Profiles In Cardiology

BROWARD HEALTH CORAL SPRINGS

Craig Hostig, MD

Craig Hostig, M.D., is a cardiologist with the Broward Health Physician Group. He embarked on his cardiology career 33 years ago driven by his interest in the complexities of the human heart. "I had a desire to make a difference in people's lives," Dr. Hostig said. "It brings me much satisfaction to know that I can make a meaningful impact on my patients' cardiovascular health and pursue my passion."

He is motivated by the opportunity to save lives and continue advancing in the field of cardiology, which is constantly evolving with new discoveries and technologies.

Dr. Hostig received his medical degree from the University of Maryland School of Medicine and completed his fellowship at North Shore University Hospital in cardiovascular disease. The board-certified cardiologist has dedicated his career to the pursuit of healing hearts. He specializes in preventive cardiology, coronary artery disease, valvular heart disease arrhythmias, congestive heart failure and cardiomyopathies.

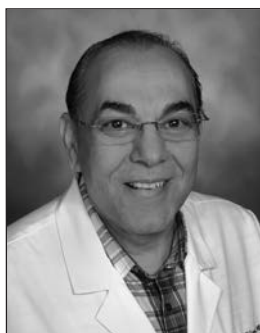


Mohamed El-Sayed, MD

Mohamed El-Sayed, M.D., is an experienced cardiologist who has dedicated nearly 30 years of his life to improving patients' heart health and well-being. "I understand that seeking medical attention, especially for your heart, can be stressful," Dr. El-Sayed said. "This is why I always strive to make my patients feel at ease."

Dr. El-Sayed has been an integral part of the Broward Health Physician Group for 14 years. He is responsible for patient consultations and appropriate management of all cardiovascular diseases. "I'm passionate about positively impacting my patient's lives," Dr. El-Sayed said. "I feel a deep sense of empathy for those who entrust me with their heart health."

Dr. El-Sayed completed his medical degree from Ain Shams University Medical College in Cairo, Egypt. He received his residency at New York Downtown Hospital and completed his fellowship in cardiology at Tulane University Medical Center in New Orleans.



BROWARD HEALTH MEDICAL CENTER

Violeta McCormack, MD

For nearly 35 years Violeta McCormack, M.D., has been providing care and treatment for heart-related issues in South Florida. She serves as the medical director of interventional cardiology and associate program director of the cardiology fellowship program at Broward Health Medical Center.

Dr. McCormack became fascinated with cardiovascular disease in medical school. "I became an interventional cardiologist to help patients with cardiovascular problems, save lives and promote heart-healthy lifestyles," Dr. McCormack said.

Dr. McCormack is the only female interventional cardiologist at Broward Health's flagship hospital, paving the way for other women to follow in her footsteps. "I am very passionate about helping my patients achieve positive outcomes and live longer lives," Dr. McCormack said.

Dr. McCormack earned her medical degree from the University of Edward Kardali School of Medicine in Liubijana, Yugoslavia. She completed her residency in internal medicine at the University Medical Center in Las Vegas, NV and a cardiology fellowship from the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine.



Maria Oliff, RN

Maria Oliff, R.N., started working at Broward Health's flagship hospital when she was 17 years of age as a certified nursing assistant, (CNA). Oliff's desire to work in the medical field began in high school when she took health occupation classes. She was inspired to get into cardiology after her father needed open heart surgery which became the catalyst for a lifelong commitment to cardiology.

"That's when my passion for knowledge in cardiology began," Oliff said.

She has now worked in the Cath lab for 20 years and serves as the charge nurse at the 723-bed hospital. She ensures smooth operations and coordination of scheduled cases. "Helping our patients feel better is the best gratification, especially in emergent situations when the patients are in critical condition," Oliff said.

Oliff completed her LPN at Sheraton Vocational College. She earned her associate degree in nursing at Broward Community College.



BROWARD HEALTH NORTH

Andre J. Landau, MD, FACC, FACP

Andre Landau, M.D., is a board-certified Broward Health Physician Group cardiologist with more 40 years of experience who practices at Broward Health North. He has been with Broward Health since 1997. He focuses on interventional cardiology and specializes in coronary angioplasty and aortic valve replacement.

"In South Africa, where I'm originally from, rheumatic heart disease is prevalent and can be quite devastating. That's what first got me interested in cardiology," said Dr. Landau. "When I moved to the U.S., my interest transitioned to conditions more common here, including coronary heart disease and valvular heart disease in elderly patients."

Dr. Landau earned his medical degree at the University of the Witwatersrand Medical School in Johannesburg, South Africa. He completed residencies in internal medicine at both Bargwanath Hospital in Johannesburg and SUNY Health Science Center in Brooklyn before his fellowship in clinical and interventional cardiology at Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York.



BROWARD HEALTH IMPERIAL POINT

Lauren Vaughan, MD

Board certified in internal medicine and nuclear cardiology with a heart failure certification from the Heart Failure Society of America, Lauren Vaughan, M.D., is a Broward Health Physician Group doctor who practices at Broward Health Imperial Point. Her areas of interest include women's heart health and preventive cardiology.

"I'm passionate about educating patients on lifestyle modification and encouraging heart-healthy habits that optimize overall health and quality of life," said Dr. Vaughan. "I believe in creating lasting relationships with patients and their families, working with them to take ownership of their health and formulate the best treatment plans."

Dr. Vaughan completed her undergraduate degree at Duke University and received her medical degree from Florida Atlantic University Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine. She completed a residency in internal medicine at ECU Health Medical Center in North Carolina and a fellowship in cardiovascular medicine at Broward Health Medical Center.



Louis Cioci, MD, FACC

Louis Cioci, M.D, FACC, is a board-certified cardiologist with the Broward Health Physician Group. He has practiced at Broward Health Imperial Point since 2009 and has conducted research comparing different medicines for heart disease.

Dr. Cioci's practice includes treating diseases of the heart, including cardiomyopathy, coronary artery disease and heart failure, as well as the prevention of cardiovascular disease and anti-aging.

Dr. Cioci earned his medical degree from the University of Bologna School of Medicine in Bologna, Italy, before completing his residency in internal medicine and a fellowship at Catholic Medical Center of Brooklyn and Queens in New York. He also completed fellowship training at the Manhattan Veterans Administration in New York City. Dr. Cioci speaks both English and Italian.



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Profiles In Cardiology

WEST BOCA MEDICAL CENTER

Constance Fields, MD

Dr. Constance Fields is a general cardiologist specializing in preventive cardiology and the diagnosis and treatment of a variety of illnesses including hypertension, coronary heart disease and congestive heart failure. Dr. Fields is board-certified in cardiology by the American Board of Internal Medicine. Additionally, she holds the distinction and honor of being a Castle Connolly Top Doctor since 1999, and in addition, earning the Exceptional Women in Medicine award in 2020 and 2021. For her education and training, Dr. Fields completed a fellowship in interventional cardiology and research cardiology from Tufts-New England Medical Center, Boston, MA. She completed her internal medicine internship, residency and general cardiology fellowship at Rush-Presbyterian-St. Luke's Medical Center located in Chicago, IL. Dr. Fields graduated medical school from Northwestern University Medical School, in Chicago.

PALM BEACH GARDENS MEDICAL CENTER

Augusto E. Villa, MD

Dr. Augusto E. Villa is an interventional/structural cardiologist on staff at Palm Beach Gardens and Good Samaritan medical centers. Dr. Villa received his medical education at Cayetano Heredia University and Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. He completed a 3-year internal medicine residency, and a 3-year cardiology fellowship in at the University of Miami School of Medicine Hospitals. He also completed residency elective rotation in cardiology consult service at The Johns Hopkins Hospital and 2-year interventional cardiology and structural fellowships at The Cleveland Clinic Foundation in Cleveland, OH.



Dr. Villa is board-certified in cardiovascular diseases, interventional cardiology, and endovascular medicine. Dr. Villa specializes in transcatheter aortic and mitral valve replacements, mitral and tricuspid valve repairs, transcatheter closure of atrial septal defects and PFO's, perivalvular leaks, and left atrial appendage occlusions. He's passionate about performing interventional/structural heart procedures, preventing heart disease, and saving lives.

Jacob Litwinczuk, MD

Dr. Jacob Litwinczuk is the Chief of Cardiology and Interventional Cardiology at Palm Beach Gardens Medical Center and has been a member of the Medical Council since 2011. He graduated from Cleveland State University and completed medical school at Wright State University School Of Medicine.



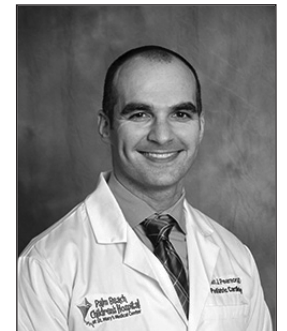
Dr. Litwinczuk completed his Internal Medicine Residency at MetroHealth Medical Center, CWRU School of Medicine, followed by a Cardiology Fellowship. He further pursued an Interventional Cardiology Fellowship at the University of Kentucky and is Board Certified in Cardiovascular Disease and Interventional Cardiology by the American Board of Internal Medicine, and is board eligible in Nuclear Cardiology.

Dr. Litwinczuk holds certifications in Vascular Brachytherapy (Novoste system), Rotational Atherectomy, Nuclear Cardiology, and TAVR (Edwards Sapien and Medtronic Corevalve) as well. He says the best part about his job is applying the most recent scientific developments and technology to patient care in difficult clinical situations and seeing them getting better and regaining hope.

ST. MARY'S MEDICAL CENTER

Elliot Pearson, MD

Dr. Elliot Pearson is a pediatric cardiologist on staff at Palm Beach Children's Hospital at St. Mary's Medical Center. He has been working with the Kidz Medical Services and the Children's Hospital since 2015 and is board certified in pediatric cardiology and general pediatrics. Dr. Pearson graduated from Emory University, where he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Neuroscience and Behavioral Biology. He continued his education at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine, obtaining a Doctor of Medicine with Research Distinction. After completing his residency at Holtz Children's Hospital at Jackson Memorial in Miami, FL, he pursued a fellowship in pediatric cardiology at Durham, North Carolina's Duke University Medical Center.



Dr. Pearson's predoctoral employment includes working as a Neurobiology Research Assistant at Florida Atlantic University and later at Massachusetts General Hospital as a Molecular Biology Research Assistant. With numerous awards and over 10 years of clinical experience in pediatric cardiology, Dr. Elliot Pearson brings a lot of expertise and dedication to his field. His favorite part of the job is the interpersonal connection with the children and families, saying, "It's a privilege to have a lasting positive impact on their lives."

Ileana A. Torres-Burgos, MD

Dr. Ileana A. Torres-Burgos is a pediatric and fetal cardiologist on staff at Palm Beach Children's Hospital at St. Mary's. She has been with the hospital since July of 2023 after joining KIDZ Medical Services. Originally from Puerto Rico, Dr. Torres-Burgos completed her Bachelor of Science in Biology and Biomedical Sciences at the University of Puerto Rico and her Doctor of Medicine at Ponce Health Sciences University-School of Medicine. She completed her Residency in General Pediatrics at Nicklaus Children's Hospital and her Fellowship in Pediatric Cardiology at the University of Miami/Jackson Memorial Hospital where she was Chief Fellow from 2022 to 2023. Dr. Torres-Burgos speaks both English and Spanish fluently, which allows her to develop trust with patients and ensures inclusive healthcare. She says the best part about her job is being able to educate families about their children's heart conditions and connecting them with the care they need.



GOOD SAMARITAN MEDICAL CENTER

Oral A. Waldo, MD

Dr. Oral A. Waldo is a cardiologist on staff at Good Samaritan and Palm Beach Gardens medical centers. He earned his Bachelors in Biological Science and Masters in Biomedical Science from Florida Atlantic University. Dr. Waldo graduated from Howard University College of Medicine with a Doctorate of Medicine. He completed his internal medicine residency and his cardiovascular diseases fellowship at Mayo School of Graduate Medical Education.



Dr. Waldo is board-certified in cardiology and internal medicine, and used to be a teaching assistant at Florida Atlantic University. He also worked as adjunct professor at Broward Community College and medstar tutor at Howard University College of Medicine. Dr. Waldo says the best part of his job is interacting with various individuals and the gratification one experiences when they are relieved from their symptoms. "I enjoy instilling hope in the minds of individuals who receive their diagnosis, especially while we formulate a treatment plan." said Dr. Waldo.

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Profiles In Cardiology

DELRAY MEDICAL CENTER

David Kleinman, MD

David S. Kleinman, M.D., a cardiac electrophysiologist, recently joined the Cardiovascular Care - Palm Beach Health Network Physician Group with offices in Delray Beach at the South Florida Heart Institute and Delray Medical Center Tower as well as in Boca Raton at Cardiology Associates of Boca Raton. Dr. Kleinman specializes in all types of heart arrhythmias. He has extensive experience in performing procedures including pacemaker and defibrillator implants, Watchman™ left atrial appendage closure implant, and catheter ablation for a variety of heart arrhythmias including atrial fibrillation (AFib), supraventricular tachycardia, and ventricular tachycardia. Dr. Kleinman is patient focused, using his over his over 30-years of experience as a cardiac electrophysiologist to determine whether medical management or a procedure is necessary. He is board-certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine in Cardiovascular Disease and Cardiac Electrophysiology. Dr. Kleinman is on-staff at Delray Medical Center and West Boca Medical Center.



Kushagra Katariya, MD, FACS

Dr. Kushagra Katariya is a cardiothoracic surgeon specializing in adult cardiothoracic surgery including minimally invasive heart valve and structural heart procedures at Delray Medical Center. Dr. Katariya specializes in coronary surgery, mitral valve surgery, aortic surgery, aortic valve surgery, lung and mediastinal surgery, transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR) and minimally invasive surgery. In addition, Dr. Katariya is board-certified by the American Board of Thoracic Surgery and the American Board of Surgery. Dr. Katariya is on-staff at Delray Medical Center and Palm Beach Gardens Medical Center and he has Cardiovascular Care - Palm Beach Health Network Physician Group offices located on the campuses of both hospitals. For his education and training, Dr. Katariya completed a fellowship in cardiothoracic surgery from Jackson Memorial Medical Center/University of Miami Miller School of Medicine. Dr. Katariya completed his general surgery training at Beth Israel Medical Center, Albert Einstein College of Medicine located in New York, NY. He graduated medical school from the University of Delhi, India in 1988.



AMAVITA HEART & VASCULAR

Pedro Martinez-Clark, MD

Dr. Pedro Martinez-Clark, an accomplished and visionary physician, boasts a compelling journey bridging two continents. Hailing from Colombia, South America, his bicultural upbringing involved frequent international transitions. Overcoming challenges during medical school in Colombia, he displayed unwavering commitment and determination. An opportunity to participate in an exchange program at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine marked a transformative turning point. This experience ignited his curiosity and catalyzed further academic pursuits, ultimately leading him to esteemed institutions, such as Mayo Clinic and Harvard University Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center. Dedication during residency provided the foundation for his passion for medical innovation and entrepreneurship. Dr. Martinez-Clark's notable contributions, including multiple published papers, showcased his ability to translate clinical inquiries into impactful basic science studies, shaping his remarkable medical career. Subsequently, his journey took him to Miami, where he joined the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine as faculty. In 2012, he founded Amavita Heart and Vascular Health™, a thriving practice with a strong presence in Miami-Dade County. Throughout his career, Dr. Pedro Martinez-Clark has exemplified an entrepreneurial spirit and resilience, using failures as steppingstones to success. His dedication to empowering physicians in healthcare decision-making and championing patient-centered care in a consolidating industry underscores his visionary leadership.



HOLY CROSS MEDICAL GROUP

Alexander Llanos, MD

Alexander Llanos, M.D., is an interventional and structural cardiologist at Holy Cross Medical Group. A cardiovascular service line physician leader at Holy Cross Health, he serves in a dyad model with the executive director. Dr. Llanos also serves on the Holy Cross Physician Board and as a member of the Trinity Health Clinical Excellence Council. He organizes local, national and international conferences in cardiovascular disease and physician leadership. His focus areas include interventional cardiology, structural heart disease, transcatheter aortic valve replacement, atrial septal defect closure and paravalvular leak closure. Board-certified in Internal Medicine, Cardiovascular Disease and Interventional Cardiology, Dr. Llanos is extensively involved in medical research and clinical trials. He earned his undergraduate degree from Mercer University (Macon, GA) and his medical degree from Medical College of Georgia (Augusta). He completed an internship and residency in internal medicine at University of Miami/Jackson Memorial Hospital and a clinical cardiology fellowship at Atlanta's Emory University before completing an interventional cardiology and advanced coronary and structural heart disease fellowship at Massachusetts General Hospital / Harvard Medical School. He obtained an MBA from the University of Florida's Warrington College of Business.



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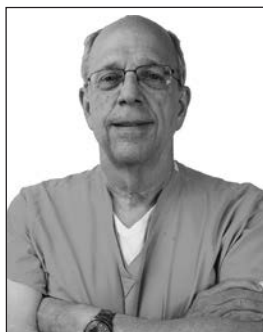


Profiles In Cardiology

PALM BEACH CARDIOVASCULAR THORACIC ASSOCIATES

Richard Faro, MD, FACS

On November 9th, 1983, Dr. Richard Faro and the cardiac team completed the very first open-heart surgery in Palm Beach County and the Treasure Coast at Palm Beach Gardens Medical Center. He also helped Palm Beach Gardens Medical Center start the heart surgery program at the hospital, which has completed more than 19,000 open-heart surgeries. Dr. Faro is on-staff at Palm Beach Gardens Medical Center and his Palm Beach Cardiovascular Thoracic Associates office is located on the campus of the hospital at 3370 Burns Road, Suite 206, Palm Beach Gardens. The practice encompasses a wide range of cardiac surgery care including coronary artery bypass graft (CABG), transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR) and acute aortic dissection repair. In addition, the practice provides vascular surgery care including transcarotid artery revascularization (TCAR), and open endarterectomy surgery.

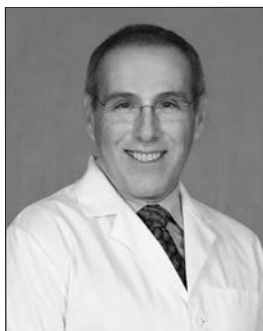


Additionally, Dr. Faro's practice offers multiple interventions utilized in the office for chronic venous insufficiency including ablation and sclerotherapy to treat varicose and spider veins. Dr. Faro is board-certified with the American Board of Surgery, American Board of Thoracic Surgery and American Board of Phlebology. For his education and training, Dr. Faro completed a cardiovascular/thoracic surgery fellowship and peripheral vascular surgery fellowship at Rush University Medical Center, Chicago, IL. In addition, Dr. Faro completed a general surgery residency at Creighton University School of Medicine, Omaha, NE, internship at S.U.N.Y. Downstate Medical Center and Kings County Hospital, Brooklyn, NY, and graduated medical school from the Creighton University School of Medicine. Dr. Faro also served as a Captain in the United States Air Force where he was on-staff at Guam Memorial Hospital located in Agana, Guam.

CARDIOVASCULAR CARE - PALM BEACH HEALTH NETWORK PHYSICIAN GROUP, DELRAY MEDICAL CENTER TOWER

Jeffrey H. Newman, MD, FACS

Dr. Jeffrey Newman is a cardiothoracic surgeon specializing in adult cardiac surgery along with expertise in traditional coronary and valve surgery at Cardiovascular Care - Palm Beach Health Network Physician Group and on-staff at Delray Medical Center. Dr. Newman also focuses on mini-mitral valve surgery and mini-aortic valve surgery. Additionally, he is proficient at using the da Vinci robotic system for lung cancer surgery, and is intimately involved in trans-catheter aortic and mitral valve procedures completed at Delray Medical Center. Dr. Newman earned his medical degree from New York Medical College in Valhalla, NY. He then did his internship and residency at St. Luke's-Roosevelt Hospital Center in New York, NY in general surgery. Dr. Newman then completed his Fellowship at Robert Wood Johnson Medical School in New Brunswick, NJ in Thoracic Surgery. Dr. Newman is a member of the American College of Surgeons and the American Society of Thoracic Surgeons. Dr. Newman's Cardiovascular Care - Palm Beach Health Network Physician Group is located in the Delray Medical Center Tower.



CARDIOVASCULAR CARE - PALM BEACH HEALTH NETWORK PHYSICIAN GROUP, PALM BEACH GARDENS

Nishant D. Patel, MD

Dr. Nishant Patel is a cardiothoracic surgeon on-staff at Palm Beach Gardens Medical Center and Delray Medical Center. He earned his Bachelor of Arts in History of Science, Technology, and Medicine and a Bachelor of Arts in Natural Sciences degree from Johns Hopkins University, where he also obtained a Doctor of Medicine in 2009. Dr. Patel was also Chief Resident in the Department of Surgery in Divisions of Cardiac and Thoracic Surgery at Johns Hopkins Hospital. After completing residency, he proceeded his training in the Edwards Lifesciences TAVR Foundations for Fellows Course in Miami, FL.



Dr. Patel received several extramural funding awards for his research endeavors while completing his education and has teaching experience as a speaker in many lectures at Johns Hopkins Hospital. He was awarded throughout his academic and medical career, recognizing achievements ranging from academic excellence to research contributions and critical care scholarships. Dr. Patel says the best part about his job is the privilege of taking care of people who are very sick, fixing them with his hands, and watching them recover, allowing them to get back to doing things they enjoy.

CARDIOVASCULAR CARE - PALM BEACH HEALTH NETWORK PHYSICIAN GROUP, SOUTH FLORIDA HEART INSTITUTE

Eric Lieberman, MD, FACC

Dr. Eric Lieberman is the National Medical Director of Cardiology at Tenet Healthcare and Regional Medical Director of Cardiology for the Palm Beach Health Network. In addition, Dr. Lieberman is the Vice Chief of Staff at Delray Medical Center where he has been on-staff since 2000. A highly experienced fellowship trained cardiologist, Dr. Lieberman is a member of South Florida Heart Institute - a cardiology practice with Cardiovascular Care - Palm Beach Health Network Physician Group, a team of seven cardiologists located at 5035 Via Delray in Delray Beach, and additional office at the Delray Medical Center Tower. Dr. Lieberman sees cardiology patients with a focus on general cardiology, preventive cardiology and cardio-oncology. Additionally, Dr. Lieberman is an associate professor of medicine at the Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine at Florida Atlantic University. Dr. Lieberman earned his medical degree from the University of Miami in Coral Gables. He then completed his residency and internship at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston, Massachusetts in internal medicine where he was also the Chief Medical Resident. Dr. Lieberman completed his fellowship at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Cardiology.



CARDIOVASCULAR CARE - PALM BEACH HEALTH NETWORK PHYSICIAN GROUP, SOUTH FLORIDA HEART INSTITUTE AND DELRAY MEDICAL CENTER TOWER

Benjamin Ravaee, MD

Dr. Benjamin Ravaee is a cardiologist specializing in the treatment of heart conditions including arrhythmias, coronary artery disease and congestive heart failure. Highly skilled in cardiac diagnostic testing, Dr. Ravaee specializes in echocardiography, transesophageal echocardiography (TEE) and nuclear cardiology. He is board-certified by the American Board of Echocardiography and the American Board of Internal Medicine with an additional Sub-Certification in Cardiovascular Disease. Dr. Ravaee's office is located at the South Florida Heart Institute and Delray Medical Center Tower where he is on-staff at the hospital as the Medical Director of Cardiac Rehabilitation. For his education and training, Dr. Ravaee served as chief fellow while completing his fellowship in cardiovascular medicine at the University Hospitals Cleveland Medical Center/Case Western Reserve University located in Cleveland, Ohio. In addition, Dr. Ravaee served as chief resident while completing an internal medicine residency and internship at the Medical College of Wisconsin Affiliated Hospitals, Milwaukee, WI. Dr. Ravaee graduated medical school from the University of Illinois at Chicago College of Medicine, located in Chicago, IL.



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Cover Story: Fighting for the Underdog: New Chief Executive of Miami Cardiac & Vascular Surgery – Tom C. Nguyen, MD, Cardiothoracic Surgeon

Continued from page 1

peer-reviewed articles. He believes research and science lead to better patient outcomes.

“My dad and older sister and I came to Houston speaking no English. We were very poor and lived on rice, eggs and soy sauce,” he recalls. “My father has been my role model. He had been in the military and was also an engineer in Vietnam, but when we came to the U.S., he took whatever job he could find. He worked as a welder. He worked in a convenience store. One day the store was robbed, and he was shot in the shoulder.”

Fortunately, Dr. Nguyen’s father survived and went on to establish a large non-profit organization that assists other immigrants, a job his U.S.-born brother assumed when their father later died.

At a young age, Dr. Nguyen realized that their close-knit community cared deeply for each other. Neighborhood “nannies” stepped in to watch children while parents worked. Helping hands were never far away, for within these familiar walls,

watching out for each other became woven into the fabric of daily life. From these experiences, Dr. Nguyen became aware that his success was not his own doing but was from support systems, luck, and many mentors. As world-renowned as he has become, it’s his humble beginnings that remain at the core of who he is.

“I had the chance to go back to Vietnam for the first time after I completed medical school,” he says. “One morning at the crack of dawn, I saw a young boy working tirelessly on a shrimping boat. I couldn’t stop thinking how that could have been me. We were about the same age. I wasn’t stronger or smarter. I was just luckier.”

Dr. Nguyen graduated from Rice University with honors in Economics. Following medical school at Johns Hopkins University, he completed a general surgery residency at Stanford University, a cardiothoracic fellowship at Columbia Presbyterian and a transcatheter fellowship at Emory University. As an innovative heart surgeon, he has performed many first in man operations.

Cardiac surgery was a draw for him, he says, because of its complexities and challenges. “I can zone out and get laser-focused,” he explains. “There are at least 100 critical steps in heart surgery with small margins of error. You need to be composed in the most chaotic environment.”

Synchronicity in the operating room is also vital to a superior-performing team and good patient outcomes. “It’s like a dance. Everyone has a role, and every person is vital to the team. You can’t be duplicating efforts,” he says. “If we work together as a team, we are unstoppable.”

Dr. Nguyen appreciates the partnerships that have developed from the Institute’s early years and as he leads the Institute through its next period of growth, he plans to build teams that will elevate cardiovascular services and enable the launch of new programs such as robotic heart surgery. Patient centered care, research and innovation will be core values of the Institute. He aspires to lead Baptist Health Miami Cardiac & Vascular

Institute to become the crown and jewel program for Miami and beyond.

He and his wife, interventional radiologist Gina Landinez, M.D., are the parents of two young girls. As someone who is keenly aware of women’s contributions to society, he is an active advocate for diversity, equity and inclusion.

The stories of hardship and the obstacles overcome by many immigrants and marginalized people resonate with Dr. Nguyen and give him special reason to appreciate the diversity of South Florida and that of his patients and their families.

“My experience shaped me as a doctor,” he says. “It’s a privilege and an honor to care for patients who have put all of their trust in you. When a patient comes back to me and says, ‘I’ve gone fishing again,’ or ‘Here’s a picture of me hiking,’ that is amazing. Getting them back to their families is magical.” Dr. Nguyen’s story, like countless others, is a testament to the transformative power of community, of fighting for the underdog, and of embracing the magic of second chances.

WHAT’S NEW...WHAT’S NEW...WHAT’S NEW...

Baptist Health Miami Neuroscience Institute Opens Epilepsy Monitoring Unit at Baptist Health Baptist Hospital



Baptist Health Miami Neuroscience Institute has opened a newly renovated epilepsy monitoring unit (EMU) at Baptist Health Baptist Hospital. The 5-bed unit is intended to observe patients 24 hours a day with state-of-the-art technology in each patient room.

Centered on surgical planning evaluation, event characterization, and medication management, the hope is patients can leave with a full treatment plan centered on their type of epilepsy, decided by a multidisciplinary team of experts. The multidisciplinary team, comprised of epileptologists, neuroradiologists, neuropsychologists, and neurosurgeons will work to evaluate where a patient’s seizures are stemming from and what treatment options, such as surgery, neuromodulation, and/or medication can be used to alleviate symptoms and steer patients to have the greatest quality of life possible. Additionally, this dedicated unit is comprised of nurses specializing in epilepsy care.

“This unit will increase our capabilities to provide more innovative options for patients with epilepsy in South Florida and beyond. My hope is patients will come to us and leave with a detailed understanding of their condition and confidence in a plan we will have crafted for them”, shared Luis Felipe Tornes, M.D., director of epilepsy with Miami Neuroscience Institute. “We understand many epileptic patients are seeking seizure freedom, or a significant reduction in seizure frequency, more specifically, those with drug-resistant epilepsy. Our team is determined to deliver a detailed evaluation of every patient who comes through our doors, offering newfound hope.”

HCA Florida JFK North Hospital Donates \$10,000 to the Palm Beach County Food Bank



HCA Florida JFK North Hospital as a part of HCA Healthcare announced the results of its annual Healthy Food for Healthier Tomorrows Food and Nutrition Drive. This fall, HCA Healthcare, their colleagues and the HCA Healthcare Foundation provided more than 1 million nutritious meals to community food banks by donating food or making financial contributions to help purchase perishable items such as milk, fruit and vegetables. This eclipses the 878,000 meals provided by the organization in 2022.

As one of the participants in HCA Healthcare’s Healthy Food for Healthier Tomorrows Food and Nutrition Drive, HCA Florida JFK North Hospital and its colleagues will donate \$10,000 to the Palm Beach County Food Bank.

For the 2023 Healthy Food for Healthier Tomorrows Food and Nutrition Drive, hospitals were encouraged to get creative and build sculptures with the donated food before transporting it to their local food banks. The winner in each division received a \$10,000 grant for the food bank serving their community. This is the second year in a row that HCA Florida JFK North Hospital won this competition.

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Anurag Agarwal, MD, Joins Baptist Health as Radiation Oncologist

Anurag Agarwal, M.D., double board-certified in radiation oncology and internal medicine, recently joined The Eugene M. & Christine E. Lynn Cancer Institute, part of Baptist Health South Florida, at Boca Raton Regional Hospital.

Prior to joining Baptist Health, Dr. Agarwal was in private practice, and medical director of radiation oncology at Broward Health, where he implemented the county's first CyberKnife program. He currently serves as an affiliate assistant professor at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine and Florida Atlantic University Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine.

Dr. Agarwal earned his medical degree from the George Washington University School of Medicine. He completed an internal medicine residency at Mount Sinai Medical Center and a radiation oncology residency at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine. He also completed a proton beam therapy fellowship at Harvard Medical School's Mass General Hospital.



Dr. Anurag Agarwal

Dr. Bernie Fernandez Joins Broward Health

Bernardo "Bernie" B. Fernandez Jr., M.D., former chief executive officer of Baptist Health Medical Group and Cleveland Clinic Florida, has been named Broward Health's new Corporate Physician Executive.

Known for his community outreach, Dr. Fernandez currently sits on the advisory council for the Phil Smith Neuroscience Institute, and was a leader with Florida Atlantic University, helping to establish the voluntary faculty for the Schmidt College of Medicine. In addition, he has held a number of appointments, including currently serving as a member of the Orange Bowl Committee, Miami/Fort Lauderdale YPO Gold Chapter and Broward Workshop. Dr. Fernandez is not only a member of the Dean's Advisory Council, but also a clinical professor and founding voluntary faculty member for the Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine at Florida International University. He previously served on the President's Commission on White House Fellowships, was chairman of the Florida Board of Medicine, was a board member of The Community Foundation of Broward and the South Florida Hospital & Healthcare Association, as well as the recipient of the Harry Mangurian Jr. Endowed Chair, to name just a few of his accomplishments.

Dr. Fernandez has a B.S. in Biology and received his M.D. from Ponce School of Medicine in Ponce, Puerto Rico. He completed both his residency and fellowship at The Cleveland Clinic in Cleveland, OH. He also received his MBA from the University of Miami and a Leadership and Management Certificate for executive development from The Wharton School of Business, University of Pennsylvania.



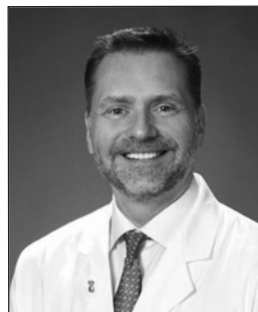
Dr. Bernardo B. Fernandez Jr.

Neurologist Gediminas Peter Gliebus, MD, Joins Baptist Health

Gediminas Peter Gliebus, M.D., a board-certified neurologist with subspecialty certification in behavioral neurology and neuropsychiatry, has joined Marcus Neuroscience Institute, part of Baptist Health, at Boca Raton Regional Hospital. Dr. Gliebus will serve as the Institute's medical director of the Cognitive and Behavioral Neurology Program.

Prior to joining Marcus Neuroscience Institute, Dr. Gliebus served as academic chair of the Department of Neurology at Drexel University College of Medicine, chief of neurology and director of the Alzheimer's Disease and Cognitive Disorder Center at Crozer Keystone Healthcare System, as well as chair of neurology at Global Neurosciences Institute.

Dr. Gliebus earned his medical degree at the Faculty of Medicine of Vilnius University in Lithuania. He completed a neurology residency at Drexel University College of Medicine, serving as chief resident. He also completed a behavioral neurology and neuropsychiatry fellowship at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine.



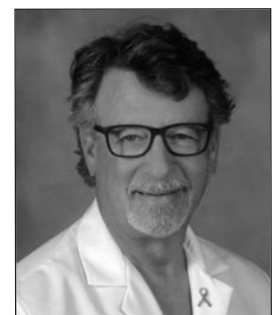
Dr. Gediminas Peter Gliebus

Orthopaedic Surgeon and Spine Specialist Kalman D. Blumberg, MD, Joins Holy Cross Medical Group

Orthopaedic surgeon and spine specialist Kalman D. Blumberg, M.D., has joined Holy Cross Medical Group.

Since 2009, Dr. Blumberg has been a physician with Florida Spine Specialists with offices in Fort Lauderdale, Marathon and Key West. He also previously was affiliated with Broward Health Medical Center and Broward Health Imperial Point in Fort Lauderdale and Lower Keys Medical Center in Key West.

Dr. Blumberg graduated from the University of Miami Leonard M. Miller School of Medicine with a Doctor of Medicine degree with research distinction. He then completed an internship in the department of surgery followed by a residency in the department of orthopaedics and rehabilitation, both at the Medical College of Virginia in Richmond, VA, and a fellowship in spine surgery at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital and Pennsylvania Hospital in Philadelphia. He graduated cum laude and with departmental honors from Tulane University in New Orleans with a Bachelor of Science in Biomedical Engineering and completed some of his undergraduate coursework at Vanderbilt University, University of Florida and Technion - Israel Institute of Technology in Haifa, Israel.



Dr. Kalman D. Blumberg

HCA Florida Mercy Hospital Welcomes New Chief Medical Officer

HCA Florida Mercy Hospital is pleased to announce the appointment of Dr. Marilu Madrigal to the position of chief medical officer (CMO).

Madrigal brings more than 30 years of experience in health-care serving in clinical and leadership roles, specializing in obstetrics and gynecology. Most recently, she was in private practice with Femwell Group Health - Gynecologic Oncology, located on the campus of HCA Florida Mercy Hospital. A former member of Mercy's board of trustees, from 1999 through 2011, Madrigal has been in practice at Mercy since 1997.

Madrigal earned a Doctor of Medicine degree from the University of Kansas School of Medicine and completed residency programs at the University of Miami School of Medicine's Sylvester Cancer Center, including one in obstetrics and gynecology and another in gynecologic oncology.



Dr. Marilu Madrigal

Rochelle Samarasekera, DO, Joins Holy Cross Health Family Medicine Practice

Rochelle Samarasekera, D.O., has joined the Holy Cross Health Medical Group.

Prior to joining Holy Cross, Dr. Samarasekera worked as a family medicine physician at Osceola Medical Center in Osceola, WI, where she provided outpatient adult and pediatric care and gained valuable experience as a hospitalist and in obstetrics. During her time there, she served on multiple committees including medical/surgical hospital, diabetes, clinic, obstetrics and quality metrics.

Dr. Samarasekera earned a Bachelor of Arts in Biology and English from Saint Louis University in St. Louis, MO, and completed her Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine at Nova Southeastern University's Dr. Kiran C. Patel College of Osteopathic Medicine in Fort Lauderdale. Dr. Samarasekera then pursued a three-year residency at Hennepin County Medical Center in Minneapolis, where she co-created monthly "Residents Best Practices" presentations to help fellow residents learn how to streamline practices for clinic and inpatient family medicine services.



Dr. Rochelle Samarasekera

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Health Care District of Palm Beach County Welcomes New Physicians

The Health Care District of Palm Beach County proudly announces the addition of six accomplished physicians to its dedicated team of professionals. Dr. Jose Hernandez Garcia, Dr. Michael Zhang, Dr. Claudia Isabella Tussey, Dr. Joshua Adametz, Dr. Patrick J. Regan, and Dr. Ana Bernard bring a wealth of experience and expertise, further enhancing the Health Care District's commitment to providing top-quality healthcare services to the community.

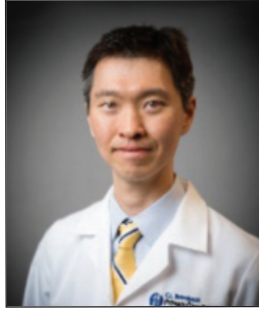
Jose Hernandez Garcia, MD, FAAP, joins the C. L. Brumback Primary Care Clinics' West Palm Beach community health center and Lakeside Medical Center, the Health Care District's rural teaching hospital in Belle Glade, as a board-certified pediatrician specializing in primary care. Since 2015, Dr. Hernandez Garcia has delivered compassionate and comprehensive care to children in private outpatient and Federally Qualified Health Center settings.

Michael Zhang, MD, MPH, joins the team at the C. L. Brumback Primary Care Clinics' Jupiter community health center, where he focuses on providing exceptional primary care services to adult patients. Board-certified in preventive medicine and board-eligible in occupational medicine, Dr. Zhang's expertise extends to specialized areas such as sports medicine and musculoskeletal injuries. He previously practiced at Southern Nevada Community Health Center, a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) in Las Vegas, NV.

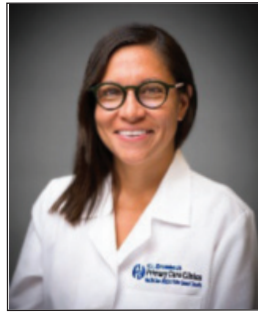
Claudia Isabella Tussey, MD, MPH, joins the team at the C. L. Brumback Primary Care Clinics' Delray Beach community health center, where she provides primary care



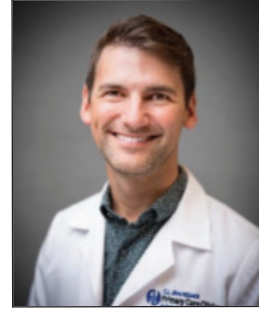
Dr. Jose Hernandez Garcia



Dr. Michael Zhang



Dr. Claudia Isabella Tussey



Dr. Joshua Adametz

services to adult patients. Board-certified in family medicine, Dr. Tussey also has experience in specialized areas such as public and community health, maternal and child health, obstetrics, family planning, and addiction medicine. Before joining the Health Care District, Dr. Tussey was an attending physician at Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist in Winston-Salem, NC for five years.

Joshua Adametz, DMD, MPH, MA, joins the Health Care District team as Dental Director of the C. L. Brumback Primary Care Clinics where he oversees the dental providers and services, establishes protocols and procedures to ensure quality of care for all dental patients and treats adult and pediatric dental patients. Prior to joining the Health Care District, Dr. Adametz was Dental Director for the Florida Community Health Centers. Previously, he was a general dentist and Associate Dental Director for Lakeshore Community Health Care in Wisconsin.

Ana Bernard, DDS, joins the team as a dentist at the C. L. Brumback Primary Care Clinics' Delray Beach community health center, where she treats adult patients. Prior to joining the Health Care District, she was a dentist for a private practice office in Kingsland, GA, for nine years. Previously, she served as Dental Director for a community health center in Anderson, IN, and she was a dentist for the Florida Department of Health in Saint Augustine, FL.

Patrick J. Regan, DO joins the team as a board-certified general surgeon. Dr. Regan performs surgery at Lakeside Medical Center and provides exceptional pre-op and post-op care services to patients at the C. L. Brumback Primary Care Clinics' Belle Glade community health center. Dr. Regan has more than 25 years of diverse medical practice experience, including trauma, critical care, pediatric, acute care, and general surgery, and is an Associate Professor of Surgery at Florida State University.



Dr. Ana Bernard



Dr. Patrick J. Regan

Accolades Accolades Accolades Accolades

Saltz Michelson Architects Named AIA Fort Lauderdale Architecture Firm of the Year

Saltz Michelson Architects has been awarded the prestigious AIA Fort Lauderdale Firm of the Year for 2023. This honor is a testament to their team's dedication to architectural excellence and community engagement. This award recognizes not just their work but the people behind it. Each team member's talent and commitment have been key to their success and this significant recognition.



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Manny Linares Named New CEO of Broward Health Medical Center

Manuel “Manny” Linares has been named the new chief executive officer (CEO) of Broward Health Medical Center.

Linares most recently served as president and CEO of Touro Infirmiry, a 360-bed hospital that’s part of LCMC Health, a public, non-profit healthcare system located in New Orleans, LA. Prior to that, he spent 30 years at Tenet Healthcare Corporation in various leadership roles, including CEO and chief operating officer (COO) of North Shore Medical Center, as well as COO of North Ridge Medical Center.

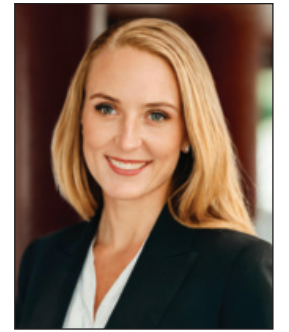
Linares earned his bachelor’s degree in electrical engineering and a Master of Health Services Administration from Florida International University.



Manuel Linares

Delray Medical Center Names Heather Havericak as New Chief Operating Officer

Heather Havericak is named to the position of Chief Operating Officer (COO) of Delray Medical Center. Havericak comes to Delray Medical Center from Broward Health, where she served in a variety of leadership roles within the system for 17 years. She spent the last four years of her tenure as the Chief Executive Officer of the system’s flagship facility, Broward Health Medical Center, which includes the Salah Foundation Children’s Hospital. She has also held the positions of Chief Operating Officer, Associate Vice President of Strategic and Administrative Services, Regional Director of the Hospital’s strategic service lines, and Nurse Manager of the Pediatric Oncology and Sickle Cell Transition Program and Pediatric Palliative Care.



Heather Havericak

Pettit Caps Remarkable 40-Year Career With VITAS® Healthcare, Leaves a Legacy of Compassionate Care in the Hospice Community

VITAS Healthcare is bidding a heartfelt farewell to one of its most esteemed and dedicated professionals, Peggy Pettit, R.N., who retired at the end of December 2023. Pettit’s four decades of unwavering commitment to VITAS and the hospice community have left an indelible mark, impacting countless lives and embodying the true spirit of compassionate care.

Pettit’s journey with VITAS began in 1983 when she joined the organization as a registered nurse. Her passion for hospice care was evident from the start, as she embraced the company’s mission to provide comfort, dignity and peace to patients facing life-limiting illnesses. Pettit’s growth within the organization is a testament to her dedication and the nurturing environment that VITAS provides for its employees.

Throughout her illustrious career, Pettit has taken on various roles and responsibilities within VITAS. From her early days as a compassionate bedside nurse to assuming leadership positions—patient care administrator, general manager, and vice president, chief operations and executive vice president roles—Pettit’s journey has been marked by a tireless pursuit of excellence in delivering hospice care.

Pettit has been a driving force behind several important initiatives within VITAS, setting many standards for the nation’s leading hospice care provider, including:

- Ensuring quality end-of-life care for patients with HIV and AIDS in the 1980s, at a time when VITAS was South Florida’s sole provider for those with the disease.
- Advocating for the company’s earliest technological advancements, including electronic medical records, throughout the 1990s-2000s.
- Drawing up the four VITAS Values in 1993 that guide every employee every day.
- Becoming the first vice president of patient and family services in 1998 and carrying on the tradition of female leadership as the protégé of VITAS co-founder Esther Colliflower.
- Introducing an outreach program for underserved communities, which includes educational initiatives and establishing enduring relationships such as the 20-plus year partnership with the National Black Nurses Association since 2003.

Additionally, Pettit has supported the hospice and healthcare community through leadership across several boards and organizations. She actively chairs both the California Hospice and Palliative Care Association and the Florida Hospice and Palliative Care Association.



Peggy Pettit

West Palm Beach VA Announces New Assistant Director

The West Palm Beach VA Healthcare System (WPBVAHCS) is pleased to announce the appointment of Thomas “Zach” Orr as its new Assistant Director. Orr is an experienced healthcare administrator, having served in various roles since he joined the Department of Veterans Affairs in 2018. Orr most recently served as a Health Systems Specialist for the Executive and Assistant Directors at the West Palm Beach VA. He previously served as an Administrative Officer for Surgical Services, overseeing 15 surgical specialties at the Sioux Falls VA in South Dakota. As the Assistant Director, Orr will provide executive oversight of five contracted Community-based Outpatient Clinics, Veterans Canteen Services, Emergency Management, Police, Supply Chain Management, Veterans Experience, Blind Rehabilitation, Prosthetics, and the Center for Development & Civic Engagement.



Thomas “Zach” Orr

HCA Florida Kendall Hospital Welcomes Vickie Magurean as New Chief Financial Officer

HCA Florida Kendall Hospital is pleased to welcome Chief Financial Officer Vickie Magurean. Magurean joins HCA Florida Kendall Hospital from the HCA West Florida Division, where she has been the CFO at HCA Florida Fawcett Hospital and HCA Florida Englewood Hospital for the last six years. While there, she helped secure \$115 million in capital investment dollars for expansion and renovation projects, two new cardiac catheterization labs, and four freestanding emergency rooms. Magurean has a proven track record in financial leadership, a deep understanding of the healthcare industry and brings a wealth of experience to Kendall Hospital.



Vickie Magurean

Healthcare Executive David O’Brien Named Market CEO for Kindred Hospitals of South Florida

David O’Brien, who has spent the past decade as an administrator for operations and nursing at hospitals in South Florida and other parts of the South, was recently named the Market Chief Executive Officer for Kindred Hospitals of South Florida. O’Brien brings significant experience as a Chief Operating Officer and Chief Nursing Officer to his new CEO role. From 2017 to ‘21, O’Brien had stints as COO at Broward Health Medical Center and Salah Foundation Children’s Hospital in Fort Lauderdale, St. Mary’s Medical Center and Palm Beach Children’s Hospital in West Palm Beach, and Hilton Head (South Carolina) Regional Hospital. In 2017-18, he was Market COO for Tenet Healthcare for a group of six hospitals in South Carolina and Massachusetts. O’Brien also has served as CNO for Palm Beach Gardens Medical Center (2015-17) and Coral Gables Hospital (2014-15). An RN, O’Brien began his healthcare career in New York, where he spent six years in nursing leadership at New York-Presbyterian Columbia University Irving Medical Center and advanced to the role of Director of Nursing. O’Brien earned the degrees of Bachelor of Science in Nursing, Master of Science in Nursing and Master of Health Administration from Phoenix University. He also holds the credential of Nurse Executive Advanced-Board Certified (NEA-BC). He is former chief of the Pearl River (New York) Volunteer Fire Department.



David O’Brien

Cleveland Clinic Names New Chief Pharmacy Officer

Cleveland Clinic has appointed Lindsey B. Amerine, Pharm.D., MS, BCPS, CPEL, FASHP, as Chief Pharmacy Officer. She will begin on February 26 and will oversee enterprise pharmacy initiatives.

Dr. Amerine joins Cleveland Clinic from UNC Health, where she most recently served as Interim Chief Pharmacy Officer and Vice President of Pharmacy from May to September last year and System Executive Director of Pharmacy since February 2022 overseeing clinical, operational, and financial services.

Dr. Amerine received her Doctor of Pharmacy degree from the University of Wyoming School of Pharmacy and her Master of Science degree, with a focus on health-system pharmacy administration, from the University of North Carolina Eshelman School of Pharmacy.



Lindsey B. Amerine

TGH Cancer Institute Receives \$2 Million Gift to Establish Sarcoma Center at Tampa General Hospital

Tampa General Hospital (TGH) has received a \$2 million gift to establish the TGH Cancer Institute Sarcoma Center. The new center is committed to the diagnosis, treatment and research of sarcoma, a cancer of the bone and connective tissue.

The generous donation made by Pathmanath "Phil" Desilva will enable the academic health system to develop a center focused solely on the treatment and care of all subtypes of sarcoma. Desilva was inspired by the vision and innovative work being done at the TGH Cancer Institute, particularly by Dr. Victoria Rizk, a medical oncologist and clinical director of the Sarcoma Center. She has been leading the development of the Sarcoma Center.

Known as a highly thoughtful and kind person with an ability to connect with people from all walks of life, Desilva was a businessman and CEO of Yzer, a logistics service leader with facilities extending across the United States. His favorite phrase, "We'll make it happen," fueled his never-ending passion for helping make those around him successful. Unfortunately, he passed away on Sept. 5, 2023, but with the knowledge that his gift would directly impact the lives of thousands affected by this rare and aggressive cancer. The TGH Cancer Institute will continue his legacy and work tirelessly to help patients suffering from this disease.

Under Rizk's leadership, the center will offer innovative research studies as well as the latest treatment advances and fund a growing comprehensive multidisciplinary clinic to include nurse navigation, genetic testing, social work services, psychology support and nutrition guidance. This directive shares the same goal of supporting sarcoma patients during their care. Throughout her academic career, Rizk has striven to advance sarcoma research with multiple peer-reviewed publications. Prior to joining Tampa General, she worked at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York City.

Around the Region... Around

Health Foundation of South Florida Announces New Board Members

The Health Foundation of South Florida is proud to announce the appointment of a dynamic and diverse group of new members to its Board.

Alfred G. Battle Jr., Deputy Director for the Development Services Department in the City of Fort Lauderdale brings over ten years of experience in community redevelopment, economic development, housing and urban planning. He is a proven senior-level public service professional who has successfully led policy changes and projects benefiting underserved communities.

David J. Clark, Senior Vice President of Operations at Broward Health System, is responsible for the day-to-day delivery of safe, high-quality patient services across the hospital district. His expertise spans healthcare administration, major capital planning, growth strategy, and fiscal management. Clark is experienced in transformational leadership, cultural shifts, influencing decisions, and implementing change management.

Alexander M. Fernandez, Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer for VITAS Healthcare, oversees the company's finance, accounting, and investor relations functions. A member of Leadership Florida's Cornerstone Class 40, Fernandez shapes the healthcare finance landscape with leadership, dedication, and a commitment to public service.

Lee Health Foundation Hires Justin Brand as Director of Development

Justin Brand has been hired as director of development at Lee Health Foundation, a role in which he will focus on philanthropy to support children's services.

Brand's experience includes working as chief development officer for the Charlotte Community Foundation since November 2018. In June, he was named as co-interim executive director for the foundation. Prior to joining the foundation, he served as operations manager for four years at the Charlotte Harbor Event and Conference Center. His more than 10 years of experience includes leadership, relationship building, financial management, community engagement and board relations.



Justin Brand



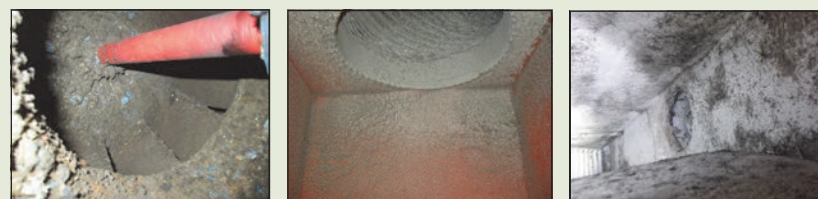
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A message from our President

2024 The Year of Nutrition, Exercise, and Sleep

We all know the right things to do to keep healthy and unfortunately, we tend to push them to the side when it comes to protecting ourselves.

In a recent article that I just read on improving our immunity levels, their advice sounded like the same advice that my mother used to share over the 70 years that I know her. To quote the Buck Institute, that advice includes:

- “Nutrition: Fruits and vegetables have thousands of active compounds that help support immune strength. Diets high in fruits and vegetables, and low in simple carbohydrates, can also help retain insulin sensitivity and promote metabolic health. In particular:

- leafy greens contain iron, folate, and Vitamin C
- carrots and sweet potatoes are high in Vitamin A
- bell peppers and citrus are very high in Vitamin C
- nuts, lentils, and seeds (as well as meat and oysters) are a good source of zinc, which helps support immune function



Jaime Caldwell

heed the advice of your parents and grandparents to eat properly, get exercise, and get plenty of sleep? Start today.

- **Exercise:** One small study found that older adults who exercised vigorously had immune systems similar to those of much younger adults.

- **Sleep:** This might be hard for many of us right now. Stress and disrupted routines can make it hard to relax at night, but it's worth trying some advice from the Mayo Clinic to get better sleep. New data is finding that irregular sleep patterns are associated with increased risk of metabolic disorders and obesity (at least in worms). And remember, a well-rested body supports a well-rested immune system.”

As we read and hear more discussions about personal accountability, it is likely only a matter of time before insurers link health insurance premiums to how well we take care of our own bodies.

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