



National Doctors' Day
MARCH 30, 2025

SALUTE TO PHYSICIANS



See pages 13-28



Healthcare Real Estate
Sustainable Architecture in Healthcare
Page 35

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THE REGION'S MONTHLY NEWSPAPER FOR HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS & PHYSICIANS
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Salute To Physicians



Mark D. Kent

CEO Leads Cano Health Out of Bankruptcy

BY LOIS THOMSON

Mark D. Kent, FACHE, FACMPE, joined Cano Health as an acquisition in January 2023, when he sold his medical practice group to the organization. "I was only meant to be around for about a year," he said, "then I was going to go off to my next venture. It was not my idea to stay." But, as often happens, plans changed.

Kent was named the interim CEO in June 2023, and within 90 days had to inform the market that Cano Health was facing a liquidity crisis, which led to bankruptcy. He admitted, "I spoke with my personal attorneys, and they said 'you could leave and take your company back.'"

Rather than do that, however, Kent went to visit some of the medical centers and wellness centers associated with Cano Health, and he recalls, "When I entered, there were patients who were saying, 'Please help save my center. This is the only place I've ever come for care, I love my doctors, I love my nurses, I hear you are the one who can help save this.' It was the same thing over and over."

That was enough to give Kent a new direction. "I came back to the corporate office, and I rallied my team and said, 'We're going to save this company. We're going to get through this together, and we're going to do it because that is our mission.' And from that point on, that's

Continued on page 30

Doctor-Led Hospitals: Enhancing Care and Leadership in Healthcare

BY DANIEL CASCIATO

Physician leadership in hospitals has become an increasingly valuable asset in today's evolving healthcare landscape. Doctor-run hospitals offer unique advantages for patients and healthcare providers, ensuring a more comprehensive approach to care delivery, innovation, and operational efficiency. Chirag Choudhary, M.D., Vice President and Chief Medical Officer at Cleveland Clinic Tradition Hospital in Port St. Lucie, shares his insights on the impact of physician leadership in hospital administration.



Dr. Chirag Choudhary

Physicians in Leadership: A Competitive Advantage

The presence of physicians in leadership positions offers hospitals a distinct advantage over traditionally managed institutions. "Several industry observers have pointed to the fact that healthcare organizations that are led by physicians tend to outperform others," Dr. Choudhary notes.

The evidence is compelling. According to *U.S. News & World Report's* annual "Best Hospitals Honor Roll," many top-performing health systems are led by physicians. "In a recent honor roll, 15 of the top 20 systems on the list are headed by physicians. I think it's safe to say that a physician's insight into healthcare delivery is highly valued in the world of medicine today," he adds.

Continued on page 29

Dr. Alwyn Leiba Takes Holistic Approach as MDC Medical Campus President

BY VANESSA ORR

As a dental hygiene student at Miami Dade College (MDC), Alwyn Leiba was always thinking of improvements that would benefit students in his role as Student Government Association president. As the president of the Miami Dade College Medical Campus, he's continuing in his pursuit to enhance student success at his alma mater.

After graduating with an associate in dental hygiene from MDC and a bachelor's degree in dental hygiene from St. Petersburg College, Dr. Leiba went on to earn a doctorate in higher education leadership from Northcentral University and an MBA with a concentration in healthcare management from American Intercontinental University. The first African American president of both the Florida Dental Hygienists' Association and the South Florida Dental Hygienists' Association, and the chair of the Association of Florida Colleges Healthcare Education Commission, he believes strongly in helping students in their efforts to pursue a healthcare education.

At MDC, Dr. Leiba has served in numerous roles including associate professor, chair and most recently, Dean of the School of Health Sciences. In June 2024, he was named president of the MDC Medical Campus.



Dr. Alwyn Leiba

Continued on page 30



Dr. Kristal Wolfe

The Evolution and Future of Hospital Medicine at Holy Cross Health and Beyond

BY KRISTAL WOLFE, MD

When I began my career 30 years ago, hospital medicine was in its infancy. Hospitalists were smaller groups of physicians, with a subset of patients assigned by emergency department (ED) call, a primary care office or an insurer. As a clinical minority in the hospital, it took time to earn the acceptance and respect of other specialists, one patient at a time. Three decades later, hospital medicine has evolved to include more physicians practicing across more subspecialties. Patients who come to the hospital, typically by way of the ED, have become accustomed to seeing a hospitalist who oversees their inpatient care, rather than their primary care physician (PCP) popping in for a visit, as was typical years ago.

This shift was driven by the need for efficiency as well as rising healthcare costs. Physicians are best at what they do routinely, and it's challenging for PCPs to bounce back and forth throughout the day seeing patients in their office for appointments and checking on patients in the hospital. Hospitalists are dedicated day in and out to patients who are admitted to the

Continued on page 30

NATIONAL DOCTORS' DAY 2025

Together, We Transform Lives

As physicians who care for some of the most vulnerable, we know that practicing medicine is more than a career. It's a calling.

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Publisher's Note

PART TWO

Doctors: The Real MVPs (Medical Valuable Professionals)

Let's be honest—without doctors, we'd all be in big trouble. Imagine a world where your only medical advice comes from your cousin who swears by essential oils and WebMD, which somehow always concludes you have a rare, fatal disease. Scary, right?

That's why doctors are the real MVPs, keeping us alive, (mostly) functional, and stopping us from diagnosing ourselves into an early grave. (And believe me lately, Carol and I have needed our share of MVP's)



The Ultimate Problem-Solvers

Doctors are like detectives, but instead of solving murders, they're figuring out why you have a weird rash or why your back sounds like a bag of popcorn every time you move. They go through years of training, mountains of textbooks, and countless sleepless nights just so they can listen to us say, "I Googled my symptoms, and I think I might be dying." And yet, they still manage to keep a straight face.

Superheroes in Scrubs

While superheroes get capes, doctors get scrubs, which, let's be honest, are way more practical. They deal with life-and-death situations daily, often running on caffeine and two hours of sleep. And unlike superheroes, they don't get to dramatically disappear after saving the day. Nope, they're back in their office, filling out enough paperwork to make a tree cry.

During the pandemic, doctors became the closest thing we had to actual superheroes—except instead of fighting bad guys, they fought viruses, misinformation, and people who thought wearing a mask was the hardest thing they've ever done. They've been our first line of defense against health crises, often sacrificing their own well-being to take care of others.

The Keepers of Medical Secrets

Doctors have seen it all—every weird symptom, every embarrassing question, every "I swear I have no idea how that got stuck there." And yet, they maintain professionalism, treating each patient with respect while secretly collecting the best dinner party stories they'll never get to tell. They also have an unmatched poker face, which they perfected from years of hearing, "So, I read on the internet that eating garlic cures everything."

Defenders Against Stupidity

Let's be real—doctors save lives not just from disease but from some very questionable life choices. They're the ones who remind us that energy drinks are not, in fact, a food group, that "just walking it off" is not always medical advice, and that you probably shouldn't perform DIY surgery with a butter knife.

They also have the patience of saints. They somehow manage to keep their cool when patients insist they don't need medication, even though their blood pressure is high enough to launch them into space. And they smile politely while explaining, for the 500th time, that vaccines do not, in fact, contain tracking devices.

The Bottom Line

Doctors are the backbone of society, the unsung heroes of our daily lives, and the only reason half of us are still walking around. They work insane hours, deal with impossible situations, and somehow still show up every day ready to help. So, if you see a doctor, thank them—maybe with coffee. Or chocolate. Or, you know, by actually listening to their advice for once.

-Charles Felix, Owner and Publisher



You can reach Charles Felix at
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EXPERT ADVICE

Life After Residency: Contracts Require Expert Advice

BY VANESSA ORR

Most residents coming out of medical school have student loans to pay, and that financial burden may convince them to put off other expenses like hiring healthcare attorneys and practice consultants to advise them on their careers and assist them with employment contracts. This can be a huge mistake as the cost of hiring one of these professionals can save doctors money, time and possible legal trouble in the long run.

"New doctors need to set themselves up for success early on, so they don't face issues later," explained Kyla Murphy, AVP National Healthcare Practice, Risk Strategies, noting that most young medical professionals are not taught about business or insurance in medical training and are thirsty for knowledge on the subject.

"It can be easy to get caught up in the idea of making money and waiting until those loans are paid down, but it's so important to hire experts to review contracts before signing anything," she continued. "There can be a number of pitfalls that they wouldn't recognize due to the lack of education in the areas of business and insurance."

According to Tom Murphy, SVP National Healthcare Practice, Risk Strategies, even doctors who have been practicing for 25 years or more can be confused about certain contract terms.

"One of the biggest issues we've seen is with 'tail coverage,' which is the professional liability coverage that covers a practice when a doctor leaves a group or cancels a claims-made policy," he explained. "The medical group may agree to provide insurance when they hire the doctor, but when that doctor leaves, the contract may specify that they have to purchase this coverage on their own, which will provide retroactive coverage for the time the physician was in the group or for the duration of the policy."

Many residents don't realize that this coverage costs roughly 200 percent of the doc-



Kyla Murphy



Tom Murphy

tor's current premium; if the premium is \$10,000, for example, the tail coverage will cost \$20,000.

"Talk about sticker shock! This is a huge expense that the provider will be responsible for, and it's one of the biggest things that young doctors miss when looking at contracts," said Murphy.

While tail coverage may still be included in a contract, a healthcare attorney or practice consultant can advise clients on ways to minimize the effect or negotiate better terms.

"For example, a doctor may agree to be responsible for the tail, but ask the practice to agree to purchase the tail if the doctor stays for three years or more," said Murphy. "It can be used as a negotiating tool, and at least the doctor is aware of their responsibilities if they leave the group."

In addition to compensation and insurance issues, healthcare attorneys can also review partnership or ownership clauses, as well as noncompete wording that may limit a physician's ability to practice once they leave the group.

Murphy adds that having this kind of professional advice is necessary, not only when reviewing employment contracts, but vendor contracts, lease contracts, and other contracts as well. In addition to healthcare attorneys and/or practice consultants, he also advises young doctors to hire a financial advisor and real estate experts as the practice grows.

"Sometimes you have to spend money to make money," said Kyla Murphy. "And if you engage with an expert up front, you will more than make up for that expense down the road."

For more information, contact Kyla Murphy at Kyla.murphy@risk-strategies.com or Tom Murphy at tmurphy@risk-strategies.com or call 800-966-2120.

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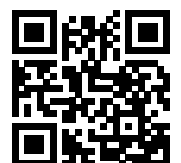
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A Dangerous Overstep in Mental Health Care: Prescriptive Authority for Psychologists Risks Patient Safety

As a board-certified psychiatrist and president of the Dade County Medical Association, I am compelled to voice my strong opposition to the proposed legislation granting prescriptive authority to psychologists in Florida. While the intention behind this bill is to address the pressing need for improved mental health services, I firmly believe that allowing psychologists to prescribe medication poses significant risks to patient safety and the overall quality of mental health care.



BY PATRICIA ARES-ROMERO, MD

patients at risk.

Furthermore, the process of diagnosing mental health conditions often involves ruling out underlying medical issues that can present with psychiatric symptoms. Psychiatrists are trained to identify these medical conditions, ensuring that patients receive appropriate treatment. Granting prescriptive authority to psychologists could lead to misdiagnoses or overlooked medical problems, compromising patient safety.

mising patient safety.

Collaborative Care as the Optimal Model

The current collaborative care model, where psychologists and psychiatrists work together, leverages the strengths of both professions. Psychologists provide essential psychotherapy services, while psychiatrists manage medical evaluations and medication management. This team-based approach ensures that patients receive comprehensive care tailored to their individual needs.

Expanding prescriptive authority to psychologists may disrupt this collaborative dynamic, leading to fragmented care and potential communication breakdowns. Maintaining clear roles within the mental health care team preserves the quality and safety of patient care.

Conclusion

While addressing the mental health crisis in Florida is imperative, we must prioritize patient safety and the quality of care. Granting prescriptive authority to psychologists, who lack the necessary medical training, is not the solution. Instead, we should focus on enhancing collaborative care models, increasing funding for mental health services, and provide access to a board certified psychiatrist. By doing so, we can ensure that patients receive safe, effective, and comprehensive mental health care.

I urge lawmakers to reconsider this legislation and to engage with medical professionals to develop strategies that truly benefit the mental health of our community without compromising patient safety.

Dr. Patricia Ares-Romero is President of the Dade County Medical Association.

Insufficient Medical Training

Psychiatrists undergo extensive medical education, including four years of residency training, to develop a comprehensive understanding of the human body, disease processes, and pharmacology. This rigorous training equips us to make informed decisions about prescribing medications, considering potential interactions, side effects, and the complexities of co-occurring medical conditions. In contrast, psychologists' training focuses primarily on psychotherapy and psychological assessment, lacking the medical foundation necessary for safe and effective medication management.

The proposed bill suggests that additional coursework and supervised clinical experience can bridge this gap. However, condensed training programs cannot replicate the depth and breadth of medical education required to navigate the complexities of psychopharmacology safely. Allowing professionals without comprehensive medical training to prescribe medications undermines the standard of care that patients deserve.

Patient Safety Concerns

Medications used to treat mental health disorders often have potent effects and can lead to severe side effects if not managed correctly. For instance, antidepressants, antipsychotics, and mood stabilizers require careful monitoring and a thorough understanding of their pharmacokinetics and pharmacodynamics. Without the necessary medical background, psychologists may not be adequately prepared to handle adverse reactions or manage complex medication regimens, potentially putting

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Physicians' Concerns Amidst Growing Uninsured Population and Government Program Uncertainty

BY JORGE ABRIL

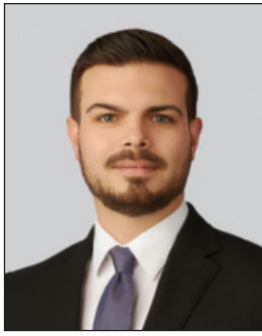
Abril Law, a prominent healthcare reimbursement law firm based in Miami, is intensifying its efforts to support local physicians as they grapple with mounting challenges in an increasingly unpredictable healthcare landscape. Among the most pressing issues is the marked increase in uninsured patients seeking care, which has sparked complex conversations between Abril Law and its physician clients regarding financial sustainability.

Abril Law attorney, Trevor Biglin, describes how uninsured patients create a "domino effect" that can further complicate reimbursement processes, leading to delayed payments and uncertain revenue streams:

"Physicians are under increasing pressure to continue providing care while managing financial constraints. With more patients unable to afford insurance coverage, it is becoming increasingly difficult for physicians to rely on reimbursement programs that once provided consistent income."

Surge in Uninsured Patients

According to a recent U.S. Census Bureau report, the number of uninsured Americans grew sharply over the past year, partially due to the expiration of temporary coverage subsidies introduced dur-



Trevor Biglin

ing the pandemic. This latest surge has left physicians to grapple with the insurmountable challenge of balancing patient care with their practices' financial viability.

For Abril Law, the situation presents an array of legal and financial concerns for providers. Physicians often face unpaid medical bills when treating uninsured patients due to limited cost-covering options.

Prior Authorization Impacts

Another significant challenge is the added complexity of prior authorization requirements. Physicians now find themselves having to navigate these processes even for uninsured individuals who attempt to use limited emergency or high-deductible plans. The result is longer wait times for approval, ensuing delays in patient care and an increase in administrative burdens for physicians and their staff.

Abril Law actively advises on the legal ramifications of dealing with prior authorization denials, delays, and the evolving complexities of reimbursement systems.

"We work closely with our clients to streamline their prior authorization processes to avoid denials and delays, which ultimately affect their bottom line," explained Biglin. "We ensure physicians understand the legal frameworks surrounding these authorizations so they can

protect their financial interests while still complying with insurance regulations."

Uncertainty Surrounding Federal Programs

To complicate matters further, physicians are now facing an additional layer of uncertainty with the looming threat of cuts to federal healthcare programs, including Medicare and Medicaid. These programs provide vital coverage to millions of low-income and elderly patients, and cuts would result in increased financial pressure for physicians who rely on these reimbursements.

Abril Law actively monitors legislation surrounding potential cuts and holds frequent consultations with healthcare providers to strategize the best ways to mitigate risk; including transitioning to value-based care models and advocating for policy changes that may lessen the negative effects of reduced reimbursements.

"It's not just about managing day-to-day operations anymore," said Biglin. "Physicians need a long-term strategy that adapts to changes in the healthcare reimbursement environment. The unpredictability of federal funding for healthcare programs is a real threat, and we are doing everything we can to help physicians plan ahead and safeguard their practices against these potential disruptions."

Impact on Bottom-Line and Revenue Cycle

Perhaps the most significant concern for providers is the direct impact these challenges are having on their bottom lines.

The growing gap between operational costs and reimbursements has forced many practices to cut back on services, reduce staff, or even close their doors in extreme cases. In order to maintain a sustainable revenue cycle, providers are increasingly looking for external support, and an experienced law firm is often the best route.

For over 30 years, Abril Law has worked with physician practices to implement financial strategies that improve revenue cycle management, such as optimizing billing practices, leveraging technology for faster reimbursements, and exploring new models of healthcare delivery that can generate more consistent revenue streams.

"Physicians are facing a perfect storm of financial pressures right now, and it's crucial that they stay ahead of the curve in terms of legal compliance, financial management, and insurance negotiations," noted Biglin. "Our long-standing relationships with Managed Care companies enable us the ability to aggregate our client's claims and quickly resolve disputes on a contingency fee basis."

Abril Law's expertise in healthcare reimbursement ensures that providers can continue delivering quality care while mitigating the financial risks that accompany these turbulent times. With collaboration and a sharp focus on future-proofing their clients' practices, Abril Law remains a trusted ally for physicians.

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Cutting-Edge Technology: A New Era for Lung Cancer Diagnosis

BY SUE MACDONALD

A flurry of advances in identifying suspicious lesions in the lungs and treating lung cancer early in the disease process are giving hope to patients who are risk of dying from the most common cause of cancer-related death among U.S. men and women. Available at Jupiter Medical Center, these advancements in screening, diagnostics and treatment include robotic technologies that identify lung cancer much earlier in the disease process, and imaging and tissue-sampling technologies that provide important details about the nature of the cancerous tissue.

Combined, they allow lung specialists to fine-tune effective treatments that can lengthen the lives of cancer patients.

"In the past 10-15 years we have seen a lot more advances in pulmonology," says Dr. Michael Marsh, a lung specialist who joined to the Jupiter Medical Center pulmonology team in late 2024 after serving as a cancer liaison physician and lung nodule clinic director at other Florida hospitals. "The paradigm has significantly shifted over the past decade because of these technologies. Today, we are finding smaller lung lesions, detecting them earlier and curing people with lung cancer earlier in the disease process."

Earlier diagnosis, targeted treatments

The specific technologies at Jupiter that support earlier diagnosis and streamlined, state-of-the-art care, include:

- Ion robotic bronchoscopy, a navigational technology that enables precise, minimally invasive access to small, hard-to-reach lesions in the lung, allowing cancer to be detected earlier with fewer complications than legacy methods, such as CT-guided biopsy. "Lung cancer symptoms usually don't start until the later III or IV stages, and by then you're looking at managing the cancer rather than curing it," says Dr. Marsh. The older CT approach involves inserting a tiny needle through the skin, muscles, lining of the lung and lung itself to extract cells for examination, and it remains a valid tool for some types of lung cancer. "The newer ion robotic bronchoscopy helps us find these tiny



Dr. Michael Marsh

lesions in the lung early — from millimeters to a centimeter or two — and that's when cancer's very treatable and even curable."

- Cone beam CT imaging, which relies on a computerized arm that rotates around the patient and provides a real-time, three-dimensional image of suspicious lesions in the lung. The benefit? This technology increases the both the accuracy of diagnosis and the safety of sampling suspicious nodules/tissue for further examination. Jupiter Medical Center is one of a handful of Florida hospitals that offer CT cone beam imaging, says Dr. Marsh.

- Cryobiopsy deploys a tiny flexible probe that locates and freezes suspicious lung tissue, which is then removed to be examined for cancer. Cryobiopsy provides larger, higher-quality tissue samples, and it also helps improve diagnostic accuracy and inform targeted treatments, notes Dr. Marsh.

"Game-changing" technology

The benefit for patients with lung cancer are many, says Dr. Marsh, who chose pulmonology as his specialty because his grandparents — both of whom were smokers — died from lung cancer within a year of each other while he was in medical school. He is now an experienced lung cancer specialist.

"The robotic bronchoscopy platform is a game changer, allowing us to reach lesions in the lung that we previously could not access, and it offers a minimally invasive approach," says Dr. Marsh. "It also carries a significantly lower chance of complication compared to legacy forms of biopsy, such as CT-guided peripheral needle biopsies. Those approaches have a relatively high occurrence — up to 20%, in some cases — of a collapsed lung or bleeding.

"By comparison, the chance of complications with the ion robotic bronchoscope is 4% or less," he adds, "and my personal rate of complication is less than 1.6%."

For information about lung cancer diagnosis and treatment, or to schedule a next-day oncology appointment for a newly diagnosed cancer, contact the Jupiter Medical Center Lung Center of Excellence at The Anderson Family Cancer Institute at (561) 263-4400.

KIDZ Adds athenahealth EHR to Increase Efficiency, Improve Patient Communication

BY VANESSA ORR

When KIDZ Medical Services first implemented the athenahealth EHR (electronic health record) and patient portal 18 months ago, the West Palm Beach multispecialty practice team wasn't sure how different it would be from previous patient record-keeping iterations. However, a number of useful features have made it well worth the training time and investment, according to physician "super user" Matthew Ramirez, M.D., MS, FAAP, a board-certified pediatric hematologist/oncologist at KIDZ Medical Services, and whose office is located at the West Palm Beach location.

"Overall, it's a game-changer," Dr. Ramirez said. "All KIDZ Medical offices are now on the same EHR, which makes it easier to see the records of patients who see other KIDZ providers; it enables us to coordinate care better than ever before." KIDZ Medical Services cares for neonatal, pediatric and women's health patients across 15 office locations and 19 hospital partner sites throughout South Florida.

The athenahealth system allows users to coordinate and collaborate with other users, like sharing a patient's treatment records or clinical notes from the patient's pediatrician or primary care provider. The system makes it easy to transfer patient information into the system.

"With one click, you can update a patient's records, which is especially helpful with long-term patients who may have a narrative in their notes; for example, how they presented with a specific disease, their medical history, comorbidity conditions they have and more," said Dr. Ramirez, noting that other versions require providers to type or cut and paste the information.

"The ability to bring in historical information from previous notes without having to type everything out really helps



Dr. Matthew Ramirez

with charting," he added.

Time saving and convenience were two major draws for adoption of the athenahealth EHR. The system comes with a dictation tool, which makes it easier for physicians to document patient notes. It also features a portal that includes the doctor's inbox, so that they can receive communications directly from patients and families, as well

as other physicians throughout the KIDZ Medical enterprise.

However, Dr. Ramirez notes expanded access as the number one differentiator.

"The biggest advantage is that we have the ability to log in securely from outside the office, utilizing two-factor authentication," he said. "Because the app is web-based, I can open it on a home computer or hospital computer system to see my calendar, communicate with my patients or whatever else I need. Now I can integrate my clinic work with my hospital work."

Dr. Ramirez also credits athenahealth's developers for their openness to new ideas in order to make the system even more useful. "I saw the opportunity to implement a quick fix that could save us time, so I sent the idea over to them. As a result, they were able to build us a template that I now use every day in clinic," he said. "If you see something that can make the system work better, they're open to making those updates."

As a physician user, Dr. Ramirez has gone through additional athenahealth training, but he said that learning the system was not difficult for KIDZ' office support staff. They adopted it quickly, and the EHR has since introduced operational efficiencies as well as an improved patient experience thanks to a user-friendly patient portal.

"It's been well worth the time and effort to get everyone on board, and it's made a very big difference in our patient care overall," he added.

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ACHE OF SOUTH FLORIDA MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: Rahat Verma

BY LOIS THOMSON

Rahat Verma confessed he is an avid traveler, visiting 45 countries and more than 15 states, and he holds a strong appreciation for the influence that the cultures, norms, and values of those experiences have taught him. Verma began life in Chicago but moved to South Florida at a young age, and spent the majority of his life there.

Verma is currently the Vice President of Operations at HCA Florida Kendall Hospital in Miami, where he has worked since 2022, starting as an Administrative Resident and then serving as Associate Administrator. Prior to that he worked at an HCA hospital in Los Angeles as an Administrative Intern, a position he held in grad school while attending the University of Minnesota, where he was pursuing a Master of Business Administration and a Master of Healthcare Administration.

His current role has him overseeing operations at HCA Florida Kendall, both clinical and non-clinical, including for such departments as imaging services, rehabilitation services, safety and security, communications, environmental services, food and nutrition services, and emergency management, among others.

In addition to his work at the hospital, Verma is a long-standing member of ACHE – the American College of Healthcare Executives – where he recently became a member of the board. He first learned about the organization when he was in graduate school. "There was an opening to serve on the board as a student member, so I joined the Minnesota Chapter in 2019. I remained a member of



Rahat Verma

both that chapter and simultaneously our local chapter here in South Florida, knowing that South Florida was my home base and I did have intentions of coming back here at some point."

For the past few years he has been highly involved as a volunteer, as a mentor for student competitions, and by offering support wherever possible.

This year, however, he has taken the next step, joining the board as the Student Services Chair-Elect. "It's an incredible opportunity for me to immerse myself more into the culture of the organization, and continue to spread the impact out into the community."

The responsibilities for that position are to create opportunities for students, at both the graduate and undergraduate levels, to get more involved in ACHE. Verma said he and Student Services Chair Marla Sanfilippo will work to do this by hosting the annual student case competition, and by facilitating events that are directly aimed at students, such as job fairs, networking fairs – focusing on students, and those entering the job market who are new to the healthcare industry.

Of his experience with ACHE, Verma commented, "I had initial baseline expectations, but my experience has superseded those." Likewise, he explained how he has been able to apply his experience at HCA Florida Kendall to the ACHE Chapter: "The culture at our hospital is one of the most diverse and most meaningful cultures that I've ever had the opportunity to be part of. That has transcended into what I aim and the board aims to create as the culture of our South Florida Chapter in 2025."

Research Collaborative Seeks AI Tool for Bowel Dysfunction

BY JENNIFER
WILLIAMSON



Dr. Marylise Boutros

Sphincter preserving surgery is increasingly being performed for rectal cancer, offering a cure while allowing patients to avoid a permanent colostomy. However, up to 70% of rectal cancer survivors who undergo a partial or total resection of the rectum experience a distressing group of bowel-related symptoms referred to as low anterior resection syndrome (LARS).

"There is no standard treatment for LARS and limited resources to help patients self-manage their symptoms, especially during the first three months after restoration of GI continuity, following the removal of their temporary ileostomies," explains colorectal surgeon Marylise Boutros, M.D., Director of Research for Cleveland Clinic's Digestive Disease Institute in Florida.

Dr. Boutros is leading a team of researchers from Cleveland Clinic in Florida and McMaster University in Ontario, Canada, in a collaboration to develop a LARS-AI tool that can provide patients with real-time education on self-management strategies for their symptoms.

The project, entitled The Feasibility and Impact of an Artificial Intelligence Platform for the Management of Low Anterior Resection Syndrome: A Prospective Pilot Study, was recently awarded a 2024 Research Grant through the Society of American Gastrointestinal and Endoscopic Surgeons (SAGES) Education & Research Foundation.

Quality of life concerns

Symptoms associated with LARS include fecal incontinence, urgency, frequency, clustering of bowel movements, and painful evacuation. They can vary in severity by patient and their respective cancer and course of treatment.

"Patients can suffer with bowel symptoms for well over a decade following resection, often without any resources to support them," says Dr. Boutros. "This can lead to anxiety, isolation and an overall decrease in quality of life."

An international expert in LARS-focused clinical research and care, Dr. Boutros has been a passionate advocate for rectal cancer survivors since completing her colorectal surgery residency and fel-

lowship training at Cleveland Clinic Weston Hospital more than a decade ago.

"What I've observed in my years as a surgeon is that we are doing a great job curing patients of their cancer but not preparing them for their 'new' life after treatment," says Dr. Boutros, noting she's seen patients unable to return to work due to their disordered bowel function.

Symptom management

Symptom management for LARS typically includes lifestyle and pharmacological strategies, such as dietary restrictions, stool bulking agents, and anti-diarrheal medications. Other possible interventions may include pelvic floor rehabilitation, sacral neuromodulation, and transanal irrigation (TAI).

Dr. Boutros points out that TAI, a procedure where patients flush out their entire colon on a regular basis at home, is not widely used in the U.S., though it is part of the management guidelines put forward by an international team of LARS experts in 2021. As principal investigator of a Canada-based trial, she is currently evaluating the impact of TAI on quality of life in rectal cancer survivors living with LARS and expects to publish her findings in the coming year.

"We are still in the early days of learning to manage postoperative bowel dysfunction, and our tools are limited," shares Dr. Boutros. "Our hope for the web-based AI platform we are developing is that we can put the best information we have into the hands of all patients struggling with LARS no matter where they are receiving care."

Foundational research

Another research initiative led by Dr. Boutros included the development of an educational booklet on LARS as part of a LARS Patient-Centered Program to educate individuals with rectal cancer about postoperative bowel dysfunction, help manage expectations, and review the different treatment strategies. It, too, is currently being evaluated through an ongoing clinical trial.

"The LARS-AI tool we are now developing builds upon our previous research and is the next step in empowering patients to self-manage their symptoms, alongside their clinical care team, and regain their quality of life as rectal cancer survivors," says Dr. Boutros.



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Lawyers Helping Doctors with Disability Insurance Claims - We Are Here For You

BY BRYN NATLAND

You have spent your entire career specializing in one medical specialty. We have spent our entire careers specializing in one area of law. If you were sick, you would go to a specialist. If you are facing a legal issue, you want an attorney who specializes in that area of the law.

Eddie Dabdoub and the attorneys at Dabdoub Law Firm have established themselves as experts in handling physician disability insurance claims. After nearly two decades of representing physicians from all medical specialties suffering from various medical conditions, they understand the unique challenges physicians face when disabilities impede their practice.

Client Success: Liver Transplant Surgeon Wins Disability Benefits under an Own Occupation Policy

Dabdoub Law Firm represented a liver transplant surgeon who suffered a wrist injury preventing him from being able to perform long and arduous liver transplant surgeries. However, he was able to continue doing general surgery and performing his academic responsibilities at the teaching hospital where he worked. His own occupation disability claim was denied by Ameritas when they claimed he was not totally disabled because he performed other surgeries aside from liver transplants and continued teaching.

Attorneys Eddie Dabdoub and Nina Burgos filed a lawsuit against Ameritas in federal court in pursuit of their client's disability insurance benefits. It was their position that Ameritas got their client's occupation wrong. They argued that although their client could perform some duties of his occupation, it was not the main duty of his specialty.

The other surgeries and teaching responsibilities were customary parts of his role as a liver transplant surgeon. Attorneys Dabdoub and Burgos challenged Ameritas' denial by asserting that the inability to perform liver transplants—the core function of their client's medical specialty—constituted a total disability under the policy. Although

Ameritas tried to muddy the waters and complicate the occupation, it was very simple – their client was a liver transplant surgeon who could no longer perform liver transplants. Thus, he is totally disabled under the terms of his own occupation disability policy. The federal court agreed with the firm and awarded total disability benefits be paid to their client plus attorney's fees paid to Dabdoub Law Firm.

Expertise in Physician Own Occupation Disability Claims

You have spent years in education and training to become an expert in your medical specialty. But most of the time you weren't educated or trained in what to do when you fall ill or injured and can no longer perform the duties of your medical specialty. What happens when you can no longer work as a cardiac surgeon or an emergency room physician or a liver transplant surgeon?

Most physicians have "own occupation" disability insurance policies. These policies are designed to provide benefits when a physician is unable to perform the specific duties of their medical specialty, even if they can work in another capacity. It is important before you are facing a disability claim, that you review and understand your disability insurance policy. An experienced disability insurance attorney can walk you through the definitions and requirements under the policy.

One of the biggest mistakes we see when a physician becomes disabled and can no longer perform the duties of their job, is they cut back at work. But by the time they are ready to file their disability claim, they have cut back on procedures and surgeries so much that they have altered the duties of their occupation.

At that point the disability insurance company will argue they are no longer practicing within their medical specialty and instead will water down their occupation making an approval of benefits very difficult. In addition, insurance companies employ tactics to delay or deny these claims, such as requesting excessive information or approving only partial disability benefits.

Navigating the Claims and Investigation Process

Filing a disability claim involves a thorough investigation by the insurance company, which typically involves requests for comprehensive documentation related to the physician's practice and medical condition. This request often includes:

- Medical records
- Support from treating providers
- CPT codes and billing information
- Profit and loss statements
- Interview with the insurance company

Ensuring that your occupation is presented in a clear and concise manner is imperative. Some disability insurance companies use tactics to delay or deny claims, such as misclassifying a physician's occupation to suggest they were performing a less demanding occupation prior to disability or that they are capable of performing another medical specialty.

The insurance companies also often ask for redundant and unnecessary documentation, which can cause undue delays in the claim process. You want to be sure that when you are submitting information and documentation it is information that the insurance company needs to analyze your claim.

Guidance for Physicians Facing Disability

Physicians considering filing a disability insurance claim should take proactive steps to strengthen their case:

1. Maintain Detailed Medical Rec-

ords: Comprehensive documentation of the medical condition and how it impacts your ability to perform your own occupation, i.e. your medical specialty, is crucial.

2. **Communicate Openly with Treating Physicians:** Ensure that health-care providers understand the specific demands of the medical specialty and can provide informed opinions on your disability's impact.

3. **Understand the Insurance Policy:** Familiarity with the terms and definitions within the policy, particularly the definition of "total disability," is essential.

4. **Seek Specialized Legal Assistance:** Engaging a law firm experienced in physician disability claims can provide invaluable support throughout the process, or even before you decide to stop working.

Help from a Lawyer with Expertise in Disability Insurance Law and Physician Disability Claims

If you are facing a disability claim or just have questions about your disability insurance policy, call 888-812-0393 to speak with an attorney today or visit our website at www.longtermdisability.net to learn more about our experience and expertise with physician disability insurance claims.

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A message from our President

The Importance of Mental Health in the Continuum of Care: Lessons from RFK Jr.'s Journey

Mental health is an integral component of overall well-being, yet it has historically been treated as separate—or even secondary—to physical health. In reality, a holistic approach to healthcare must include mental health services to ensure comprehensive treatment and improved outcomes. The story of Robert F. Kennedy Jr. (RFK Jr.) underscores this point, as his own health challenges highlight the complex relationship between mental and physical health, as well as the need for integrated care.

RFK Jr. has openly discussed his struggles with addiction, particularly with heroin and other substances during his younger years. As a member of the prominent Kennedy family, his challenges with substance abuse reflect both personal struggles and the broader issue of addiction in society. He has also shared his battles with neurological and autoimmune conditions, including spasmodic dysphonia, a rare disorder that affects the voice and is linked to the nervous system. [Spasmodic dysphonia is a voice disorder. It causes involuntary spasms in the muscles of the voice box or larynx. This causes the voice to break and have a tight, strained, or strangled sound. Spasmodic dysphonia can cause problems ranging from trouble saying a word or two to being not able to talk at all.] His health struggles exemplify how chronic conditions often carry significant mental and emotional burdens, including anxiety, depression, and stress. Without proper mental health care, these issues can exacerbate physical symptoms, hinder treatment adherence, and diminish quality of life.



Jaime Caldwell

This interplay between mind and body is well documented in medical research. According to the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), individuals with chronic physical illnesses are more likely to experience mental health disorders, and vice versa. For example, stress-related conditions can contribute to cardiovascular disease, while untreated depression can lead to poor management of diabetes and other chronic conditions. Despite this, mental health services remain underfunded and often inaccessible to those who need them most.

The healthcare system must recognize mental health as a fundamental part of the care continuum. This means integrating mental health screenings into primary care, ensuring parity in insurance coverage, and expanding access to behavioral health specialists in hospitals and community settings. Policymakers and healthcare leaders must also address the stigma surrounding mental health, which prevents many from seeking necessary care.

RFK Jr.'s experiences serve as a reminder that health is not merely the absence of disease but the presence of balance—physical, mental, and emotional. RFK Jr.'s experience with addiction highlights the struggles that many individuals, even those from privileged backgrounds, can face.

His story aligns with broader conversations about addiction being a disease rather than a moral failing, emphasizing the need for access to treatment and compassionate approaches to recovery. By prioritizing mental health within the broader healthcare framework (mainstreaming mental health), we can move toward a more holistic, patient-centered approach that benefits individuals and communities alike.

Let's hope that RFK Jr. remembers his own mental health challenges as he creates his own legacy as the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services.

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Tampa General Cancer Institute Physicians Share In-Depth Knowledge at Sarcoma Symposium

Health care professionals from across Florida gathered in West Palm Beach recently for the inaugural Tampa General Hospital (TGH) Cancer Institute Sarcoma Symposium. Attendees gained in-depth knowledge from expert medical oncologists, surgical oncologists, radiation oncologists, radiologists, pathologists, plastic surgeons and geneticists from the TGH Cancer Institute's Sarcoma Center of Excellence, who shared cutting-edge insights on treating this complex and rare cancer of the bones and soft tissues.

The symposium attracted medical professionals representing a variety of specialties, including medical oncology, radiation oncology, surgery, pathology, radiology and genetics. Speakers covered a wide range of topics reflecting the multidisciplinary care philosophy of the TGH Cancer Institute's Sarcoma Center of Excellence.

"This symposium is extremely important because there are not many sarcoma centers in Florida. We are one of only four in the state," said Victoria Rizk, M.D., a medical oncologist who specializes in breast cancer and sarcoma, and serves as the Sarcoma Center of Excellence's director. "We want Florida physicians to know we're accessible and eager to help with their patients."

"Since 2020, Tampa General has established a growing network of services on Florida's East Coast. This symposium showcases the innovative care local physicians can access through Tampa General," said Dr. Abraham Schwarzberg, executive vice president, chief of oncology and president of the Tampa General Provider Network (TGPN), and vice president of clinical and translational research, TGH-USF Health Joint Office of Clinical Research. "This is game-changing medicine that will benefit patients needing complex care in the Palm Beaches and on the Treasure Coast."

The Sarcoma Center of Excellence at the TGH Cancer Institute offers comprehensive diagnostic and treatment services for more than 70 types of bone and soft tissue sarcomas. Nationally acclaimed for groundbreaking contributions that continue to revolutionize cancer care, Tampa General has been recognized as "One of the Nation's Best Hospitals" by *U.S. News & World Report* for 2024-25. The academic health system was also recognized by *Newsweek* as one of America's Best Cancer Hospitals.

In addition to complex surgical procedures, the TGH Cancer Institute offers the latest advances in sarcoma treatment, including immunotherapy, targeted therapy and brachytherapy. An innovative radiotherapy technique, brachytherapy involves the precise implantation of a small radioactive device near a sarcoma site to safely deliver a high dose of radiation to the tumor, which can effectively destroy the cancerous cells and reduce the risk of recurrence.

"We are able to provide a level of care that is not readily available in the community," said Dr. Rizk. "Because these are often such rare and complex cases, our sarcoma center offers physicians a group setting with a multidisciplinary team, where everyone is not



Dr. Victoria Rizk (third from the left) joined by the presenters at Tampa General Hospital Cancer Institute's 2025 Sarcoma Symposium in West Palm Beach.

only familiar with this type of cancer, but also committed to achieving the best patient outcomes."

The multidisciplinary Sarcoma Tumor Board meets weekly to review cases. While challenging each other and "thinking outside the box," tumor board members collaboratively design a comprehensive treatment plan for each patient. These are reviewed with the patient on the same day the plan is finalized. "By working as a cohesive team in real time, we avoid delays and achieve great patient outcomes," noted Dr. Rizk.

For example, Dr. Rizk does multidisciplinary clinics with Dr. Timothy Nywening, a Tampa General surgical oncologist. "If we do get last-minute cases, we are able to see them in person together on the same day, present their case in tumor board, and get a comprehensive treatment plan for their personal stage and diagnosis."

The Sarcoma Center of Excellence offers second opinions, as well as telehealth options, so world-class care is available for patients no matter their location.

Dr. Rizk encourages physicians to reach out for help, understanding the challenges they face managing a rare tumor on top of their regular patient volume. "Please ask for help," she said. "The last thing we want is for community doctors to feel isolated or unable to access world-class care or clinical trials for their patients with complex and rare tumors. We're an extra layer of support so they feel confident they are giving the right treatment for patients closer to home."

The Sarcoma Center of Excellence at the TGH Cancer Institute is a member of the SARC organization, an international consortium of sarcoma centers across the world that collaborate for research purposes. "With less than 5% of all cancer centers in the world qualifying for membership in SARC, the TGH Cancer Institute is part of an elite group in the fight against sarcoma."

For more information about the Sarcoma Center of Excellence at the TGH Cancer Institute, visit [TGH.org/institutes-and-services/cancer-institute/sarcoma-center-of-excellence](https://tgh.org/institutes-and-services/cancer-institute/sarcoma-center-of-excellence).

Around the Region... Around the Region... Around the Region...

Palm Beach Gardens Medical Center Names Samantha Ing Chief Strategy Officer

Palm Beach Gardens Medical Center (PBGMC) names Samantha Ing, MSHA, to the position of Chief Strategy Officer (CSO). She will be responsible for developing and executing strategic growth plans.

Ing returns to Palm Beach Health Network (PBHN) where she previously held the position of Cardiovascular Service Line Administrator. In addition to new her role at PBGMC, she will lead the growth strategy of our cardiac and vascular service lines throughout PBHN and provide strategic support for Florida Coast Medical Center, a new hospital in Port St. Lucie that will open in September 2025.

Most recently, Ing held the title of Vice President of Cardiovascular Services for Trident Medical Center in South Carolina.

Ing holds a Master of Science in Health Administration from the University of Alabama at Birmingham. She earned her Bachelor of Science degree from Georgia Southern University.



Samantha Ing

Palm Beach Gardens Medical Center Announces 2025 Governing Board

Palm Beach Gardens Medical Center is proud to announce the members of its 2025 Board of Governors, a distinguished group of professionals committed to advancing healthcare excellence in the community. The board, composed of leaders from diverse fields including medicine, finance, law, government, and public service, will play a vital role in shaping the hospital's future.

The 2025 Board of Governors includes two new members: Dr. Robert Avino and Dr. Andres Suarez.

Chairman

Jose A. DeOlazabal, D.O., Pulmonologist, Lung Specialists of Palm Beach, and former Chief of Staff, Palm Beach Gardens Medical Center

Vice-Chair

Dana P. Middleton, Vice-Mayor, Palm Beach Gardens, and Member and Past-Chair, PGA Corridor Association

Michael V. Mitrione, Attorney, Gunster Law Firm

Shady S. Salib, M.D., Internal Medicine Physician

Stephen S. Mathison, Esq., Attorney, Mathison Whittles, LLP, and Member, PGA Corridor Association

Robert Premuroso, City Council Member, Palm Beach Gardens

Michael J. Bauer, General Manager, Roger Dean Chevrolet Stadium

Leslie Diaz, M.D., Infectious Disease Specialist

Keith E. Bryer, Fire Chief and CFO, Palm Beach Gardens Fire Rescue

Jose R. DeOlazabal, M.D., Pulmonologist, Lung Specialists of Palm Beach

Robert J. Avino, M.D., Orthopedic Surgeon, Palm Beach Orthopaedic Institute

Andres E. Suarez, M.D., Infectious Disease Specialist



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Dr. Kayvan Amini: Leading the Broward County Medical Association into a New Era

BY DANIEL CASCIATO

The Broward County Medical Association (BCMA) has a new leader—Dr. Kayvan Amini, D.O., FACC. A dedicated cardiologist with a strong passion for patient care, physician advocacy, and medical education, Dr. Amini's journey to becoming the president of BCMA has been defined by service and leadership, being recognized as the State of Florida Physician of the Year 2023 by the Florida Osteopathic Medical Association (FOMA).

His tenure is set to focus on unity, advocacy, and innovation in healthcare, with an eye on improving physician welfare, patient outcomes, and technological integration.

A Journey Rooted in Service and Advocacy

For Dr. Amini, medicine was more than just a career—it was a calling. Raised with a deep commitment to service, he believes that “the ultimate gift is the gift you give others.” His dedication to patient care and advocacy has evolved over the years, broadening from individual patient interactions to influencing healthcare policy at a systemic level.

“As physicians, we start by wanting to change one life, but as we grow, we realize that advocacy allows us to impact entire communities,” Dr. Amini explains. His work within BCMA, as well as his multiple advisor Board positions for the State of Florida, has given him a vantage point to drive meaningful change for both patients and physicians.

Dr. Amini has served in multiple leadership roles, including as the President of the Broward County Osteopathic Medical Association and a trustee of the Florida Osteopathic Medical Association. He has also been a national policy delegate for the American Osteopathic Association. These experiences have equipped him with the insight and network to address healthcare's complex challenges.

A Vision for the Future: Unity and Progress

As BCMA president, Dr. Amini's primary goal is fostering unity within the fragmented healthcare landscape of Broward County. “We all share the same vision—better patient outcomes, better



Dr. Kayvan Amini

physician support, and a stronger healthcare system,” he says. He hopes to bring together private practitioners, hospital-employed physicians, health systems, educational institutions, and policymakers to work collaboratively rather than in silos.

He referenced the wisdom of Socrates, who wrote, “A perfect human is all humans put together.” Dr. Amini believes the perfect community is one where all stakeholders come together to enhance care. “Broward County has the potential to be one of the best healthcare communities in the country if we work together,” emphasizing that “Together we are Greater.”

His vision focuses on stakeholder engagement, patient advocacy, physician leadership development, and embracing innovative medical technologies, particularly in artificial intelligence and digital healthcare.

“Technology can revolutionize patient care, but we must guide its integration to ensure it enhances, rather than replaces, the physician-patient relationship,” he says.

Addressing Key Healthcare Challenges in Broward County

Dr. Amini is well aware of the significant challenges that healthcare providers in Broward County face. Chief among them are excessive administrative burdens, including prior authorizations and retroactive denials. He notes that these hurdles are detrimental to physicians and ultimately harm patients.

“Physicians are burning out from unnecessary bureaucratic red tape. We need to eliminate these inefficiencies and focus on what matters—patient care,” he explains.

Another critical issue he aims to tackle

is the scope of practice concerns. “We must ensure that those seeking expanded roles in healthcare have the necessary training to maintain quality care,” he states, emphasizing BCMA's advocacy for high standards in medical practice.

Additionally, he highlighted the increasing physician shortage in Broward County. “We need to retain our medical students and residents locally. By working closely with medical institutions, we can incentivize them to stay and serve our community.” His recent appointment to the State of Florida GME Committee will have him focusing on addressing the physician workforce.

Embracing Technology for the Future of Healthcare

As an advisor for the State of Florida's Health Information Exchange and the chairman of the AI in Healthcare Task Force for the Florida Osteopathic Medical Association, Dr. Amini is uniquely positioned to lead BCMA into a technology-driven future. “Artificial intelligence and digital health tools are rapidly evolving, and we must ensure that they serve as aids to physicians, not replacements,” he says.

To this end, BCMA is launching a new initiative called Med Talk, a podcast designed to educate physicians, practice managers, and medical staff on AI integration and other emerging technologies. “Education is the key to adoption. We don't want to force technology upon physicians; we want to equip them with the knowledge to use it effectively.”

Supporting Physicians Through Advocacy and Wellbeing Initiatives

Recognizing the mounting pressures on healthcare professionals, Dr. Amini is committed to creating a supportive environment for BCMA members. “Physician leadership is crucial in shaping the future of medicine. We need to ensure doctors have the tools and resources to lead effectively,” he says.

BCMA is also taking a proactive stance on physician mental health. “Stress and burnout are at an all-time high. We have implemented wellness initiatives, stress management workshops, and confidential mental health support programs to ensure no physician feels alone in their struggles.”

Additionally, he is leading the expansion of the Physician Business Bootcamp, designed to equip doctors with the knowledge needed to navigate the complexities of running a medical practice. “Understanding the business side of healthcare is crucial for sustainability and success,” he adds.

The Future of Healthcare: Collaboration and Patient-Centered Innovation

Looking ahead, Dr. Amini envisions a healthcare system that is more integrated, patient-centered, and technological data-enabling care. He advocates for a transition towards a value-driven inclusive model for all physicians, prioritizing patient outcomes over volume-driven reimbursement.

“We must bridge the gaps between specialties, primary care, and community health initiatives,” he said. “Preventative care should be at the forefront, and we need to ensure that Broward County has the primary care workforce to meet our growing needs.”

Ultimately, he believes strong physician leadership is critical to navigating these changes. “Physicians must have a seat at the table when decisions are made about healthcare. Our voices must be heard to ensure patient care remains the top priority.”

A Legacy of Service and Leadership

Dr. Amini's passion for medicine, advocacy, and leadership is evident in his ambitious plans for BCMA. “I believe that if you have the capacity to serve, you must. We are stewards of this profession, and we must pass it on stronger and better than we found it.”

As he embarks on his tenure as BCMA president, his commitment to unity, innovation, and physician advocacy will undoubtedly shape the future of healthcare in Broward County. With a strong foundation in service and leadership, Dr. Amini is set to leave a lasting impact on the medical community and the patients it serves.

For more information, visit www.bcma.com.

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SALUTE TO PHYSICIANS

Dr. Corey Harrington Looking to Make Big Impact

BY LOIS THOMSON

Dr. Corey Harrington is a successful chiropractor who is passionate about making a broader impact in the healthcare industry. It's not that he doesn't like his work, but, rather than being in a position to help just one person at a time, he wants to be able to make a larger impact.

Dr. Harrington is a Faculty Clinician at Keiser University, a chiropractic college, but previously worked in a private practice setting. "I practiced privately in North Miami," he said. "That began in 2016 when I moved to Florida from North Carolina." Dr. Harrington currently works in a campus-based clinic that provides treatment for students and the local community. He also serves as an anatomy and physiology professor. "We provide a normal range of services, just like when I was in private practice." He said he loves the work: "I do enjoy education, I taught at Broward College for a little while, so I love teaching in general, and this was a way for me to combine teaching with the practice of chiropractic medicine."

As someone who is passionate about his work, he explained that one of the things he likes most is trying to bring the best out in patients by blending evidence-based practice (EBP) and compassion to restore function, enhance wellness, and empower patients — without drugs or surgery. "We don't prescribe drugs, we don't do surgeries — not because those things are bad, but if we're just talking about pain or disability, we're trying to take care of that in a natural way."

According to Dr. Harrington, chiropractic care aligns with the value-based care model by emphasizing patient-centered, non-invasive treatment that improves outcomes while reducing costs. By focusing on evidence-based musculoskeletal care, chiropractors help prevent unnecessary surgeries, reduce reliance on opioids, and enhance mobility and quality of life.

Dr. Harrington said the spine is one of the most important parts of the body, and people don't pay enough attention to it. He pointed out that we hear about getting checkups to maintain oral health, for example, but spinal health is often overlooked. "You can't see it, so people don't think about it — until they can't move."

He continued by saying that chiropractors are uniquely positioned to be able to help patients, because most people are dealing with some kind of physical ailment — whether back pain or neck pain or something else. "We enhance patient well-being by delivering effective, patient-centered care that restores function, improves mobility, and supports long-term health. I've done that in private practice, been able to reduce musculoskeletal pain without having the side effects of prescription drugs or



Dr. Corey Harrington

surgery — those come with risks. That's the greatest feeling, and that's why I chose this as a career path."

Dr. Harrington is studying for his Executive Master of Health Administration (EMHA) at Florida Atlantic University (FAU) in Boca Raton, FL. "I wanted to make a larger impact, and that ties into why I'm at FAU — I want to continue to make a larger impact by gaining the skills needed to become a healthcare executive. So that's why I came to FAU, to bring everything together, and develop the executive skillset to make a broader impact on communities at large."

Dr. Harrington will join the spring 2025 graduating class when he receives his EMHA. "My experiences have equipped me with the skills and opportunities to grow as a healthcare leader. By following a strong blueprint, I'm committed to driving innovation and patient-centered care to improve communities and create lasting impact." He said one

thing that was particularly impactful for him was being a student member of the American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE) and being able to network. "I'm currently a member through the EMHA, where you receive a student membership and are encouraged to attend networking and educational events held by the local chapter and associated organizations. Also, FACHE, the Fellowship, is on my radar as something I'd like to pursue down the road."

Because of what chiropractors can offer — pain relief without drugs or surgery — Dr. Harrington believes chiropractic medicine has a big future. "We're already looking at a lot of challenges when it comes to prescription drug abuse, opioids. That's a large concern, not just in Florida, but nationally."

He emphasizes the current focus on value-based care — improving patient outcomes while reducing costs. With healthcare systems facing resource challenges, the goal is to find solutions that are both effective and efficient.

For more information on Dr. Corey Harrington, visit LinkedIn at www.linkedin.com/in/physician-leadership or scan the QR Code.

To learn more about the Executive Master of Health Administration, visit <https://business.fau.edu/masters-phd/mha/>.



Join us for our upcoming **Graduate Business Open House on Saturday, March 15** to be hosted at FAU Executive Education in Boca Raton, FL. Register here for more information - <https://faucboep.radiusbycampusgmt.com/ssc/eform/G00G02fG0872SA700ICL.ssc>, or schedule an appointment with our Admissions team today by emailing us at execmha@fau.edu.



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SALUTE TO PHYSICIANS

BAPTIST HEALTH HEART & VASCULAR CARE

Harneet Walia, MD

Harneet Walia, M.D., FAASM, is the medical director of sleep at Baptist Health Miami Cardiac & Vascular Institute and chief of clinical transformation for Baptist Health. She is also a professor at Florida International University Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine. As chief of clinical transformation at Baptist Health, Dr. Walia continues to drive innovation and excellence in healthcare delivery. She has also led multiple professional and leadership development initiatives.

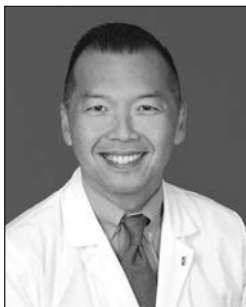
Dr. Walia has led numerous clinical trials and real-world research projects on sleep apnea treatment, including upper airway stimulation and health outcomes, ranging from patient-reported outcomes to cardiometabolic disorders. She and her team have demonstrated that improving sleep disorders can improve patients' quality of life, depressive symptoms and insomnia symptoms, and have garnered various national awards. Her research has also shown that obstructive sleep apnea is associated with recalcitrant blood pressure and that treatment can improve blood pressure. Her research has been published in several high-impact, peer-reviewed journals such as CHEST, JAMA Otolaryngology, and the Journal of Clinical Sleep Medicine.



Anthony Lee, MD

Anthony Lee, M.D., is a board-certified vascular surgeon and the chief of vascular surgery at The Christine E. Lynn Heart and Vascular Institute, part of Baptist Health, at Boca Raton Regional Hospital. He treats the entire range of vascular diseases, with an emphasis on complex thoracic and thoracoabdominal aortic aneurysms and dissections. Dr. Lee is also a clinical professor of surgery at Florida Atlantic University Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine in Boca Raton, Florida. After earning his medical degree from Johns Hopkins School of Medicine, he completed his residency in general surgery at the University of Michigan. He then completed a fellowship in vascular and endovascular surgery at Stanford University.

Dr. Lee has authored more than 30 book chapters, and nearly 130 articles in peer-reviewed journals, and served as the principal investigator in more than 25 medical device clinical trials. His clinical research focuses on the surgical repair of complex aortic aneurysms, and his team is currently studying the safety and efficacy of a novel, state-of-the-art aortic stent graft to treat aortic aneurysms.



Brian Snelling, MD

Brian Snelling, M.D., is a board-certified neurosurgeon, director of cerebrovascular and endovascular neurosurgery, and director of the stroke program at Marcus Neuroscience Institute, part of Baptist Health, at Boca Raton Regional Hospital. Dr. Snelling specializes in treating aneurysms, arteriovenous malformations, strokes and other vascular diseases of the brain and spine. Before joining Marcus Neuroscience Institute in 2018, Dr. Snelling completed a neurological surgery residency and endovascular neurosurgery fellowship at Jackson Memorial Hospital and the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine. Dr. Snelling received his medical degree from West Virginia University School of Medicine where he was elected to the Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society and served as class president. He received an undergraduate degree in biomedical engineering from Vanderbilt University.

He is a pioneer of radial artery access in neuro-intervention and has trained hundreds of surgeons in the procedure. He has authored over 50 refereed articles on topics including cerebrovascular disease and neuro-oncology.



Justin Sporrer, MD

Justin Sporrer, M.D., is a neurosurgeon and director of functional neurosurgery at Baptist Health Miami Neuroscience Institute. He specializes in general neurosurgery, functional neurosurgery, deep brain stimulation and high-intensity focused ultrasound for movement disorders. Dr. Sporrer received his undergraduate degree from Georgetown University, where he received the Barrett Award for Excellence in Humanities, the Department of Physics Award, and the Chapman Award in Biology. He received his medical degree from the University of Florida (UF), earning numerous accolades, including the Academic Perfection Award and the American Medical Association Educational Research Foundation Award. Dr. Sporrer completed an internship and residency in neurological surgery at the University of Florida. During his residency, he received the Charles "Chuck" Shank Award in Neurosurgical Excellence and the Resident Teacher Award. He also served as chief resident.

In addition, Dr. Sporrer was a clinical research fellow at the UF Center for Movement Disorders. He is a member of the Congress of Neurological Surgeons and the American Association of Neurological Surgeons.



BAPTIST HEALTH ORTHOPEDIC CARE

John Uribe, MD

John Uribe, M.D., is a dual board-certified orthopedic surgeon, José Milton Foundation Endowed Chair in Orthopedics, and chief medical executive of Baptist Health Orthopedic Care. He specializes in sports medicine, arthroscopic surgery and minimally invasive surgical procedures for degenerative conditions of the knee, shoulder and elbow. Dr. Uribe is the team physician for the Florida Panthers hockey team and the Miami Dolphins football team. He is also chairman of the department of orthopedics for Florida International University Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine. Dr. Uribe was a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army and served as chief of orthopedics at Tripler Army Medical Center in Honolulu. His research interests include minimally invasive resurfacing techniques of the knee and shoulder, as well as ligament and tendon restoration. A member of multiple professional organizations and societies, he is well-published and lectures extensively in the U.S. and abroad.

Anthony Miniaci, MD

Anthony Miniaci, M.D., is deputy chief medical executive for Baptist Health Orthopedic Care and specializes in sports medicine, shoulder and knee surgery. Dr. Miniaci comes to Baptist Health by way of the Cleveland Clinic where he served as head of the sports medicine program, and professor at Case Western University Cleveland Clinic Lerner College of Medicine where he oversaw the building of a freestanding sports medicine center and was head team physician for the Cleveland Browns. He has produced internationally recognized scientific papers, patents and presentations with a vast career in orthopedic research and development. He was also a professor of surgery and head of sports medicine at the University of Toronto caring for athletes, including Olympians, members of the Toronto Blue Jays and players in the National Hockey League. Dr. Miniaci is based at the new Leon Cooperman Medical Arts Pavilion on the campus of Boca Raton Regional Hospital and calls the new patient-centric facility "the new hub for Baptist Health Orthopedic Care" in Palm Beach County. He notes this location as a key component of the integration of Baptist Health Orthopedic Care across South Florida.



BAPTIST HEALTH

William J. Tingle, MD

William J. Tingle, M.D., FACS, is a board-certified urologist at Baptist Health Urology. He has over 30 years of experience in his field and specializes in the treatment of kidney stones, benign prostatic hyperplasia, erectile dysfunction, voiding dysfunction and prostate cancer. Before joining Baptist Health, Dr. Tingle practiced at Florida Urology Specialists in Sarasota, FL. He earned his medical degree from the University of Florida College of Medicine in Gainesville, where he also completed a general surgery internship and a urology residency at UF Health Shands Hospital. Dr. Tingle is certified by the American Board of Urology and is a fellow of the American College of Surgeons. He is also a member of the American Urological Association and the Florida Urologic Society. Now serving patients in Marathon and Tavernier, Fla., Dr. Tingle is bringing high-quality urologic care closer to home for the local community. He is committed to providing personalized care, believing that clear, effective communication with his patients builds trust, strengthens the patient-doctor relationship and improves treatment outcomes.



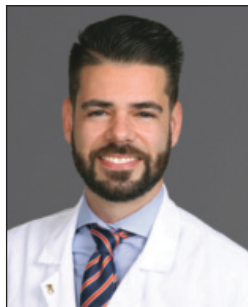
SALUTE TO PHYSICIANS

BAPTIST HEALTH

Jordan Seth Moseson, DO

Jordan Moseson, D.O., is a board-certified surgeon at Baptist Health, specializing in minimally invasive colorectal and general surgery, including robotic surgery. His expertise includes performing colonoscopies and sacral neuromodulation (electrical stimulation therapy) for bowel incontinence. Prior to joining Baptist Health, Dr. Moseson completed his residency in colon and rectal surgery at Louisiana State University. After earning his medical degree from New York College of Osteopathic Medicine, he served as chief resident during his general surgery residency at Nassau University Medical Center.

Additionally, Dr. Moseson serves as an associate assistant professor of clinical services at Florida Atlantic University and trains Baptist Health general surgery residents. He is a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons and a member of the American Society of Colon and Rectal Surgeons and the Florida State Medical Association. With 17 years of experience, Dr. Moseson delivers the most innovative and cutting-edge care, minimizing discomfort and enhancing the quality of life for patients.



Kathy Schilling, MD

Kathy Schilling, MD, currently serves as the Medical Director of the Christine E. Lynn Women's Health & Wellness Institute at Boca Raton Regional Hospital, part of Baptist Health South Florida. As a radiologist with sub specialization in breast imaging, Dr. Schilling has been a member of the Baptist Health team since 1988. Dr. Schilling is committed to cutting-edge research and advancements for breast cancer detection and early diagnosis, ultimately leading to better health and well-being for women in the community.

In recent years, Dr. Schilling has spearheaded Baptist Health's efforts in utilizing artificial intelligence (AI) for breast cancer imaging. Since implementing AI, breast radiologists at Lynn Women's Health & Wellness Institute have improved their detection rate by 23 percent. Prior to joining Baptist Health, Dr. Schilling attended the University of Miami School of Medicine and completed fellowship and residency programs at Mount Sinai Medical Center.



Manmeet Ahluwalia, MD, MBA, FASCO

Manmeet Ahluwalia, M.D., MBA, FASCO, is the chief scientific officer, chief of medical oncology, deputy director and Fernandez Family Endowed Chair in Cancer Research at Baptist Health Miami Cancer Institute. For over a decade, he has led practice-changing research for developing new therapies for patients with primary brain tumors and brain metastases, resulting in his 250+ peer-reviewed papers. He designed and led the initial studies on combining immunotherapy/targeted therapy and radiosurgery in brain metastases. Prior to joining Baptist Health, Dr. Ahluwalia served as the Miller Family Endowed Chair in Neuro-Oncology and the head of operations at Burkhardt Brain Tumor and Neuro-Oncology Center for Cleveland Clinic, Ohio. Dr. Ahluwalia completed internal medicine training at Cleveland Clinic Health System and fellowship training at Roswell Park Cancer Institute in 2009.

Dr. Ahluwalia has received several prestigious awards, including the Fellowship of the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO), the National Cancer Institute/CTEP Career Development Award via the American Brain Tumor Consortium (ABTC), ASCO Leadership Development Program, Most Distinguished Physician Award of AAPI, amongst others. Just recently, Dr. Ahluwalia was elected to join the prestigious American Society for Clinical Investigation (ASCI).



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SALUTE TO PHYSICIANS

KIDZ Medical Pulmonologist Living Her Lifelong Dream to Help Children

BY VANESSA ORR

Dr. Maria E. Franco, a KIDZ Medical Services pediatric pulmonologist who is based at Nicklaus Children's Hospital, has known that she wanted to be a pediatrician since a very young age.

"I said that I would be a pediatrician at three years of age, and I never changed my mind," she laughed, adding that she had been inspired by an uncle in the same field. "I believe that you have to have a calling to be a physician, and you definitely have to have a calling to be a pediatrician."

Dr. Franco believes "you have to have a special heart" to do this work, because caring for children with serious medical conditions is never easy. Her approach is to not only treat the condition, but also to provide support for children and their families as they go through difficult moments.

"I became a pediatrician because I wanted to do something for children, but when you help children, you're obviously helping the whole family," Dr. Franco said. "The relationship that you have with parents is very important because they are their children's advocates, so



Dr. Maria E. Franco

what you do affects the whole family as well as the health of the child. It's very rewarding when you treat the whole family together."

Dr. Franco — who has also served as the president of the medical staff at Nicklaus Children's Hospital for the last six years — graduated from Nuestra Señora del Rosario Medical School in Bogota, Colombia. Dr. Franco was later chief resident in pedi-

atrics at Crozer Medical Center in Philadelphia, PA, and then completed a fellowship at St. Christopher's Hospital for Children in Philadelphia. She is Board-certified in pediatrics and pediatric pulmonology.

In her role as president of the medical staff, Dr. Franco is in charge of 800 physicians who are just as committed to helping children. "Nicklaus Children's Hospital has all the subspecialty programs that children need, and an outstanding, very well-recognized group of physicians who make a big difference every day in the lives of South Florida children," she said. "Together we provide important and excellent care in every pediatric subspecialty."

Dr. Franco's leadership and experience

also helps to train the next generation of pediatric clinicians, and she hopes that more physicians will go into the pediatrics because she has seen a worrying trend — both in Florida and nationally over the past decade. "Unfortunately, there are not that many physicians going into pediatrics, which also decreases the availability of subspecialty care," she said. "As we see fewer pediatric subspecialists, it will make it even more difficult for patients who need that care to get timely appointments. We need to continue to encourage young physicians to go into pediatric fields."

Dr. Franco's passion to help children has also led her to participate in various volunteer initiatives. Though her work in the clinic and in the hospital keeps her quite busy, she hopes to spend more time on the volunteer work she loves in the future.

Dr. Franco served as a medical volunteer for Operation Smile for many years, where she provided pulmonology and intensive care services for children in Kenya, Brazil, Ecuador, Philippines, and Vietnam, including for cleft palate surgery pre-op and post-op care.

"I'm very privileged to do what I love," she said. "But it is also fantastic to travel to another country and help hundreds more children; it's rewarding work that I hope to do again soon."



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SALUTE TO PHYSICIANS

WEST BOCA MEDICAL CENTER

CATHOLIC HEALTH SERVICES

Luisa C. Cueto, MD

Dr. Luisa C. Cueto has 32 years of experience as a medical doctor. Specializing in obstetrics and gynecology at MyDoc Women's Health Specialists in Boca Raton and Boynton Beach, FL, she is board-certified with the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology. Dr. Cueto is also affiliated with West Boca Medical Center. Dr. Cueto received her medical degree from the Medical College of Wisconsin in Milwaukee. She received her Florida medical license in 1996 and her Louisiana medical license in 1993, after completing her residency and fellowship at Tulane University Hospital and Clinics. She is recognized as a Fellow with American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (FACOG). In addition to women's health services and OBGYN, Dr. Cueto offers comprehensive, holistic, primary care for her patients needing guidance with any health issue. She is a native speaker of Spanish and English.



Thiago G. Queiroz, DO

Thiago G. Queiroz, D.O., is the Medical Director at St. Anthony's Rehabilitation Hospital, located in Lauderdale Lakes, and part of Catholic Health Services' Continuum of Care. He obtained his Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine from Nova Southeastern University and completed his residency in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine. Dr. Queiroz is board-certified in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation and holds certifications in Advanced Cardiac Life Support and Pediatric Advanced Life Support. His clinical interests include musculoskeletal medicine, sports medicine, and spasticity management. Dr. Queiroz is skilled in procedures such as ultrasound-guided joint injections, platelet-rich plasma therapy, and osteopathic manipulative medicine. He is fluent in English, Spanish, and Portuguese, which enhances his ability to serve a diverse patient population. Beyond his clinical practice, Dr. Queiroz is actively involved in community service and has been recognized for his leadership and dedication to patient care.



Avraham Schlager, MD

Dr. Avraham Schlager, M.D., FACS, is a board-certified pediatric general surgeon on staff at Palm Beach Children's Hospital at St. Mary's and Palm Beach Children's Hospital at West Boca. He is also an Associate Professor of Surgery at Florida Atlantic University Schmidt College of Medicine. He specializes in advanced minimally invasive surgery, pediatric oncologic surgery, complex neonatal surgery with prenatal counseling, thyroid surgery, inflammatory bowel disease, and pectus excavatum (Nuss procedure). Previously, Dr. Schlager served as Surgical Co-Director of the Pediatric ICU and Trauma Medical Director at Akron Children's Hospital, where he was also an Assistant Professor of Surgery at NEOMED. He completed a pediatric surgery fellowship at Emory University and his general surgery residency at NYU Medical Center.



Colleen M. Neubert, DO

Colleen M. Neubert, D.O., serves as the Medical Director at St. Catherine's West Rehabilitation Hospital, located in Hialeah Gardens and part of Catholic Health Services' Continuum of Care. She earned her Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine from the West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine and completed her residency in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at Larkin Community Hospital. Dr. Neubert is board-certified by the American Board of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation. Her clinical expertise encompasses musculoskeletal disorders, sports medicine, stroke rehabilitation, and neuromuscular disorders. She is proficient in procedures such as EMG/NCS, ultrasound-guided joint injections, and osteopathic manipulative treatment. Dr. Neubert is dedicated to developing individualized treatment plans aimed at enhancing functional outcomes for patients with disabilities. In recognition of her commitment to excellence, she was honored as Resident Physician of the Year at the West Palm Beach VA Hospital for the 2021–2022 academic year.



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SALUTE TO PHYSICIANS

PALM BEACH ORTHOPAEDIC INSTITUTE

John Hinson, MD

Board certified in orthopedic surgery since 2012, John Hinson, M.D., of the Palm Beach Orthopaedic Institute specializes in traumatic and degenerative conditions of the shoulder and elbow including arthroscopic surgery, rotator cuff repair, shoulder instability procedures, shoulder replacement including reverse total shoulder replacement and the care of throwing athletes and golfers. Dr. Hinson graduated with honors from the Medical College of Georgia in 2004 and served as President of the Georgia Elbow and Shoulder Society from 2013-2015. He has been a Fellow of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons since 2014. A passionate advocate for using current surgical technology to advance healing and outcomes, Dr. Hinson has also presented at the American Osteopathic Academy of Orthopedics 2015 Postgraduate Seminar, spoken to nascent physicians at local schools, and been published in international journals, written about managing complications of reverse total shoulder arthroplasty.



Jonathan Shaw, MD

Dr. Jonathan Shaw is a local, fellowship-trained, joint replacement surgeon at the Palm Beach Orthopaedic Institute. Specializing in minimally invasive total hip and knee replacement, he utilizes robotic surgery, performs revision joint replacement, and offers nonoperative care for hip and knee arthritis.

Trained at one of the world's top arthroplasty fellowships, Midwest Orthopaedics at Rush, Dr. Shaw is an active member of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons and the American Association of Hip and Knee Surgeons. At his practice, Palm Beach Orthopaedic Institute in West Palm Beach, Florida, he focuses on orthopedic research and the advancement of total joint arthroplasty. Serving patients in Palm Beach County, Dr. Shaw is rewarded by the patient being able to resume an active lifestyle with pain relief and improved mobility function.



MOUNT SINAI MEDICAL CENTER

Mike Cusnir, MD

As the Chief of the Division of Hematology and Oncology, Dr. Mike Cusnir's approach to patient care is rooted in both clinical excellence and the personal connections he builds with those he treats. Every patient is met not just with a plan, but with understanding, empathy, and a sense of hope. Originally from Colombia, he earned his medical degree at Pontificia Universidad Javeriana before completing his residency at Maimonides Medical Center in Brooklyn. He then specialized in hematology and oncology at the University of Maryland, serving as chief fellow during his final year. Since joining Mount Sinai in 2003, Dr. Cusnir has led numerous clinical trials, published several articles, and recently completed a fellowship in integrative medicine at the University of Arizona. As co-director of Gastrointestinal Malignancies, he treats a wide range of cancers, blending traditional and integrative therapies. Outside of patient care, Dr. Cusnir is passionate about mentoring future healthcare professionals and has been recognized as "Attending of the Year" for his outstanding impact on residents and interns.



Irma Forghani, MD

Dr. Irma Forghani is a renowned expert in genetics, specializing in adult inherited and complex disorders. As the Director of Genetics at Mount Sinai Medical Center, she combines exceptional clinical expertise with a commitment to advancing the field through research. Dr. Forghani earned her medical degree from Isfahan University of Medical Sciences in Iran and completed her residency in internal medicine at the University of Oklahoma, followed by a fellowship in medical genetics at the University of California Medical Center. Board-certified by the American College of Medical Genetics and the American Board of Internal Medicine, she focuses on hereditary connective tissue disorders, vascular malformations, and hereditary cancer syndromes. Prior to joining Mount Sinai, Dr. Forghani was an associate professor at the University of Miami, where she founded the Hereditary Connective Tissue Disorder Clinic and led the Cancer Predisposition Syndrome Clinic. She has authored numerous articles and co-investigated the NIH-funded Undiagnosed Diseases Network study. She guides medical students, residents, and fellows, and is involved in community efforts to raise awareness about complex inherited disorders.



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SALUTE TO PHYSICIANS

ADVANCED SURGICAL PHYSICIANS

Andrew J. Shapiro, MD

Dedicating his life to service, Andrew J. Shapiro, M.D., of Advanced Surgical Partners is a board-certified general surgery specialist, U.S. Army veteran and proud philanthropic partner for numerous causes in Palm Beach County including but not limited to volunteering his time to teach surgery at UM's School of Medicine and volunteering to train canine companions at New Horizons Service Dogs. Dr. Shapiro has completed over 1000 surgical procedures with the cutting edge da Vinci® robot - a minimally invasive system which guides a physician's hand movements with a precise range of motion. His mastery of this technology and his ability to perform complicated procedures with meticulous precision cements his status as a leader in the field of minimally invasive surgery and with his continued practice and advocacy of minimally invasive robotic surgery, he plans to continue striving towards greater heights for medical advancement and patient care.



Kyle S. Eldredge, DO

A colorectal surgeon dedicated to serving Palm Beach County's western communities, Kyle S. Eldredge, D.O., worked as a paramedic for four years before graduating from the Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine. Dr. Eldredge was awarded a fellowship in Robotic Minimally Invasive Colorectal Surgery from 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 general to gynecologic to bariatric to single-site gallbladder surgery, the procedure only uses small cuts 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 medical expertise they deserve.



DELRAY MEDICAL CENTER

Stephen Milan, MD

Dr. Stephen Milan is a pulmonologist and advanced bronchoscopist specializing in robotic assisted navigational bronchoscopy and endobronchial ultrasound for minimally invasive lung cancer diagnosis and therapeutic treatments. Dr. Milan works closely with oncology, and thoracic surgery teams. Dr. Milan, with the oncology and thoracic surgery teams, continue to advance care with "single anesthesia events" to diagnose and cure lung cancer with one minimally invasive surgical procedure. They also leverage cutting edge technological advances in robotics and utilize AI as part of their comprehensive cancer care. He is on staff at both Delray and West Boca medical centers. Dr. Milan earned his Bachelor of Arts in Biology from Pace University and his medical degree from Ross University School of Medicine. He completed his residency, internship, and fellowship at New York-Presbyterian Brooklyn Methodist Hospital. Dr. Milan is fluent in both English and Spanish.



Michael Stark, DO

Michael Stark, D.O., is a fellowship trained orthopedic spine surgeon on staff at Delray Medical Center and West Boca Medical Center. He specializes in all aspects of the spine from the neck to the lower back, utilizing a minimally invasive surgical approach to decrease both pain and recovery time. In addition, he performs lumbar and cervical fusion, disc replacement, and spinal deformity correction, treating conditions such as herniated discs, stenosis, degenerative disc disease, and spinal trauma. Dr. Stark earned his Bachelor of Science in psychology from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and his Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine from Nova Southeastern University, where he received the prestigious Howard Dunbar Scholarship. He completed his orthopedic surgery residency at Jefferson Health New Jersey and a spine surgery fellowship at SUNY Upstate Medical University. He is a member of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons and the American Osteopathic Academy of Orthopaedics.



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SALUTE TO PHYSICIANS

MEMORIAL DIVISION OF OTOLARYNGOLOGY

Aileen Kerns, DO

Dr. Aileen Kerns is an otolaryngologist, specializing in the diagnosis and treatment of ear, nose, and throat disorders, and also a head and neck surgeon that performs salivary gland operations, thyroidectomies, and other procedures.

But it's her work with sleep apnea patients, and new approaches that can aid those that suffer, that has her most excited. "We'll soon be expanding sleep surgery options at Memorial, including Inspire therapy, which have life-changing potential for patients," said Dr. Kerns.

For the Inspire treatment, Dr. Kerns implants a small device in the chest that, when turned on, stimulates the tongue to keep the airway open during sleep, ensuring normal breathing patterns. She does this in collaboration with sleep medicine specialists, believing the team approach is most beneficial for sleep apnea patients.



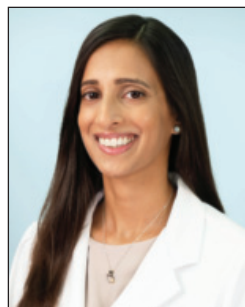
MEMORIAL DIVISION OF PEDIATRIC PALLIATIVE CARE

Amisha Desai, DO

As a specialty primarily focused on improving quality of life for patients, pediatric palliative care often involves acute and chronic pain management. Dr. Amisha Desai, a fellowship-trained physician, prefers non-pharmacologic interventions for pain whenever possible.

"Pain is best managed by addressing not only physical pain but also its psychological and social aspects as well," said Dr. Desai. "It is a multi-modal, interdisciplinary approach that I've found delivers the best outcomes."

Acupuncture is one of the weapons in the doctor's arsenal. Many studies have demonstrated its success treating several conditions, including chronic pain, with minimal, if any, side effects. The treatment involves inserting tiny, hair-thin needles into the skin at strategic points to improve energy flow throughout the body. Dr. Desai completed an acupuncture training course in 2024 and now offers the treatment at her outpatient office in Miramar. She is hoping to bring this treatment to Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital in Hollywood soon.



MEMORIAL DIVISION OF ORTHOPEDIC SURGERY AND SPORTS MEDICINE

Miriam Weisberg-Tannenbaum, MD

A fellowship-trained orthopedic surgeon, Dr. Miriam Weisberg-Tannenbaum specializes in shoulder and elbow, treating pathology ranging from rotator cuff tendinitis and tears to joint replacement and revision arthroplasty.

"Medicine isn't black and white, and neither are surgical options for patients," said Dr. Weisberg-Tannenbaum, a graduate of Florida International University's Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine. "I focus on patient-specific care that is guided by the individual's personal goals within the spectrum of treatment options."

A former athlete, it was Weisberg-Tannenbaum's own injury, and the compassion she received from a pediatric orthopedic surgeon, that sparked her interest in medicine. Today, she aims to combine the empathetic care she once received with the latest technologies, including CT-guided surgical planning, custom implants, and cutting-edge techniques, to deliver patients the best possible outcomes.



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SALUTE TO PHYSICIANS

MEMORIAL DIVISION OF PEDIATRIC NEPHROLOGY

Pamela Millan, MD, MSPH

Dr. Pamela Millan is a pediatric nephrologist at Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital, caring for babies, children and teenagers with a variety of kidney and urinary tract issues. Many of her patients have chronic diseases that significantly impact their quality of life.

"Working with dialysis patients and seeing their difficulties firsthand is what inspires me most," said Dr. Millan, who completed fellowship training in pediatric nephrology in 2023. "Their resilience motivates me to take a central role in their care."

Dr. Millan is involved in multidisciplinary clinics for Spina Bifida and congenital heart disease and heart transplant, which allow the opportunity to have a preventative approach with patients who are at high risk for renal disease. When she is not seeing patients, Dr. Millan is participating in clinical research and medical education with medical students and residents.



MEMORIAL HOSPITAL WEST

Seyed Alipasha Rassouli, MD

A Facial Plastic and Reconstructive surgeon, Dr. Alipasha Rassouli is focused on the impact he can have for patients, including those who require excision of and reconstruction for skin cancer of the head and neck.

"I was particularly drawn to facial plastic surgery because it blends medical expertise with artistry, allowing me to address both functional and aesthetic concerns," said Dr. Rassouli. "I appreciate how we're able to deliver immediate, life-changing results."

A fellowship-trained physician (University of Toronto, 2015), Dr. Rassouli also performs surgery for thyroid cancer, otolaryngology, and facial cosmetic issues. Away from the operating room, the son of two healthcare providers advances the field through research, publications, and presentations that focus on improving outcomes and experiences. "Helping patients regain confidence and achieve their goals is one of the most rewarding aspects of my work," Dr. Rassouli said.



MEMORIAL CARDIAC AND VASCULAR INSTITUTE

Sonya Tuerff, MD, MBA, FACS, FSVS, RPVI, CHCQM

Dr. Sonya Tuerff is medical director for endovascular surgery at Memorial Hospital West and Memorial Hospital Miramar. In that role, she is passionate about organizational management, improving the delivery of patient care, and growing Memorial Cardiac and Vascular Institute to meet the needs of the South Florida community.

"The vascular surgery team at Memorial provides excellent, state-of-the-art, comprehensive care, and I love the immediate impact we're able to have on our patient's lives," said Dr. Tuerff. "We have the only accredited vascular lab in the area and perform many procedures in the office and on an outpatient basis."

Memorial was the first in South Florida to perform the DETOUR procedure, a minimally-invasive treatment for peripheral artery disease (PAD) that involves using a stent graft to create a bypass around a blocked artery. As with other procedures Dr. Tuerff performs, it can help relieve symptoms and reduce the chance of the patient having a cardiac event or stroke.



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SALUTE TO PHYSICIANS

HOLY CROSS MEDICAL GROUP

Diana P. English, MD, FACOG

A gynecologic oncologist at Holy Cross Medical Group, Diana P. English, M.D., is a Fellow of American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. She is board-certified by the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology in OBGYN and Gynecologic Oncology and by the American Board of Internal Medicine in Hospice and Palliative Medicine. She specializes in all gynecologic cancers — ovarian, fallopian tube, uterine, cervical, vaginal and vulvar cancer.

She also treats benign diseases including pre-cancers of the cervix, vagina and uterus; pelvic masses; uterine fibroids; complex endometriosis; abnormal uterine bleeding; cervical and vaginal dysplasia; genetic predisposition to cancer; and inherited cancer syndromes. Her focus areas include minimally invasive surgical approaches; heated-intraperitoneal chemotherapy; cytoreductive procedures, chemotherapy and targeted therapies for gynecologic cancer; and palliative medicine.

Previously, Dr. English was an associate professor at University of South Florida's Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology with a joint appointment in the Department of Internal Medicine. She was the USF gynecologic oncology fellowship director and director of outpatient palliative care and survivorship program director at Tampa General Hospital. She earned her Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery with honors from the University of the West Indies in Mona, Jamaica and did her OBGYN residency training at the University of Miami. She completed a gynecologic oncology fellowship at Yale School of Medicine and a hospice and palliative medicine fellowship at Stanford University Hospital and Clinics.



Edwin Golikov, DO

Edwin Golikov, D.O., is a gastroenterologist with Holy Cross Medical Group who is specially trained to diagnose and manage diseases of the digestive tract, from the esophagus to the large intestine. He treats patients with conditions including colon cancer prevention, inflammatory bowel diseases, gastroesophageal reflux and liver disease. His sub-specialty focus includes pancreaticobiliary disorders, gastrointestinal cancers, complex polypectomy and pancreatic cystic lesions.

He performs interventional endoscopic ultrasound, endoscopic retrograde cholangiopancreatography, endoluminal stenting and suturing. Dr. Golikov completed fellowships in advanced interventional endoscopy at NYU Langone Hospital in Mineola, New York and gastroenterology at Arnot Ogden Medical Center in Elmira, New York. Dr. Golikov earned his Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine with honors from NYIT College of Osteopathic Medicine in Old Westbury, New York and B.A. in Natural Sciences from Fordham University.

He is triple board certified in Internal Medicine, Gastroenterology and Obesity Medicine. Additionally, Dr. Golikov is proficient in Russian.



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CELEBRATING NATIONAL DOCTOR'S DAY - MARCH 30, 2025

SALUTE TO PHYSICIANS

BROWARD HEALTH CORAL SPRINGS

Joseph P. Corallo, MD

Joseph P. Corallo, M.D., serves as the vice chief of staff at Broward Health Coral Springs, is the director of the hospital's Center of Excellence in minimally invasive colon and rectal surgery and a member of the core faculty for Broward Health's general surgery residency program.

Board certified in both general surgery and colon and rectal surgery, Dr. Corallo specializes in robotic, laparoscopic and open surgery, as well as complex endoscopy. With nearly 25 years of experience, Dr. Corallo has received numerous awards and honors, authored textbook chapters and contributed to national presentations in the field of surgery.

"The ability to make a tangible difference in my patients' lives—whether through minimally invasive techniques, advanced laparoscopic procedures or innovative treatments—is incredibly rewarding," Dr. Corallo said. "The human body is complex, and the field of colorectal surgery allows me to continuously learn, evolve and push the boundaries of what is possible to improve patient outcomes and quality of life."

Dr. Corallo received his bachelor's degree magna cum laude in psychology from Rutgers University and earned his Doctor of Medicine degree at University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey. He completed his general surgery residency and colon and rectal surgery fellowship at the University of Miami and Jackson Health System.



BROWARD HEALTH NORTH

Faraaz Mushtaq, DO

Broward Health Physician Group's Faraaz Mushtaq, D.O., is board certified in cardiology and internal medicine and has practiced at Broward Health North since 2016.

He finds the most rewarding aspect of cardiology to be the immediate and meaningful impact he can have on his patient's lives, whether through managing complex cardiovascular conditions or preventing life-threatening events.

"I chose this specialty because of the dynamic nature of cardiac care with the balance of critical decision-making, long-term patient relationships and evolving medical advancements keeps every day both challenging and fulfilling," said Dr. Mushtaq.

In addition to his clinical practice, Dr. Mushtaq serves as an associate program director of the transitional year residency program at Broward Health North.

Dr. Mushtaq received his bachelor's degree cum laude in health information management from Saint Louis University and earned his Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine degree at Nova Southeastern University College of Osteopathic Medicine. He completed his internal medicine residency at Palmetto General Hospital and his cardiology fellowship at Broward Health Medical Center.



BROWARD HEALTH MEDICAL CENTER

Jose Martinez, MD

Jose Martinez, M.D., a cardiologist with over 24 years of experience in South Florida healthcare, serves as the chief medical officer for Broward Health Medical Center.

He was inspired at a young age to pursue medicine. "My father was a physician, and I admired how he applied his knowledge to assist others," Dr. Martinez said. "I find the field of medicine fascinating; it intertwines science, clinical skills and a drive to serve for the good of others."

Dr. Martinez is responsible for translating the administrative vision, strategy and initiatives to the medical staff at the 716-bed hospital.

"It motivates me to know my experience can help restore health or provide comfort in difficult times," Dr. Martinez said.

Dr. Martinez earned his medical degree at Ponce School of Medicine in Puerto Rico and holds a MBA in Healthcare from Florida International University, an M.A. in Theology from St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary and an M.S. in Bioethics from St. Thomas University. His residency and fellowships include internal medicine, cardiology and interventional cardiology at the University of Miami and Jackson Health System.



BROWARD HEALTH IMPERIAL POINT

Shalom Adams, MD

Shalom Adams, M.D., is a board-certified family medicine physician with the Broward Health Physician Group who practices at Broward Health Imperial Point. Dr Adams is dedicated to helping patients improve their well-being and prevent future medical issues. He specializes in preventive medicine, smoking cessation, weight management, chronic disease care and education on contraception, medication management and the importance of regular physical exams. Dr. Adams also provides guidance on hospital discharge planning and advance healthcare directives.

Having managed asthma as a child, Dr. Adams' personal healthcare experience sparked his interest in medicine.

"I wanted to learn about specific conditions, prevent them and help people manage chronic illnesses," he says. Since starting his practice in 2021, his focus has been on enhancing the health of individuals and families in Broward County.

Dr. Adams completed his residency at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai in Oceanside, New York, and earned his medical degree from the American University of the Caribbean School of Medicine in Sint Maarten.



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SALUTE TO PHYSICIANS

ST. MARY'S MEDICAL CENTER

Michael J. Thomas, MD

Michael J. Thomas, M.D., R.D., is a board-certified pediatric gastroenterologist on staff at Palm Beach Children's Hospital at St. Mary's and Palm Beach Children's Hospital at West Boca in addition to seeing patients at the KIDZ Pediatric Multispecialty Practice locations in West Palm Beach and Port St. Lucie. He joined KIDZ Medical in 2023. Dr. Thomas earned his medical degree from St. George's University in Grenada after completing his undergraduate studies in Nutrition & Food Science at Drexel University in Philadelphia. He also completed a dietetic internship at Rutgers University and earned the credential of Registered Dietitian (RD). Dr. Thomas completed his pediatric residency at New York-Presbyterian Brooklyn Methodist Hospital and his pediatric gastroenterology fellowship at Maria Fareri Children's Hospital/Westchester Medical Center, affiliated with New York Medical College in Valhalla, NY. Dr. Thomas is board-certified in pediatrics and pediatric gastroenterology from the American Board of Pediatrics. His clinical interests include inflammatory bowel disease, eosinophilic esophagitis, non-alcoholic fatty liver disease, functional gastrointestinal disorders, and the nutritional implications amongst a range of gastrointestinal conditions. He enjoys building trusting and communicative relationships with his patients and their families.



Sara Tano, MD

Dr. Sara Tano is a board-certified emergency medicine physician on staff at both St. Mary's and West Boca medical centers. She joined KIDZ Medical in 2022. Dr. Tano earned her medical degree from American University of Antigua College of Medicine after completing her undergraduate studies in biology and chemistry at Florida International University. She completed her pediatric residency and her fellowship in pediatric emergency medicine at Nicklaus Children's Hospital in Miami. Dr. Tano is board-certified in general pediatrics from the American Board of Pediatrics and is a member of the American Academy of Pediatrics. She is also a Clinical Affiliate Assistant Professor of Emergency Medicine at Florida Atlantic University Schmidt College of Medicine.

Dr. Tano treats both general and higher-acuity pediatric patients of all ages. She is fluent in English and Spanish.



PALM BEACH GARDENS MEDICAL CENTER

John Afshar, MD

John Afshar, M.D., is a board-certified, fellowship-trained neurosurgeon on staff at Palm Beach Gardens Medical Center and St. Mary's Medical Center. He specializes in minimally invasive spine and brain surgery. Dr. Afshar earned both his undergraduate and medical degrees from Georgetown University before completing his neurosurgery residency at Georgetown University Medical Center. He received specialized training at the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology and Children's National Medical Center and conducted a research fellowship in brain tumors and cerebrovascular disease at the National Institutes of Health, earning national recognition with the Galbraith Award. He completed further training through a spinal fellowship at Tampa General Hospital/University of South Florida. Dr. Afshar is a Diplomate of the American Board of Neurologic Surgery and a member of the Congress of Neurologic Surgeons and the North American Spine Society.



Nishant Patel, MD

Dr. Nishant Patel is a cardiothoracic surgeon on staff at Palm Beach Gardens and Delray medical centers. 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 preceded 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.



GOOD SAMARITAN MEDICAL CENTER

Evan Levy, MD

Evan Levy, M.D., is a gynecologic oncologist with Florida Cancer Specialists & Research Institute (FCS). He provides care to patients at the FCS Boca Raton, Lake Worth and West Palm Beach locations.

Dr. Levy is on staff at several Palm Beach Health Network hospitals, including Good Samaritan, Palm Beach Gardens, St. Mary's and West Boca medical centers.

Dr. Levy received his medical degree from Yale University School of Medicine in New Haven, Connecticut and completed residency training in obstetrics and gynecology at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine, McGaw Medical Center in Chicago. He has been recognized with multiple teaching excellence awards and was the 2020 recipient of the Michael Newton Award from the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine in recognition of his clinical excellence and compassion to patients.

During his fellowship in gynecologic oncology at Montefiore Medical Center/Albert Einstein College of Medicine in Bronx, New York, Dr. Levy was named as administrative chief fellow and also provided guidance to fellow physicians as a peer-to-peer team member.



Kyle Petersen, MD

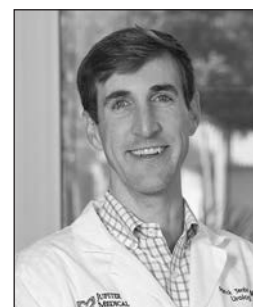
Dr. Kyle Petersen is a fellowship trained, board certified orthopedic spine surgeon, on staff at Good Samaritan, Palm Beach Gardens and St. Mary's medical centers. He utilizes minimally invasive techniques trying to limit pain and preserve mobility. While at UCLA for his fellowship he learned endoscopic spine surgery. He focuses on all aspects of the spine from the neck to the lower back and SI joint. Dr. Petersen has authored and published numerous peer reviewed articles and book chapters relating to spine and orthopedic trauma. He has presented his work at numerous meetings across the United States. Having had spine surgery himself, Dr. Petersen demonstrates empathy towards all his patients in the hopes of getting them back to the things they love. Dr. Petersen grew up in Naples, FL and was named Florida 2A basketball Player of the Year. He continued his basketball career at the University of Akron, a division I program. He is now excited to return to Florida to take care of patients and bring his training from across America back home.



JUPITER MEDICAL CENTER

Patrick O. Tenbrink, MD, MSC

Board-certified in urology, Dr. Patrick Tenbrink joined the multidisciplinary team of experts at Jupiter Medical Center's Anderson Family Cancer Institute as the Medical Director of the Barb & Joe Charles Center for Urology. Dr. Tenbrink specializes in adult general urology and urologic cancers, offering comprehensive care that includes prevention, diagnosis, management and surgical options, focusing on minimally invasive and robotic techniques. His expertise encompasses robotic-assisted surgery for prostate cancer, the Aquablation procedure for benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH) and NanoKnife® IRE for prostate cancer. Dr. Tenbrink earned his medical degree from the University of Toledo College of Medicine, Toledo, Ohio, and served his residency and internship at the University of Maryland Medical Center in Baltimore. He is committed to a collaborative approach, prioritizing the needs of each patient and their families and ensures that patients receive personalized, continuous care throughout their treatment.



Kevin Green, MD

Dr. Kevin Green is board-certified, fellowship trained in pulmonology and critical care medicine, specializing in interventional pulmonary medicine. His clinical expertise includes diagnosing and managing pulmonary conditions such as interstitial lung disease, obstructive pulmonary disease, pleural diseases and lung nodules, bronchial thermoplasty, and Zephyr valves lung volume reduction. Dr. Green is one of the few physicians in Florida utilizing Ion robotic-assisted navigational bronchoscopy with cone beam CT. This cutting-edge technology improves the accuracy and diagnosis of hard-to-reach nodules in the lungs. He earned his medical degree from Ross University School of Medicine, Dominica, Barbados, and served his residency, internship, and fellowship at the University of Florida College of Medicine, Jacksonville, FL. He is an integral member of a multispecialty group of physicians dedicated to patients with pulmonary issues, providing compassionate, individualized care for each patient.



Cover Story: Doctor-Led Hospitals: Enhancing Care and Leadership in Healthcare

Continued from page 1

Enhancing Patient Care and Outcomes

Physicians transitioning into leadership roles bring firsthand clinical experience that enhances patient care. “Clinical knowledge and experience are key in improving patient care,” Dr. Choudhary explains. “First-hand experience helps us think about the provider experience as well as the patient experience. This perspective guides decisions that enhance the experience for all involved.”

Beyond clinical expertise, empathy plays a crucial role. “As a physician who has worked in critical care, I know how grueling long hours in a hospital setting can be. I worked through the COVID pandemic and shared many challenges with my team. We helped each other stay strong,” he says.

The ability to relate to the demands of clinical practice enables physician leaders to foster a more supportive and effective healthcare environment.

Navigating the Transition to Leadership

While physicians bring valuable skills to leadership, transitioning from clinical practice to administration presents challenges.

“There are administrative skills that are not taught in medical school,” Dr. Choudhary acknowledges. “I think being open to learning new ways and having a supportive organization that invests in leadership development can bridge gaps and help develop better healthcare leaders.”

Leadership development programs, mentorship, and continuous education play a vital role in preparing physicians for administrative responsibilities, ensuring they can effectively navigate both the clinical and managerial aspects of hospital operations.

Driving Innovation and Operational Efficiency

Physician leaders are uniquely positioned to drive innovation and improve operational efficiency. With their deep understanding of clinical care and the challenges faced by healthcare workers, they can implement strategies that enhance service delivery.

“The healthcare industry has encountered challenges that require physicians to help create and execute successful strategies across a wide variety of clinical delivery environments, including the move to value-based care delivery,” says Dr. Choudhary. “This requires innovation which doesn’t happen in a vacuum – it takes an entire team. As a physician leader,

you learn when to push and when to empower your teams to take on the challenges and come up with their own ways to innovate.”

Balancing Leadership and Clinical Engagement

Despite the administrative responsibilities of leadership roles, physician leaders must remain connected to clinical practice. For Dr. Choudhary, rounding with his teams is a priority.

“I enjoy rounding with my teams. I visit the floors at Cleveland Clinic Tradition Hospital. I listen to patients’ and staff’s concerns, and I watch the teams tackle big issues and formulate solutions,” he says.

Engaging with patient care fosters a deeper understanding of the hospital’s daily challenges, ensuring that leadership decisions remain grounded in the realities of clinical practice. “Cleveland Clinic is incredibly supportive of physicians in dual roles and encourages physician leaders to make time for patient interactions when possible,” he adds.

Advice for Aspiring Physician Leaders

For physicians considering a transition into leadership, Dr. Choudhary emphasizes the importance of teamwork and trust. “I would say to trust that we’re all dealing with the same challenges. Trust

your team to come up with solutions and don’t take everything on yourself. And believe that what you’re doing is changing lives because it is.”

He also highlights the importance of staying connected to the fundamental values of medicine. “Having first-hand knowledge of the doctor-patient relationship at an individual level helps to address collective issues like social determinants of health, healthcare barriers and changing patients’ expectations.”

The Future of Physician Leadership in Healthcare

Physician leadership will continue to play a critical role in shaping the future of healthcare. “It’s important to allow physician leaders to be human, to be vulnerable, and to reconnect with the reasons why they went into medicine in the first place,” according to Dr. Choudhary.

As healthcare organizations increasingly recognize the benefits of physician-led administration, integrating clinical expertise with strategic decision-making will remain essential in ensuring high-quality patient care, innovative problem-solving, and a strong, sustainable healthcare system for the future.

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Cover Story: CEO Leads Cano Health Out of Bankruptcy

Continued from page 1
exactly what we did."

A company facing bankruptcy can often expect to encounter 12 to 18 months of restructuring, but Kent is thrilled to state, "We entered and exited within 4-1/2 months. I'm proud of our team, and certainly proud of our providers, physicians and nurses – they stayed with us and helped propel the company forward. I'm blessed to lead such an amazing team. Our advisors were also phenomenal."

Kent was named permanent CEO in August 2023. Cano Health entered bankruptcy in February 2024 and emerged in June 2024. Moving forward, he said his vision for the coming year is to continue to optimize various locations, wellness centers, and medical services. "Around the fourth quarter we'll be evaluating markets, and next year we'll begin to implement the plans."

He said he joined the organization "because I believed in the culture and the service; it was very much akin to what I as an entrepreneur had developed." What Cano Health offers is a family-like atmosphere that provides the human touch when it comes to caring for patients, and that will continue as the organization moves forward.

In addition to the medical clinics, Cano Health offers wellness centers, where patients can engage in various activities that focus on both physical and emotional health, which are equally important. Kent emphasized, "We're going to continue the great services we provide. Our wellness centers are not just about arts and crafts, but also yoga, muscle tone, teaching our seniors balance, diet and exercise, nutrition, and the like."

Kent said being involved with an organ-

ization like Cano Health is important to him because when he was a teen he lost his grandmother to complications from diabetes. "She was a nurse who cared deeply for her family and her community; she was a very strong Christian woman. When she passed away I had extreme grief, and I decided to turn that into something positive by going into healthcare. I didn't want anyone else to lose a family member because of gaps in care – a lack of care in the community, a lack of understanding. The model that is Cano Health wasn't around at that time; a value-based, outcome-approach to engaging and educating patients wasn't around."

In addition to his work at Cano Health, Kent was recently named chair of the Broward Health Foundation Board, for which he said he was "immensely honored and moved." He explained that Cano Health has about 50 owned and affiliated primary care locations in Broward County, saying they are deeply entrenched there as a healthcare provider.

Kent expressed his gratitude for Shane Strum being the CEO of Broward Health System, and his recent appointment as interim CEO of Memorial Health System. "I believe exploring the alignment of the two systems is critically important for residents of Broward County. Broward Health and Memorial are where our patients go for care. I want residents to have the best care in Broward County; there's no need for them to be shuttled to counties to the north or south when we have care right here. I am excited by what is to come!"

*For more information, call
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Cover Story: Dr. Alwyn Leiba Takes Holistic Approach as MDC Medical Campus President

Continued from page 1

"I believe this campus is a diamond in the rough," he says of MDC, located in the heart of the Miami Health District. Home to the School of Nursing and the School of Health Sciences, the medical campus offers more than 31 educational options, including Physician Assistant, RN and RN to BSN programs as well as associate's and bachelor's degree programs and training certificates.

According to Dr. Leiba, his goal is to enhance the student experience—not just in the classroom, but by providing a full holistic experience and constant support.

"I was once a student and I know the struggle," he explained. "When I come to work, I take off my administrative hat and think about the student experience. What would I have liked as a student, and how would I know what resources are available?"

"If a student is not doing well, we're here to support them in whatever they need," he added. "If that means tutoring because they are not succeeding in a certain subject, or helping them with tuition support and assistance because they are going through financial difficulties, we want to do that. We want to work alongside them in their educational journey from day one."

This holistic approach can include everything from the security team walking new students unfamiliar with the campus to class when they are lost to faculty providing online tutoring. Students facing financial difficulties can take advantage of Single Stop, a program that includes a food pantry, bus passes, books and more.

"Life happens, and in some cases, it affects a student's ability to concentrate or study. But when you provide the help they need, greatness can happen," said Dr. Leiba. "When all the pieces come together—when they can move beyond a rough financial situation or academic issue—it ultimately becomes a win-win situation."

He added that because medicine is a "brand new language" for many students, everyone is required to take an Introduction to Healthcare class, no matter what avenue of healthcare they are pursuing.

"This gatekeeper class teaches students the basic things they need to know to dive into a career," said Dr. Leiba. "It helps students figure out if they're in the right place or whether a different pathway would be more appropriate. People think about nurses and doctors when you say healthcare, but there are so many other avenues and different health professions."

Dr. Leiba's approach also includes providing support to community partners by working with hospitals in South Florida to determine how the college can help them, and what they need from a future workforce.

"We want to know how we can support their healthcare systems and support Miami-Dade County," Dr. Leiba explained, noting that it's important to keep abreast of new trends, like artificial intelligence, when educating medical providers. "Our goal is to continue developing these partnerships so that we can support our students as well as our community."

Cover Story: The Evolution and Future of Hospital Medicine at Holy Cross Health

Continued from page 1

hospital, providing them with the care and attention they deserve. They're also masters of the hospital system who know the hospital's layout, policies, procedures and standards of practice, and can thus tailor their communication style to meet the needs of different care teams within the hospital, with the aim of improving care and efficiency.

Communication is key, and hospitalists use a whole-team approach. They obtain collateral information from the PCP, confirm plans with outpatient specialists and healthcare proxies and advocate with the insurance companies for the most effective discharge disposition for the patient.

Sound Physicians ("Sound"), which was founded over two decades ago in the Pacific Northwest, has provided hospital-

ist services to Holy Cross Health in Fort Lauderdale for 13 years. As a national medical group, Sound partners with hospitals in communities coast to coast to provide hospitalist teams, as well as teams for emergency medicine, critical care and anesthesia. When the partnership between Sound and Holy Cross began, there were six hospitalists with private physicians from the community still admitting their own patients and taking the occasional ED call. Since then, Sound has grown to 24 physicians who handle more than 80 percent of admissions at Holy Cross, alleviating the workload for the majority of private physicians who entrust us to care for their patients.

At Holy Cross, we have a 21-to-1 patient-to-hospitalist ratio on an average

day. Hospitalists work in a stimulating, intense, demanding environment with long days and grueling schedules for the benefit of the patient. They maintain continuity to build trust and confidence with the patient and their family, so they know they have an inpatient physician who is invested in their care and advocating for them throughout their stay — for the best outcome and experience.

As the needs of the patients of Broward County continue to grow, I see our group expanding to better care for the increasing complexity of patients' health. No two patients are alike, and no two days are alike. Our patients' complex cases with multiple comorbidities are what draw us to this specialty and are why we strive to stay up to date with and promote medi-

cine's rapidly evolving, evidence-based guidelines and practice standards.

When physicians-to-be are in medical school and deciding what path to take, some discover a passion for hospital medicine. We work side-by-side with our four resident teaching teams at Holy Cross, knowing that a positive experience for a resident can help them decide to join us as a hospitalist when they graduate. It's uniquely rewarding to make an impact on a young physician, welcome them to our team and guide them along the early steps of their journey as a new hospitalist with Sound.

Dr. Kristal Wolfe is Medical Director of Sound Physicians and Chief of Internal Medicine at Holy Cross Health.

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Lee Health Taps Former FGCU Women's Basketball Player Dr. Kelsey Diemer to Join the Lee Health Musculoskeletal Institute

At 5 feet, 8 inches tall, hailing from Barnesville, MN, Dr. Kelsey Diemer is donning a Lee Health jersey, joining the Lee Health Musculoskeletal Institute, where she will specialize in primary care sports medicine. The former FGCU basketball star brings an important and specialized perspective to patient care for the Southwest Florida community. Dr. Diemer will also help athletes and non-athletes with injury prevention, safe ways to exercise, and building strength and conditioning. She will also offer ultrasound-guided injections, including orthobiologics like platelet-rich plasma (PRP), and more.

Dr. Diemer received her Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine from Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine in Bradenton, completed her residency in internal medicine at Naples Community Hospital and her fellowship in sports medicine at the University of Florida College of Medicine. Dr. Diemer was also a team physician for FGCU Athletics and an assistant team physician with the Florida Everblades.



Dr. Kelsey Diemer

Cleveland Clinic Tradition Hospital Welcomes Three New Cardiologists

To serve the growing needs of St. Lucie and Martin counties, Cleveland Clinic Tradition Hospital in Port St. Lucie is welcoming three new cardiologists.

The new cardiologists are:

Jaime Lewellyn, D.O., general and interventional cardiology. She specializes in coronary artery disease, valvular heart disease, heart failure, cardiogenic shock and preventive cardiology.

Dr. Lewellyn completed an interventional cardiology fellowship and a cardiovascular disease fellowship at the University of Tennessee. Her internal medicine residency was at University of Tennessee at Knoxville. She attended Debusk College of Osteopathic Medicine, University of Florida and University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Dr. Lewellyn has previous experience as a paramedic and EMS trainer.

Richard Zelman, M.D., interventional cardiology. Dr. Zelman specializes in treating heart blockages through percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI), heart valve repair, pacemakers, echocardiogram, transesophageal echocardiogram, and nuclear studies to assess blood flow.

Dr. Zelman completed multiple fellowships in cardiovascular medicine (interventional, vascular, general cardiovascular and cardiovascular research) at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston and St. Elizabeth Medical Center in Brighton, Massachusetts.

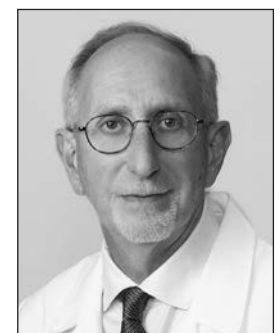
Dr. Zelman completed his residency and internship at Brigham and Women's Hospital and graduated from University of Texas Health Science Center's Medical School in San Antonio.

Gregory Heins, D.O., general cardiology (invasive and non-invasive). Dr. Heins has worked for Cleveland Clinic's cardiovascular medicine department since 2018 in Medina, OH.

He completed his cardiology fellowship at Deborah Heart and Lung Center in New Jersey and his internal medicine residency and internship at Delaware Valley Medical Center in Langhorne, PA. He graduated from the College of Osteopathic Medicine at Kansas City University, Missouri.



Dr. Jaime Lewellyn



Dr. Richard Zelman



Dr. Gregory Heins

Cardiologist Laura Fornos Verde, MD, MS, FACC, Joins Holy Cross Medical Group

Cardiologist Laura Fornos Verde, M.D., M.S., and Fellow of the American College of Cardiology, has joined Holy Cross Medical Group.

A native of Brazil, Dr. Verde earned her Doctor of Medicine from Faculdade de Ciências Médicas de Santos in Santos and completed an internal medicine residency at Hospital Prof. Edmundo Vasconcelos in São Paulo. Prior to immigrating to the U.S., she was an emergency medicine, occupational health and internal medicine physician in Brazil. While enrolled in the Master of Science in Clinical Research program at Campbell University in North Carolina, Dr. Verde completed internal medicine residencies at Pitt County Memorial Hospital (now called ECU Health Medical Center) / East Carolina University at Brody School of Medicine in Greenville, North Carolina, where she later served as chief resident and completed a cardiology fellowship. She also taught classes at Campbell University School of Pharmacy and was a research assistant at Duke Clinical Research Institute. Prior to joining Holy Cross, Dr. Verde was a general cardiologist with Conviva Care Specialists.



Dr. Laura Fornos Verde

Accolades Accolades Accolades Accolades

Holy Cross Health Selects Michelle Schnobrick as Leader of the Quarter

Holy Cross Health proudly announces microbiology supervisor Michelle Schnobrick as Leader of the Quarter. With over 32 years of dedicated service at Holy Cross, she has consistently demonstrated exceptional leadership and innovation, steadily advancing through the ranks.

Working alongside her dedicated team, Schnobrick demonstrated remarkable resilience as she navigated the unprecedented challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. Throughout this period, she worked tirelessly to adapt to rapidly changing circumstances, implementing innovative solutions to ensure the continuity of operations, while also prioritizing the health and safety of her staff and community.

In the immediate aftermath of the pandemic, the microbiology blood culture analyzers experienced a critical malfunction, prompting Schnobrick to develop and implement a manual process for the daily plating and interpretation of blood cultures. Her swift and effective response ensured the continuity of essential laboratory operations during this challenging period.

While managing the manual processes, Schnobrick efficiently validated, correlated and integrated new analyzers into the EPIC system, successfully establishing the EPIC interface and bringing the analyzers online in record time. Upon resolving this issue, she swiftly transitioned to implementing molecular methods for expedited bacterial identification, significantly enhancing the speed of antibiotic treatment and contributing to improved patient outcomes.

Since then, Schnobrick has worked collaboratively to complete two optimization initiatives aimed at further enhancing the efficiency, all with the ultimate goal of advancing patient care. Throughout these efforts, she has fostered a highly engaged team that consistently recognizes her as an innovative leader who is open to new ideas and a skilled communicator who leads by example.



Michelle Schnobrick

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

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

Cleveland Clinic Announces Fundraising Campaign for New Hospital in West Palm Beach



Cleveland Clinic has announced its goal for a fundraising campaign that will expand its exceptional care for the residents of Palm Beach County. Cleveland Clinic also named the location for a new hospital that will be funded by the campaign.

"Cleveland Clinic has served the healthcare needs of Palm Beach County residents for many years and is committed to an expansion plan that will transform care for the community," said Tom Mihaljevic, M.D., CEO and President of Cleveland Clinic and the holder of the Morton L. Mandel CEO Chair. "The community's visionary leaders challenged us to respond to the region's growing healthcare needs. With the support of the community, we will enhance care through a broad range of specialties and greater access."

For more than 15 years, Cleveland Clinic has cared for patients at the outpatient center at City Place in West Palm Beach. To meet the evolving needs of the community, Cleveland Clinic plans to build a new hospital and expand outpatient services at a new location. These projects will be supported by a fundraising campaign that is off to a strong start, already reaching \$100 million toward a goal of \$500 million to begin construction of the hospital.

Plans for the new hospital include approximately 150 inpatient beds, an emergency department, a medical office building and an ambulatory surgery center. The hospital will be located on newly acquired land next to Clear Lake in West Palm Beach.

In addition, Cleveland Clinic will lease space at 15 CityPlace for a new 120,000 square-foot outpatient location that will nearly quadruple the square footage of the existing Cleveland Clinic Health Center.

Better Together: A Groundbreaking Collaboration with Broward Health and Memorial Healthcare System

Broward Health and Memorial Healthcare System have unveiled a historic partnership aimed at enhancing access to care and improving health outcomes throughout Broward County. This pioneering initiative, "Better Together," is dedicated to tackling the pressing primary and maternal healthcare needs within Broward County communities, while also addressing food insecurity. Better Together chose to focus on these three areas because the County continues to see:

- High incidence of poor maternal-fetal outcomes with 35% of all Black infant deaths coming from identified communities.
- One in 10 people have hypertension and almost a third of the County population isn't receiving annual checkups.
- Almost 200,000 residents have little or no access to nutritious food.

This multi-million-dollar collaboration to create a healthier community is supported by key community partners, including the United Way of Broward County, the Community Foundation of Broward, the Health Foundation of South Florida, Feeding South Florida and Broward County, as well as the two health systems.

Nicklaus Children's Health System, Florida International University Announce Pediatric Academic Affiliation

Nicklaus Children's Health System and Florida International University, through its Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine, announced a strategic affiliation to create the region's only pediatric academic hospital that will enhance expert pediatric medicine in South Florida and beyond. This collaboration will expand physician training, research, and patient care, improving the health of children in South Florida and beyond.

"Nicklaus and FIU have had a long-standing relationship in training our medical students. Now, we will work together to improve access and quality of care for the children in our community and those from outside communities who travel here for life-saving care," said Dr. Juan C. Cendan, College of Medicine dean and senior vice president for health affairs.

Nicklaus Children's Hospital, South Florida's only specialty licensed children's hospital, will become the exclusive pediatric teaching hospital for FIU Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine, and members of the Nicklaus Children's Pediatric Specialists, the health system's medical group practice, will be eligible to serve as faculty in the college's Department of Pediatrics. Together, the two cornerstone institutions will enhance pediatric education for medical students, increase the number of physicians by expanding graduate medical education programs like residencies and fellowships, and help attract highly specialized physicians who will lead groundbreaking research.

15th Annual Holy Cross Golf Classic Raises Funds for Partners in Breast Health Program and New Mammography Machine

The 15th Annual Holy Cross Health Golf Classic, presented by The Harry T. Mangurian, Jr. Foundation, raised more than \$279,000 to support the Partners in Breast Health program and to fund a new mammography machine for the Holy Cross Health Dorothy Mangurian Comprehensive Women's Center.

Since 2011, the Partners in Breast Health program has provided breast health services to uninsured and underserved women. This program bridges that gap by offering outreach education, clinical breast exams, screening mammograms and diagnostic procedures to women who lack access to healthcare services. A new mammography machine for the Dorothy Mangurian Comprehensive Women's Center will allow Holy Cross Health to screen more patients, reduce wait times and provide faster, more accurate results, all while enhancing patient comfort. These initiatives ensure that every woman, regardless of their circumstances, has access to the care she needs.

In recognition of his distinguished leadership, commitment and impact as Golf auctioneer for the last 15 years, Gordon Latz was presented with the Legacy of Excellence Award.

"Gordon is truly one of a kind, bringing a special energy, passion and charm to the stage. His ability to engage the room, inspire generosity and make every bid feel like a celebration has been nothing short of remarkable," said Sheri Whittington, who along with Steve Mehalls, led the golf committee. "Thanks to his leadership and dedication, our auctions have raised significant funds in support of Holy Cross, making a lasting difference in the lives of so many. We are also deeply grateful for the vision, commitment and generosity of the Harry T. Mangurian, Jr. Foundation which has made this event successful for 15 years and counting."



Sheri Whittington and Gordon Latz
Photo Credit: Downtown Photo

Baptist Health Miami Neuroscience Institute Hosts First Parkinson's Disease Symposium for Patients and Care Partners



(l-r) Dr. Samer Tabbal, Dr. Diego Torres-Russotto, Jessilyn Pozo, APRN, Dr. Justin Sporrer

Baptist Health Miami Neuroscience Institute recently held its first Parkinson's Disease Patient Symposium for patients and care partners in the South Florida community. The event, which took place at the Hilton, Miami Dadeland, provided insight and education to patients and caregivers about diagnosing and treating Parkinson's Disease. Experts from the Miami Neuroscience Institute led panel discussions to increase awareness and promote regional and national community engagement.

"Educating our community about Parkinson's disease is essential to improving patient outcomes and quality of life," said Diego Torres-Russotto, M.D., chair of neurology and the Distinguished Endowed Chair in Neurology at Baptist Health Miami Neuroscience Institute. "By bringing together experts in the field, we can empower individuals with knowledge and resources to navigate their journey with Parkinson's more effectively."

"This symposium is an invaluable opportunity for patients, caregivers, and medical professionals to come together, share knowledge, and explore the latest advancements in Parkinson's Disease care, said Samer Tabbal, M.D., director of the movement disorders program at Baptist Health Miami Neuroscience Institute. "By fostering collaboration and education, we can continue to improve treatment options and enhance the quality of life for those living with this disease."

Miami Jewish Health Unveils FiftyTwoNorth: A New Address for Luxury Independent Senior Living

Miami Jewish Health is redefining luxury senior living with the development of FiftyTwoNorth, new independent living community offering residents an upscale and active lifestyle with access to wellness and social events, all on one expansive campus. FiftyTwoNorth combines resort-style amenities and cultural experiences within the heart of Miami, making it a sought-after destination.

A New South Florida Senior Living Standard

Set amid more than 20 acres of lush greenery and just minutes from Miami's vibrant Design District, FiftyTwoNorth will feature 192 stylish residences (located in one 11-story and two 5-story buildings) with modern finishes, expansive layouts, and thoughtful conveniences. Key community offerings, amenities, and services will include:

Wellness and Fitness: A state-of-the-art fitness center, walking trails, and holistic wellness programs to nurture physical, mental, and emotional well-being.

Cultural and Social Experiences: A rich calendar of curated events, social gatherings, and educational offerings on-site and scheduled excursions to top Miami cultural, athletic, social, and culinary venues to inspire lifelong learning and connections.

Gourmet Dining: Chef-prepared gourmet dining experiences, with a variety of culinary options catering to diverse tastes and dietary preferences including the Sky Lounge on the 11th floor.

FiftyTwoNorth will also be an inviting and diverse community inclusive of all faiths and backgrounds and is expected to begin welcoming residents in 2028.

What is a Life Plan Community?

As a Life Plan Community, FiftyTwoNorth provides seniors the opportunity to age in place, living in one location for as long as they need, regardless of their changing healthcare needs.

This modern approach to living provides long-term peace of mind by offering pre-



dictable monthly costs, safeguarding both residents and their families from the financial uncertainties often associated with aging while offering upscale amenities, recreational activities, and access to additional healthcare resources, when needed. This is especially important as, according to data from the U.S. Census Bureau and recent demographic studies, nearly a quarter of Miami's residents will be aged 65 and older by 2030.

Additionally, FiftyTwoNorth provides residents curated daily activities to fulfill intellectual, cultural, physical, and social needs – all designed to bring joy and cultivate relationships with others, a proven key to longevity. In fact, the American Seniors Housing Association found seniors who lived in a Life Plan Community on average lived seven years longer.

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Baptist Health South Florida Expands into Sunrise: A New Era of Healthcare Access

BY DANIEL CASCIATO

Baptist Health South Florida is taking a significant step toward expanding healthcare access with the development of a new hospital in Sunrise. With a mission centered on improving the health and well-being of the communities it serves, Baptist Health is dedicated to providing high-quality, cost-effective, and compassionate care. The new facility aims to address the growing demand for healthcare services in the region while integrating advanced technology, patient-centered design, and sustainable practices.

A Strategic Expansion to Meet Community Needs

The decision to establish a hospital in Sunrise was driven by the pressing need for accessible, high-quality healthcare services. According to Ana Lopez-Blazquez, Executive Vice President and Chief Strategy Officer, Chief Executive Officer of Baptist Health Enterprises, "The residents of Sunrise need a hospital in their community; having a hospital nearby isn't just convenient, it's essential."

This expansion aligns with Baptist Health's overarching mission to serve the local population with comprehensive medical services while maintaining a



Ana Lopez-Blazquez

strong commitment to patient care.

Comprehensive Services and Specialties

Baptist Health Sunrise Hospital will offer a robust array of medical services designed to meet the community's diverse healthcare needs. The facility will house approximately 100 inpatient beds, including 10 critical care beds with room for expansion. Additionally, it will feature a 25-bay emergency department, ensuring timely access to urgent care.

Beyond emergency and inpatient services, the hospital will be fully integrated with Baptist Health's extensive network of specialty services, including cancer care, orthopedic care, cardiovascular care, and brain and spine care. "The hospital is designed to serve the community close to home," Lopez-Blazquez explains. "If highly complex care is required, we can coordinate care amongst our highly specialized programs with our renowned physicians."

A Patient-Centered Approach to Design

Baptist Health Sunrise Hospital prioritizes patient-centered care through its innovative and healing-focused design. The facility will incorporate elements that

promote comfort and reduce stress, blending art and science to create an optimal healing environment.

"Our patients serve as the guiding light behind everything we do," says Lopez-Blazquez. "With a warm color scheme, natural stone façades, and lush vegetation, the design is intended to provide a welcoming and calming atmosphere. Water features and organic materials further enhance the space, promoting relaxation and healing."

Leveraging Advanced Medical Technologies

Staying at the forefront of medical advancements, Baptist Health is integrating cutting-edge technologies to enhance patient outcomes and streamline operational efficiency.

"The healthcare industry is constantly evolving, and we work to be ahead of that evolution through research and technology," Lopez-Blazquez emphasized. "By continuing to integrate cutting-edge platforms, systems, robotics and AI-integrations, we are able to better support our patients and streamline our workflow."

These technologies have helped them better ensure that patients are receiving the highest standard of care in a timely and effective manner.

Economic Growth and Community Partnerships

Beyond healthcare, the new hospital is expected to have a significant economic impact on Sunrise. Baptist Health's investment in the facility will generate more than 600 jobs once fully operational.

"Aside from improving access to healthcare in the area, the facility will provide high-quality employment opportunities and better allow the organization to tap into existing community partners," says Lopez-Blazquez. "We are actively engaged in the Sunrise community through local partnerships and offerings, including Education & Exercise classes, Youth Athletics, Autism Swims, and more."

Baptist Health currently collaborates with over 25 Broward County community organizations, providing valuable resources and services to local residents. This new hospital will further solidify its role as a cornerstone of the community.

Meeting the Future Healthcare Demands of Broward County

Broward County's growing population requires a healthcare system that can adapt to increasing demands. Currently, many residents of Sunrise must travel outside the area for hospital-based care. Baptist Health aims to change that.

"Currently, patients in Sunrise who are seeking urgent and hospital-based medical care need to drive to surrounding areas; they need a high-quality option right in their backyard and we are here to deliver," Lopez-Blazquez adds. "Baptist Health Sunrise Hospital will serve as a valuable resource to improve the overall health and wellbeing of the growing community. As the communities we serve grow, the hos-

pital is designed to expand along with them."

Sustainable and Environmentally Friendly Healthcare

Baptist Health Sunrise Hospital is not only committed to superior medical care but also to sustainability and environmental responsibility. The facility is designed with eco-friendly initiatives aimed at reducing its carbon footprint and supporting long-term environmental health.

"This hospital will set a new standard for minimizing ecological impact," Lopez-Blazquez notes.

Some of the key sustainability strategies include:

All electric systems: This ultimately reduces its carbon footprint and paves the way for a hospital operating on 100 percent renewable energy in the future.

Green walls: Nature-based green walls not only enhance aesthetics but contribute to a healthier, more healing atmosphere.

Solar power: To harness the power of the Florida sun, solar panels are integrated to further reduce its reliance on traditional energy sources.

These efforts align with Baptist Health's broader sustainability strategy, ensuring that the hospital operates in an environmentally conscious manner while promoting community wellness.

Seamless Collaboration Across Baptist Health Facilities

Baptist Health has long been a trusted healthcare provider in Broward County, operating 13 physician practice locations, seven urgent care centers, and five diagnostic imaging centers in the region. The new hospital in Sunrise will be a critical addition to this network.

"All facilities in the area – as well as in the greater South Florida market – work together to provide patients with high-quality and seamless care," says Lopez-Blazquez. "With an ideal central location, Baptist Health Sunrise Hospital will be perfectly positioned within the region to work cohesively with other hospitals and partners as needed."

A Transformational Step for Healthcare in Sunrise

The establishment of Baptist Health Sunrise Hospital represents a bold step forward in providing accessible, high-quality healthcare for the growing Sunrise community. Through a combination of advanced medical services, cutting-edge technology, sustainable practices, and a strong commitment to patient-centered care, Baptist Health South Florida is poised to make a lasting impact on the region.

"This is more than just a hospital—it's a commitment to the health and future of our community," Lopez-Blazquez concludes. "We are proud to bring exceptional healthcare closer to home for the people of Sunrise."

For more information, visit baptisthealth.net.

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Sustainable Architecture in Healthcare: Designing for Environmental Responsibility



BY CHARLES
MICHELSON, AIA,
ACHA, LEED AP

In today's rapidly evolving world, sustainability has become a key focus across industries, including healthcare. As hospitals and other healthcare facilities strive to reduce their environmental footprint, architects play a critical role in shaping spaces that balance operational efficiency, patient care, and ecological responsibility.

The Architectural Challenges of Healthcare Sustainability

Unlike commercial or residential buildings, healthcare facilities operate 24/7, requiring a constant flow of energy, water, and resources. This presents a unique challenge for architects, who must integrate sustainability measures while ensuring that healthcare environments remain functional, safe, and patient-centered. Hospitals consume vast amounts of energy due to advanced medical equipment, stringent air quality requirements, and continuous operations. Additionally,

the management of hazardous waste and the need for sterile environments add layers of complexity to sustainability efforts.

Design Strategies for Green Healthcare Facilities

To address these challenges, architects must embrace innovative design strategies that optimize energy use, improve indoor environmental quality, and reduce waste. Some key approaches include:

Passive Design and Energy Efficiency: By leveraging passive solar design, natural ventilation, and high-performance building envelopes, architects can significantly reduce energy consumption. Thoughtfully placed windows and shading devices can minimize the need for artificial lighting and cooling, while green roofs and insulated walls help regulate indoor temperatures.

Renewable Energy Integration: Hospitals are ideal candidates for on-site renewable energy systems, such as solar panels. Architects can incorporate these technologies into the building's design to reduce dependency on fossil fuels and lower operational costs over time.

Sustainable Materials and Construction Methods: Selecting non-toxic, recycled, and locally sourced materials can minimize a building's environmental impact. Additionally, modular construction and prefabrication techniques reduce construction waste and expedite project timelines.

The Business Case for Green Healthcare Design

Healthcare leaders may struggle to justify the upfront costs of sustainable architecture. However, green hospitals benefit from reduced operating expenses, improved staff well-being, and enhanced patient recovery rates. Sustainable features, such as access to daylight, biophilic design, and improved air quality, have been shown to reduce stress and promote healing.

By embracing environmentally conscious architecture, hospitals can position themselves as community leaders in sustainability, reinforcing their commitment to public health and corporate social responsibility.

Charles Michelson is President of Saltz Michelson Architects.
For more information, visit www.saltzmichelson.com.

Mount Sinai Medical Center Celebrates Major Milestone in Cancer Center Construction

Mount Sinai Medical Center marked a significant milestone with the Topping Out ceremony for the new Irma and Norman Braman Comprehensive Cancer Center, located on its main campus in Miami Beach. This pivotal development has been decades in the making to address the critical need of prompt detection, early intervention, cutting edge treatments and an increased capacity for oncology services.



(l-r) Irma Norman; Gino Santorio, President and Chief Executive Officer; Norman Braman signed the last beam

The ceremony was attended by key figures including Jeanette Rubio, a close family friend of the Braman's, and representatives from the City of Miami Beach and Miami-Dade County. To commemorate this milestone, the last beam of the building was ceremoniously signed, and will be placed at the top of the new cancer center.

"Opening In early 2026, the Braman Comprehensive Cancer Center will deliver true clinical excellence to the South Florida community," said Norman Braman, philanthropist, businessman and Lead Donor of the cancer center. "It will allow Mount Sinai physicians to deliver care in a completely patient-centric, high-touch, high-tech environment."

The Braman Comprehensive Cancer Center, a transformative investment spanning more than 200,000 square feet, was designed to redefine the cancer care experience and provide a holistic treatment process for its patients. It offers a comprehensive range of support services, including nutrition counseling, physical therapy, massage therapy, meditation classes, and a dedicated wellness spa, ensuring that every patient receives care that nurtures both body and mind.

The Braman Comprehensive Cancer Center will provide patients with access to a full spectrum of clinical expertise, support services, research opportunities, and cutting-edge technologies, all within breathtaking views of Biscayne Bay. This state-of-the-art facility will deliver expert clinical care in an environment that fosters healing and well-being. Patients can expect an experience centered around comfort, convenience, and the highest level of care.

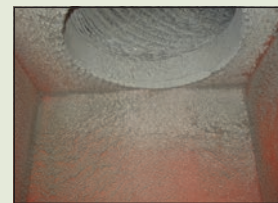
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Broward Health Breaks Ground in Lighthouse Point Bringing First Freestanding Emergency Department to the City



Broward Health recently celebrated a major milestone with a groundbreaking ceremony to kick off the construction of the first freestanding emergency department in Lighthouse Point.

The freestanding emergency department will be equipped with 10 exam rooms and will be supported by an additional 9 exam rooms on the second floor of the medical offices. Broward Health anticipates treating approximately 18,000 patients annually at the new facility.

"Beyond providing essential medical care, the freestanding emergency department is expected to generate a significant economic impact," said Christopher Pernicano,

chair of the North Broward Hospital District Board of Commissioners. "It's expected to generate more than \$15 million for the local economy and create 30 full-time jobs."

This cutting-edge, two-story, state-of-the-art facility will handle the same level of care as a hospital-based emergency department, including specialized adult treatment and care. On average, discharge times at a freestanding emergency department are 90 to 120 minutes, compared to 220 minutes at a hospital.

Key features of the new Lighthouse Point emergency department include:

- Staffed by board-certified emergency physicians and nurses.
- 24/7 hours of operation, 365 days a year.
- Specialized adult care, including trauma and resuscitation.
- Advanced diagnostics and radiology services, including mammography, ultrasound, CT scan, bone density, plain X-ray and Point of Care Lab.
- Continuity of care within the Broward Health system to ensure high-quality care across virtually any medical specialty.

The project, designed by HKS Architects and being constructed by The Beck Group is targeted for completion in Spring 2026.

The 14,251-square-foot facility will consist of 9,418 square feet dedicated to the emergency department and 4,833 square feet for medical office space, with 41 parking spaces available for visitors and staff.

Baptist Health Hosts Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for New Location in Cutler Bay

Baptist Health is expanding access to high-quality care with the unveiling of its new facility in Cutler Bay.

Designed to provide quality care closer to home, this new location offers a variety of healthcare options to meet the needs of the Cutler Bay community. It's comprehensive range of services includes Baptist Health



Urgent Care, a 3,550-square-foot space for minor illnesses and injuries; Baptist Health Diagnostic Imaging, providing on-site CT scans and digital x-rays; Baptist Health Primary Care, housed in a 3,992-square-foot office for routine and preventative care; and Baptist Health Brain & Spine Care, led by a team of renowned neurologists specializing in brain and neurological disorders.

"Our goal with this new facility is to remove barriers to care and bring top-tier medical services closer to home," said Batista-Rodriguez. "We want every South Dade resident to feel confident that their healthcare needs can be met right in their own neighborhood."

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CONGRATULATIONS ON THIS MOMENTOUS ACHIEVEMENT

Mount Sinai Medical Center Expands Access and Renovates Key Facility to Attract and Retain Clinicians

From behavioral health to maternal care, Mount Sinai is shaping the future of healthcare with focused improvements and strategic growth.

Among the primary goals of any healthcare institution is to optimize patient outcomes and expand access to quality care for everyone, whether it's for immediate treatment or long-term care.

Many hospitals and medical centers thrive because of their ability to adapt to changing circumstances and meet the evolving needs of both patients and staff. However, numerous healthcare institutions need help in recruitment and retention, making it difficult to sustain growth and maintain quality care. In overcoming these challenges, Mount Sinai Medical Center has not only been able to retain top talent but also actively expand access to care and invest in renovations tailored to serve the community better.

In recent years, many healthcare organizations in South Florida have been forced to close behavioral health centers due to financial insecurity, creating access issues for many in the community.

In response, Mount Sinai expanded its behavioral health services, which remain critical to the area.

One of the few remaining Baker Act facilities in Miami-Dade County, the Jay and Jeanie Schottenstein Center for Behavioral Health (generously endowed by the Jay and Jeanie Schottenstein Family) opened in 2022 and has since provided a multidisciplinary approach to treating a wide range of psychiatric illnesses and behavioral disorders. The center employs more than 100 staff members—including physicians, nurses, therapists, and counselors—who address conditions such as major depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, and psychosis.

At the same time, Mount Sinai remains committed to improving its maternity care services by renovating its Labor and Delivery floor to enhance the patient experience. Known for having the lowest primary cesarean section rate in South Florida, this unit spans over 24,000 square feet and will feature newly designed floors to significantly improve

comfort, care, and safety for mothers, babies, and staff. With generous donations from the Bloom Foundation, American businessman and philanthropist Warren Lichtenstein, and many others, the Labor and Delivery department is projected to be completed by April 2026.

The renovation will include ten fully remodeled suites, seven pre- and post-recovery rooms, upgraded technology, spa-like finishes, and two new spacious C-section surgical suites, fully equipped with the latest amenities. What's more, Mount Sinai's maternal care extends beyond the physical infrastructure by offering a wide range of services designed to support families, including prenatal childbirth education, cesarean birth preparation classes, and breastfeeding education.

As a mission-driven organization, Mount Sinai recognizes the importance



of providing and investing in inpatient and outpatient behavioral health care, and mother-baby care, even in the face of economic challenges. These efforts highlight the medical center's objective to improve the health and well-being of its community while fostering an environment of growth and job security. Despite the financial uncertainties facing many healthcare organizations, Mount Sinai has managed to retain its workforce and expand and recruit additional clinicians and staff.



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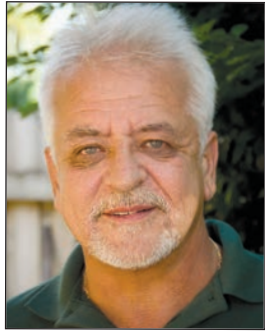


What You Can't See Can Hurt You!

Managing Indoor Air Quality in Your Home and Business

HVAC systems, consisting of heating, ventilation, and air conditioning components, are crucial for maintaining indoor comfort in residential and commercial buildings. However, these systems can also contribute significantly to indoor air quality (IAQ) problems if not properly maintained, engineered and managed. Understanding the various aspects of HVAC systems which impact air quality is essential for improving health outcomes and enhancing overall comfort in indoor environments.

One of the primary roles of an HVAC system is to circulate and condition air within a building. This process requires the intake of outdoor air, which plays a pivotal role in determining indoor air quality. Outdoor air, while generally fresher than indoor air, can carry pollutants such as pollen, dust, mold, vehicle emissions, and other contaminants. If an HVAC system inadequately manages out-



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

door air intake, these pollutants can enter and circulate through the building. Consequently, individuals with allergies or respiratory issues may experience exacerbated symptoms, leading to an overall decline in health and productivity.

Air Filtration

Air filtration is another critical component of HVAC systems that directly influences indoor air quality. HVAC systems are equipped with filters designed to trap dust, allergens, mold spores, and other particles in the air. However, filters must be regularly replaced or cleaned and fit properly to maintain their effectiveness. When filters become clogged or dirty, they can no longer efficiently trap contaminants, allowing them to recirculate in the indoor environment. In a humid environment, this issue can be compounded, as humidity can promote the growth of mold and mildew within the ducts and filters, further worsening air quality.

A.C. Hygiene

The condition of the HVAC system itself is also a significant factor in indoor air quality. Over time, dust, dirt and debris can accumulate within the system, including in ductwork, coils, and blower compartments. This accumulation not only reduces the system's efficiency but also serves as a breeding ground for bacteria, mold, and other harmful microorganisms. These contaminants can be released into the indoor air, causing health problems for occupants. Regular maintenance, including cleaning of the system and ductwork, is essential to prevent these issues from developing. In addition to dirty systems, duct leakage poses another challenge in humid climates. Ducts designed to distribute conditioned air throughout a building can develop leaks due to wear and tear, poor installation, or corrosion. In humid environments, leaked air can draw in moist outdoor air and push conditioned air out, reducing the system's effectiveness, increasing humidity levels indoors, and causing condensation. This can create an environment conducive to mold growth and other IAQ issues. Additionally, leaky ducts can pull in dust and other outdoor pollutants from attics and basements which can exacerbate air quality problems.

HVAC Inspections

Proper functioning of an HVAC system is vital to maintaining a healthy indoor environment. A well-maintained system ensures that filters are clean, ductwork is sealed, and the system operates at peak efficiency. Regular preventive maintenance, including scheduled inspections and servicing, can help identify potential issues before they become significant problems. Technicians can evaluate air filters, clean coils, assess duct integrity, and check for any signs of moisture or mold accumulation to ensure that systems are running effectively.

Furthermore, it's essential to use the correct types of filters for specific applications. High-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filters, for example, can capture smaller particles compared to standard filters. Using filters with the appropriate MERV (Minimum Efficiency Reporting Value) rating can significantly enhance indoor air quality by trapping a larger percentage of airborne contaminants.

It is also essential to balance the building's ventilation needs with energy efficiency. A system that works too hard can lead to increased wear and tear and energy costs, while one that does not provide adequate ventilation can compromise indoor air quality. Scheduled professional assessments can ensure that the HVAC system is not only functioning correctly but also that all components are clean and free from

harmful contaminants. This proactive approach can save building owners from expensive repairs down the line and can extend the lifespan of the HVAC system. Additionally, well-maintained systems can operate more efficiently, thereby lowering energy consumption and utility bills.

Building occupants can also take steps to enhance indoor air quality by maintaining their HVAC systems. Simple tasks such as regularly checking and replacing air filters, monitoring humidity levels, and using exhaust fans in moisture-prone areas like kitchens and bathrooms can have a substantial impact.

Keeping the area around outdoor air intake vents clear of debris and pollutants is equally important for ensuring only clean air is drawn into the system. Moreover, adopting a comprehensive indoor air quality management plan can provide long-term benefits.

This plan may include improving ventilation rates, using air cleaners, using ultraviolet (U.V.) light sanitizers, and investing in humidity control systems to mitigate the effects of outdoor pollutants. It is also beneficial to integrate smart technology that monitors air quality in real time, allowing for adjustments as needed to maintain ideal conditions.

In summary, while HVAC systems are designed to create a comfortable indoor environment, they can also contribute to indoor air quality problems if not properly maintained. Issues such as inadequate outdoor air intake, inefficient air filtration, dirty systems, and duct leakage, especially in humid environments, are all factors that can severely impact IAQ. A clean, well-maintained and functioning HVAC system is essential for ensuring healthy indoor air quality. Regular inspections, filter changes, and maintenance practices are crucial for preventing the buildup of contaminants and ensuring that the system operates effectively. By taking a proactive approach to HVAC maintenance, building owners and occupants can significantly improve their indoor air quality, resulting in healthier, more comfortable living and working environments.

Michael Tebor is Vice President of Air Duct Asepsics, a NADCA certified air duct cleaning company with more than 35 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), a Certified Mold Remediator (ACAC), and a state licensed Mold Assessor. The company's skill sets, experience and multi-disciplinary approach to problem solving sets it apart in the industry. Tebor can be reached at 888-707-7763 or visit www.ADAflorida.com.

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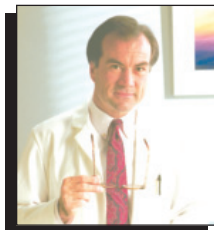


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