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Dr. Adriana Bonansea-Frances

Dr. Adriana Bonansea-Frances Becomes 115th President of DCMA

BY VANESSA ORR

On June 14, 2025, Dr. Adriana Bonansea-Frances became the seventh female president of the Dade County Medical Association, which has recently changed its name to the Miami-Dade County Medical Association (MDCMA). As the incoming leader of the 122-year-old organization, her goals include championing physician advocacy, fostering collaboration across specialties, and promoting access to quality care for patients.

Dr. Bonansea-Frances was first introduced to the organization while working at the Florida Center For Allergy & Asthma Care, which she joined in 2007. A native of Argentina, she attended medical school at the National University of Rosario in Argentina and performed her internship and residency in Pediatrics at Schneider Children's Hospital and Tufts University in Boston, MA. She did her fellowship in Allergy/Immunology at KUMC in Kansas City, MO.

"I was not very involved with the MDCMA at the beginning, because I spent long hours working," she explained. "But then I started working with Dr. Barbara Montford, who had previously served as president of the organization and we began going to meetings—that was seven or eight years ago."

Continued on page 18

Q&A with World-Renowned Nicklaus Children's Interventional Cardiologist, Dr. Shyam Sathanandam

A pioneer in groundbreaking procedures for neonates and premature infants, Dr. Sathanandam is chief of cardiovascular medicine and co-director of the Nicklaus Children's Heart Institute.

What interested you in specializing in pediatric interventional cardiology?

I began my career as an artist and that has deeply shaped the way I approach my work as a cardiologist. The discipline of art taught me how to work with fine detail and be precise with my hands. Early in my medical training I was captivated by the precision and potential of catheter-based interventions. It wasn't until I saw the impact these procedures had on critically ill newborns who might not survive a traditional surgery, that I realized the power of this field. The idea that you could navigate the tiniest vessels of a premature infant's heart and correct a life-threatening defect without ever opening the chest inspiring. Pediatric interventional cardiology is still at its infancy and is one of the most dynamic areas in medicine, driven by constant technological advances and collaborative problem-solving.

Continued on page 18



Dr. Shyam Sathanandam

Cleveland Clinic's Concierge Medicine Program Helps You Prioritize Your Health

Our health and wellness should always be a top priority, but for many of us it's the first thing we neglect as life's daily demands take precedence. Enlisting the right physician and medical team focused on prevention, disease management and wellness is the first step toward proactively prioritizing your health.

Cleveland Clinic's Concierge Medicine program recognizes the value of developing a long-term relationship with a doctor who is committed to optimal wellness and disease prevention. By limiting the size of the practice, the program offers timely access to a personal physician, minimized wait times, personalized health management plans, and healthcare coordination.

The Concierge Medicine program in Weston is led by Robert Piloto, M.D. Dr. Piloto believes in the motto 'Patients First,' which led him to become the Chief Experience Officer at the Cleveland Clinic Weston Campus overseeing the Patient Experience Office and the Center of Excellence in Healthcare Communication. He served as the Chief Patient Experience Officer from 2016 until 2023. The Weston concierge medicine office



Continued on page 8



Sabina Kotelnik

Enhancing Patient Satisfaction Through Authorization Transparency

BY SABINA KOTELNIK

With patient loyalty on the decline and the consumerization of healthcare on the rise, it's more important than ever to give patients an outstanding experience. However, many healthcare providers overlook a key component of enhancing the care experience: the authorization process for treatments and procedures. Clear communication about a patient's authorization status can significantly boost patient satisfaction and trust. In this article, we explore the challenges inherent in the authorization process and how to overcome them so you can communicate more effectively with your most important stakeholder: your patients.

Common Hurdles in Authorization

While authorization is an essential part of the patient care journey, navigating the process isn't easy. Recurring challenges providers face when gaining authorization include:

- 1. Securing Prior Authorization:** Insurers require prior approval for certain services to confirm medical necessity.
- 2. Handling Complex Procedures & Workflows:** The paperwork and reviews can be overwhelming, complicated, and time-consuming.

Continued on page 19



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Publisher's Note

The Lazy Days of South Florida Summer: Where Even Thermometers Break a Sweat

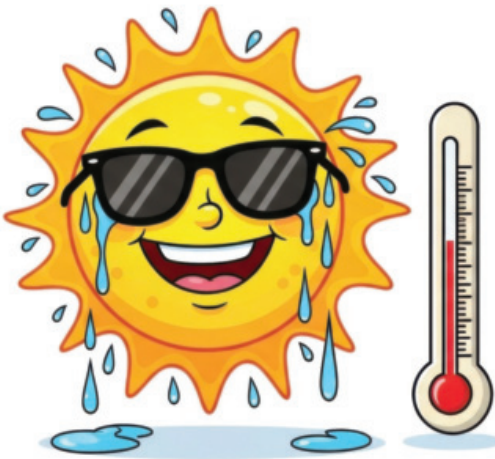
Ah, summer in South Florida — that magical time when the only thing hotter than the sidewalk is the argument over whether to blast the A/C at 72 or 68 degrees. The days are long, the humidity is thicker than hospital cafeteria pudding, and everything, everything, moves just a little slower — including healthcare.

Not to say our hospitals take a break (they don't — someone's got to patch up the tourists who think "wrestling an iguana for TikTok views" is a good idea). But even healthcare professionals feel the drag of the summer sun. You know it's summer in the ER when half the patients are suffering from sunburns the shade of lobster bisque, and the other half are experiencing "pool noodle-related injuries."

Nurses develop a sixth sense for spotting dehydration before a patient even takes a seat. Doctors learn to diagnose heatstroke with one squint through the glass doors. And let's not forget the real MVPs: the hospital maintenance staff, who deserve medals for making sure the ice machines are in working order — because there's no greater summer tragedy than warm apple juice in a patient's cup.

Meanwhile, in the administrative offices, there's an unspoken competition to see who can wear the brightest Hawaiian shirt on "Casual Fridays." Spoiler alert: it's always the CFO, and he's worn the same neon flamingo number since 2015. The only thing brighter is the glare from sunbaked windshields in the staff parking lot.

Of course, while the outside world enters full "flip-flop and sunscreen" mode, hospitals in South Florida continue their mission with admirable dedication — just with slightly more iced coffee and a firm refusal to schedule outdoor meetings.



Charles Felix 

You can reach Charles Felix at Charles@southfloridahospitalnews.com



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Dr. Stephen G. Patterson

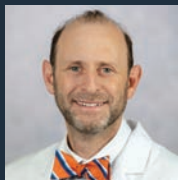
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Abraham Schwarzbarg, MD



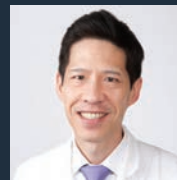
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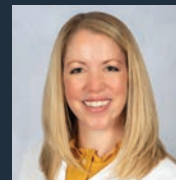
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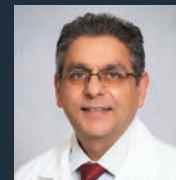
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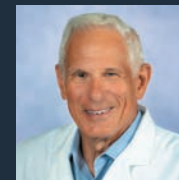
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ACHE of South Florida Member Spotlight: Jorge Quintero

BY LOIS THOMSON

Jorge Quintero lives in South Florida, but his work for The Goodman Group takes him all over the country. Based in Minnesota, The Goodman Group has three sectors: healthcare, residential, and commercial, and Quintero is national vice president of Operations and Business Development for the healthcare sector. Quintero said the company has hospitals and healthcare facilities throughout the nation, but he is responsible for two hospitals, and neither is close to home.

"I oversee Bitterroot Hospital in Hamilton, Montana, a very small, 25-bed acute care facility, and the second hospital is Flagstaff Medical Center in Flagstaff, Arizona. It's the only hospital in Flagstaff so it has 268 beds." He also oversees seven post acute care facilities, which include rehabilitation centers and skilled nursing facilities. Some of these post acute care facilities are located on the Gulf Coast of Florida, but "otherwise," Quintero said, "I live in the airport."

Quintero described his responsibilities for all of the facilities, saying, "I do the day-to-day operations, so I handle processing and quality improvements, and I oversee the facilities and construction." Included in this is oversight of new investments, renovations, procurement, budget, and cost control, and resource optimization. "I also collaborate with HR regarding talent acquisition, and I oversee customer satisfaction for the entire enterprise."

Of all of those areas, Quintero said one of the things he likes best about his work is that he can positively impact the healthcare of the population he serves. "I have the opportunity to conduct independent research tailored to each population group I serve, taking into account the specific needs of the location, state, and hospital. I'm passionate about the research process and enjoy developing service lines that are strategically designed to meet the unique needs of each community."



Jorge Quintero

Quintero said leadership and coaching is also one of his favorite parts of the job. "I am deeply committed to strong, values-driven leadership and take pride in setting clear expectations while modeling the standards and culture of our organization. One of my greatest passions is coaching and developing high-performing teams – identifying potential in individuals and providing the mentorship, guidance, and resources necessary to help them thrive and achieve long-term success."

With a decade of experience in operations, Quintero has consistently set his sights on executive leadership within the healthcare industry. "Pursuing a leadership role in healthcare has always been a primary objective for me throughout my academic journey, including my formal education and ongoing professional development."

Quintero earned his executive masters of healthcare administration from Florida Atlantic University, and he recalled during that time the college exposed him to ACHE, the American College of Healthcare Executives. "I initially joined as a student member and transitioned to full membership upon graduating from the executive program. It's been an incredibly rewarding experience – one of the most valuable aspects has been the opportunity to build meaningful connections through a strong professional network."

He appreciates getting to know colleagues in the same market, saying it is absolutely crucial because by doing so you are able to find mentors, and connect with people who oversee different aspects of the healthcare industry, along with building partnerships. "Being part of a group solely dedicated to healthcare is incredibly impactful – it creates a unique environment for collaboration, learning, and industry-specific growth that I find truly invaluable."

Quintero has already been heavily involved with the organization since he joined, particularly participating in a number of education sessions, and is working on accumulating enough credits to earn his fellowship. With all he has gained from ACHE he said he would "absolutely encourage others" to join.

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Armando Llechu Named Chief Operating Officer at Broward Health Coral Springs

Broward Health Coral Springs is pleased to announce that Armando Llechu has been named the hospital's Chief Operating Officer.

A seasoned healthcare executive with experience driving results at large healthcare systems, Llechu most recently served as chief officer of hospital-based care at Lee Health in Fort Myers where he led operations, quality and cost management for the five-hospital system. He also served at Miami's Nicklaus Children's Hospital in various leadership roles, including vice president of clinical operations and administrative director of the emergency department and support services.

Llechu earned his Bachelor of Health Services from Florida Atlantic University and his Master of Business Administration from Florida International University.



Armando Llechu

Lee Health Taps Industry Veteran Chris Akeroyd to Be Lee Health's New Chief Information Officer

Lee Health is pleased to announce that Chris Akeroyd has been selected to serve as the health system's new Chief Information Officer. Akeroyd brings more than 28 years of experience in information technology (IT), digital transformation and operational excellence across the healthcare industry and beyond.

Akeroyd most recently served as executive vice president and chief information officer for Children's Health in Dallas. He also previously served as vice president and chief digital and technology officer at Children's Health, where he established a multi-cloud technology environment and drove \$40 million in savings through IT rationalization and modernization.

Akeroyd is a certified healthcare CIO and digital health executive through the College of Healthcare Information Management Executives (CHIME). He earned his bachelor's degree in computer science from Texas Tech University.



Chris Akeroyd

Jupiter Medical Center Welcomes Allison Viramontes as Chief Financial Officer

Jupiter Medical Center (JMC) is pleased to announce the appointment of Allison Viramontes, MHA, CPA, FACHE, as the health system's Vice President, Chief Financial Officer (CFO). Viramontes brings nearly 20 years of experience in financial strategy and health care management, which includes financial planning and analysis, accounting, payer contracting, revenue cycle management and the integration of AI and automation in financial reporting and systems. Most recently, she served as the CFO of Mayo Clinic in Arizona.

After starting her career at PricewaterhouseCoopers in Sacramento, Allison served as Vice President of Revenue Cycle and Investments at Cottage Health in Santa Barbara, Vice President of Finance at UC Health, and multiple financial leadership roles at Sutter Health. Her innovative approach to financial planning has consistently driven improved fiscal performance, organizational efficiency, and enhanced patient services.

Viramontes holds a bachelor's degree of Science in Business Administration with a focus on Accounting and Finance from California State University, Sacramento, and a master's degree in health administration from the University of Southern California. She has also completed an advanced finance program at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania.



Allison Viramontes

Florida Coast Medical Center Announces Inaugural Governing Board

Florida Coast Medical Center, the highly anticipated new hospital scheduled to open in Port St. Lucie this September, has officially named its inaugural Governing Board. This diverse and accomplished group of leaders will play a vital role in guiding the hospital's mission to deliver high-quality, patient-centered care to the Treasure Coast community.

The inaugural board members include:

- Dr. William Carlson, Board Chair – Orthopedic Surgeon, South Florida Orthopaedics & Sports Medicine
- Dr. Phillip Moyer, Vice Chair – General Surgeon, Tenet Physician Resources (TPR)
- Dr. Eric Lieberman – National and Regional Director of Cardiology, Tenet Healthcare and Chief Medical Officer, Palm Beach Health Network
- Libby Flippo – Community Member and Former Chief Nursing Officer, Palm Beach Health Network
- Dr. Joseph Gage, Chief of Staff – Stuart Cardiology Group
- Shannon Martin – Mayor, City of Port St. Lucie
- Ron Guerrero – Director, St. Lucie County Public Safety Department
- Maggie Gill – Group President, Tenet Healthcare
- Tyler Sherill – CEO, Florida Coast Medical Center

Dipen Parekh, MD, Named Chief Executive Officer of the University of Miami Health System

The University of Miami Board of Trustees has unanimously selected Dr. Dipen J. Parekh as the next Chief Executive Officer of UHealth, as well as Executive Vice President for Health Affairs at the University of Miami. Dr. Parekh, a globally renowned urologic oncologist, healthcare innovator, and leader in academic medicine has served as the Chief Operating Officer of the University of Miami Health System since 2020, and alongside University of Miami President Joseph J. Echevarria jointly engineered UHealth's dramatic turnaround over the last five years.

While serving as Chief Operating Officer of UHealth, in 2021 Dr. Parekh was named Executive Dean for Clinical Affairs at the Miller School of Medicine, where he has worked to build synergy between the academic and clinical missions at the University of Miami. He is laser-focused on ensuring UHealth becomes a leader in developing and deploying emerging and effective treatments to improve wellbeing in Miami and beyond. His success has been nationally recognized, with Becker's Hospital Review naming him among the top 60 academic health system COOs to know in 2024.

Having joined the institution in 2012 as Chair of the Department of Urology, Dr. Parekh's first system-wide administrative role was as Chief Clinical Officer from 2017-2020. He is also an endowed professor of urology and the founding director of the Desai Sethi Urology Institute.



Dr. Dipen Parekh



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Leading with Compassion: Dr. Monica Cleckley's Vision for Expanding Preventive Care in Underserved Communities

BY DANIEL CASCIATO

As Clinical Director of the FAU Westgate/UBK Health Centers, Dr. Monica Roundtree Cleckley, DNP, APRN-BC, NP-C, is championing a bold and community-driven approach to primary care. With an emphasis on accessibility, trust, and long-term wellness, Dr. Cleckley is spearheading initiatives that are transforming how underserved communities in Palm Beach County receive preventive health services.

Meeting Needs Beyond Primary Care

Dr. Cleckley's inspiration for expanding partnerships around preventive care stems from a deep awareness of the unmet needs within the community.

"We realized there had been a lot of barrier access issues," she explains. "Beyond our health center, clients were requiring additional resources—dental, prenatal care, imaging. We wanted to make sure we had partnerships in place within the community to be a resource for them."

These partnerships are central to a model that not only provides clinical care but also connects patients with services that address broader social and health-related needs.

Addressing Heart Disease Through Community Collaboration

One of the center's most impactful partnerships is with the Florida Department of Health. Together, they've launched a free blood pressure screening and home-monitoring program to combat hypertension, especially among vulnerable populations, including women escaping domestic abuse.

"It was difficult for us to manage their



Dr. Monica Roundtree Cleckley

treatment without knowing what their blood pressure readings were on a regular basis," says Dr. Cleckley. "The response has been amazing. Clients were excited and committed to taking an active role in their treatment, especially now that they could track their own blood pressure at home using machines provided at no cost."

Promoting Health Literacy and Ownership

With access to tools and education, patients are becoming more engaged in their health journeys.

"Clients are more engaged with their healthcare. They're taking ownership and playing an active role in their well-being," says Dr. Cleckley.

By focusing on health literacy and providing tailored support, the center empowers patients to manage chronic conditions, understand the impact of lifestyle changes, and share their knowledge with others.

"They're also sharing the information with people in their neighborhoods and communities," she adds. "It's creating a ripple effect."

A Game-Changer: Home Blood Pressure Monitoring

Dr. Cleckley points to home blood pressure monitors as a turning point in chronic disease management. "Clients can now see their progress, understand what the numbers mean, and how diet and medication affect their blood pressure," she explains.

Without this resource, many patients had no way to measure their progress between visits.

"Now that they have cuffs at home and understand their readings, they feel more responsible and empowered. That sense of understanding leads to better outcomes and reduced risk factors."

Expanding Access to Cancer Screenings with Cologuard®

The center has also improved access to colorectal cancer screening through a partnership with Cologuard®, a non-invasive, at-home testing alternative to colonoscopies.

"We had an in-service with a Cologuard rep who educated us on the services, and it became clear this could solve a big issue for our uninsured clients," says Dr. Cleckley. The result? Patients can now receive tests at home, return them by mail, and get timely results.

"It was a huge undertaking, but it gave clients a way to complete an important screening without having to go to a specialist. Almost every eligible client is being screened, and we're seeing high response and return rates."

Tackling Barriers to Preventive Care

Despite progress, Dr. Cleckley acknowledges that significant barriers still exist.

"One of the biggest is awareness—just knowing that the health center is here," she says. Others include lack of insurance and transportation.

To address this, the center partners with nonprofits to secure grants that help underwrite services. It also offers 340B prescription assistance and sliding-scale fees for uninsured patients. For transportation, they've introduced Uber Health rides and work with insurers who offer ride benefits.

"We're working diligently to partner with other organizations that can help break those barriers and bridge the gap," she emphasizes.

Building Trust Through Integrity and Teamwork

At the heart of Dr. Cleckley's leadership philosophy is the belief that trust is earned through honesty, compassion, and collaboration.

"Being a nursing professional is a calling," she reflects. "Clients really trust their providers. So working with integrity is so very important."

She credits the success of their community partnerships to shared values and mission. "It's teamwork—it really makes the dream work. Having partners who share our goal of caring for underserved communities ensures that no one falls through the cracks."

Dr. Cleckley's commitment is clear: to continue building a network of care that empowers patients, removes barriers, and transforms lives—one trusted relationship at a time.

For more information, visit faunursing.org.

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Present Legal and Financial Challenges in Physician Disability Claims



BY EDWARD
DABDOUB

Physicians dedicate years of their lives to training, building a career, and delivering essential care and it is often under intense physical, mental, and emotional pressure. Yet, even the most resilient physician is not immune to illness or injury. For many, disability insurance is the only financial safeguard standing between long-term stability and economic hardship.

Navigating the world of physician disability insurance is not straightforward. The legal and financial landscape of these policies is increasingly complex, shaped by evolving claims practices, insurer tactics, policy ambiguities, and emerging medical and occupational realities. Understanding these dynamics is crucial when ensuring the disability coverage you purchase will actually protect your financial future.

Ambiguity in "Own Occupation" Definitions

Most individual disability insurance (IDI) policies for physicians promise own-occupation coverage—that is, benefits if a physician can no longer perform the duties of their specific medical specialty. However, many policies contain vague or shifting definitions of “own occupation” or transition clauses that redefine “disability” after a period of time. This has been an ongoing challenge for physicians who are under the belief that they are fully protected from being unable to work in their medical specialty.

Surgeons, interventionalists, and other procedure based specialists are particularly vulnerable. For example, Eddie Dabdoub of Dabdoub Law Firm won a case involving a transplant surgeon with an own occupation policy who suffered a wrist injury. As a result of the injury he could no longer perform transplants, but could perform general surgeries. Yet, the insurer denied him disability benefits claiming he was not totally disabled because he could perform general surgeries and could teach. But, the policy required he be disabled from performing his own occupation which was that of a transplant surgeon. We argued and won that the inability to perform the duties of a transplant surgeon rendered him totally disabled, regardless of whether he could do other things.

Emerging and Future Issues Long COVID and Invisible Disabilities

The pandemic has introduced long-term health challenges that insurers are slow to acknowledge. Physicians experiencing long COVID symptoms such as fatigue and cognitive dysfunction may struggle to function in clinical or surgical settings, but face skepticism from insurers due to the subjective symptoms.

Future litigation is likely to center around how insurers treat these complex conditions, especially when objective evidence is limited but functional impairment is profound.

Technology and AI in Claims Evaluation

Disability insurers are integrating algorithmic decision-making and AI tools in claims processing. While efficient, these systems often rely on patterns and templates that do not account for nuanced medical issues and occupational duties. The risk is that physicians with complex medical conditions who practice in a medical specialty with duties that are not thoroughly understood may find themselves unfairly flagged for denial.

A Critical Need for Legal Advocacy

Physicians are highly sophisticated professionals, but few are trained in reading and interpreting disability insurance contracts, let alone appealing denials or litigating against billion-dollar insurers. When disability disrupts a medical career, the resulting legal and financial battles can be overwhelming, especially when compounded by health challenges.

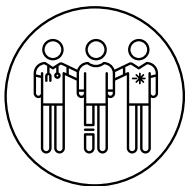
This is where legal counsel is indispensable. Physicians need attorneys who understand both the nuances of their medical specialty and the tactics of disability insurers, and who can effectively advocate for full, fair, and timely payment of benefits or litigate when necessary.

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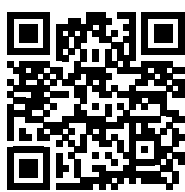
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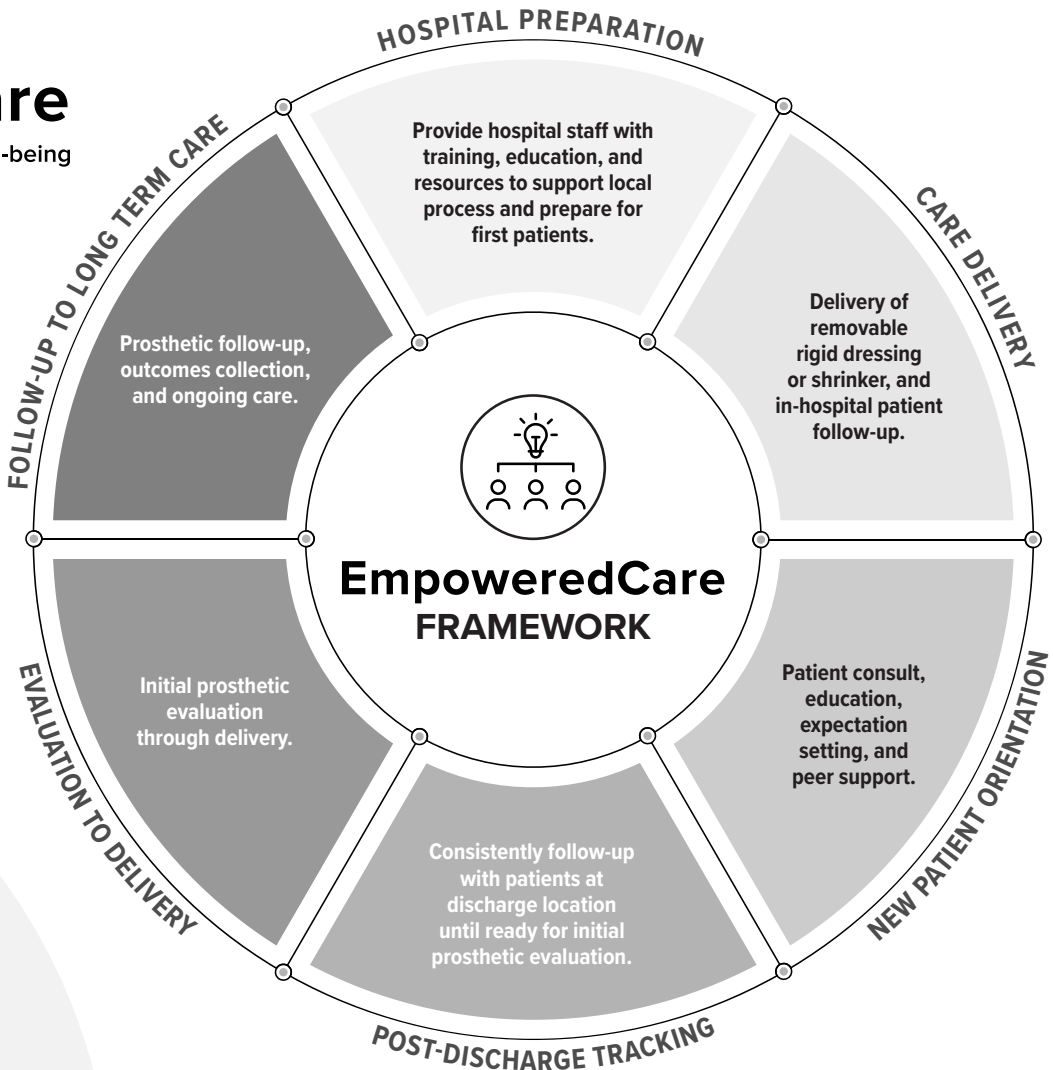
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Prepared for Hurricane Season

Floridians are no strangers to hurricanes. In fact, there have been just 18 hurricane seasons since 1851 that have passed without a storm affecting our state. And no part of the state is unaffected. Every mile of Florida's coastline has been impacted at some point by at least one hurricane.

While storms are disruptive at best and devastating at worst, the result from each storm is a stronger Florida. A stronger preparedness and response system, better communication, increased resilience, and hardened infrastructure.

As the Atlantic hurricane season officially started June 1, the 2025 season is predicted to be "above average" for hurricane activity. Running through November 30, this season is predicted to have 13 to 19 named storms, with 6 to 10 becoming hurricanes and 3 to 5 ranking at Category 3 or above.

Now is the time to prepare. To make sure emergency response plans are current.

Families and businesses alike should have a predefined emergency plan and an at-the-ready emergency supply kit.

Preparedness is the key to weathering any storm safely. And, every hospital in every community in our state lives this motto every single day.

Florida's hospitals are guided by the singular principle of delivering continuous, safe patient care, no matter the circumstances. While a storm can certainly present challenges and difficulties, hospitals have systems, infrastructure, personnel, policies, procedures, protections, and contingencies and redundancies in place to maintain a safe care environment for patients and staff and to preserve hospitals' operations to respond to the needs of the community before, during, and after a storm.

For years, hospitals have been hardening their facilities to withstand hurricane-force winds and making critical investments to support physical plant operations in the event of flooding and surges. They stockpile essential medications and supplies. In addition, as community-rooted organizations, Florida's hospitals develop, practice, and refine extensive emergency preparation plans in coordination with local and regional first responders, governments, telecommunications providers, and each other.

These plans reflect ongoing regulatory changes and new best practices in emer-



BY MARY C. MAYHEW

gency response as well as lessons learned from the management of previous crises. County emergency management officials review these plans annually for comprehensiveness and accuracy, and hospitals conduct at least two exercises a year to test, drill, and practice their plans to identify any areas of needed improvement and to ensure their teams understand how to operationalize the plan in an actual emergency.

The goal, again, is continuous, safe patient care.

When hurricanes threaten, hospitals activate their emergency response. They mobilize around-the-clock command centers to communicate and coordinate with local officials and inform critical decisions governing patient care and continued operations. Response is flexible and agile, evolving as weather and situational factors change. Response is also hyper-local. A one-size-fits-all plan or response is not a recipe for success. But, state and federal resources and support are nonetheless essential to sustain hospitals in that local response to on-the-ground situations that can vary widely from community to community, even neighborhood to neighborhood.

With patient and staff safety at the forefront of all decision-making, hospitals evaluate whether evacuations ahead of storm landfall are necessary. The purpose of the years of investments in infrastructure hardening and other physical plant improvements is to avoid, when possible, patient evacuations. If they cannot be avoided, however, advance evacuation and patient transfer decisions are made locally and in consultation with state and local officials based on projected storm paths and in accordance with the protocols and procedures outlined in emergency response plans.

This year's hurricane season is predicted to yet-again be active. While no one can control the weather, everyone can make sure they have an emergency plan ahead of time and follow local and state guidance when storms threaten. Florida's hospitals will do as they always do: prepare, practice, and respond with the diligence, expertise, and meticulousness that are the hallmark of our state's world-class healthcare institutions.

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

Dorron Marketing Is Helping Healthcare Organizations Thrive

At the heart of every successful healthcare organization is a clear message. Behind that message, you need a team that knows how to deliver it. That's where Dorron Marketing shines.

While you focus on patient care, they get your message in front of the right audience. With Dorron and his team by your side, you can boost community impact and drive up patient numbers.

The agency starts with its founder, Dorron Blumberg. He is a marketing expert with more than ten years of experience in brand development and strategy execution. Dorron grew up in the Sunshine State, where he learned to appreciate the diverse communities that make Florida special.

That early link to people and place grew into a deep passion. Now, Dorron helps healthcare organizations share their stories in meaningful and strategic ways.

Since launching the agency, Dorron and his team have achieved great results for clients. They've earned over 90 five-star reviews on Google, and they continue to boost revenue for healthcare organizations across South Florida and the rest of the US.

What makes Dorron Marketing different is its blend of empathy, expertise, and execution. The agency understands that healthcare is personal; it's about trust. That's why they root every campaign in listening first, taking the time to understand your mission, your goals, and the people you serve to craft strategies that truly elevate your impact.

They aren't focused on vanity metrics. Dorron's team knows that to get tangible results, you have to go below the surface.

They focus on what matters most to



Dorron Blumberg

healthcare providers: increasing patient volume, strengthening community trust, and supporting provider engagement. These are the key elements for a successful healthcare facility, not just likes and follows.

Dorron Marketing never relies on one-size-fits-all tactics. Every strategy is designed with your specific goals, audience, and outcomes in mind. It's what makes them a trusted partner for businesses big and small. They believe that good marketing does more than grab attention. It also drives action.

Most importantly, it helps patients feel confident in choosing you for their care.

As healthcare changes, Dorron Marketing remains a reliable partner. They help providers grow intentionally and connect meaningfully.

At its core, Dorron Marketing is more than just an agency; it's your partner in growth – the bridge between where your business is now and where you see it in five years.

The team can manage all your technical needs to grow your company. This includes branding, website design, digital marketing, social media management, and email marketing. They take your organization from a vision to a complete brand with a genuine story to tell.

That way, you don't have to sacrifice growth to focus on your patients.

You do what you love, and Dorron Marketing takes care of the rest. Because when the message is clear, the mission reaches farther.

To learn more, visit www.dorronmarketing.com.

You can connect with Dorron Blumberg directly through the contact form.

Cover Story: Cleveland Clinic's Concierge Medicine Program Helps You Prioritize Your Health

Continued from page 1

is conveniently located at 2500 Weston Rd, just minutes away from Cleveland Clinic Weston Hospital. Patients have direct access to Dr. Piloto via in-person visits, virtual visits, phone or even email.

"As the Chief Experience Officer, I enjoyed the opportunity to help improve, shape and provide our patients with the best experience during their hospital stay and visit to our clinics" says Dr. Piloto. "I also served as a facilitator of the Foundations of Healthcare Communication Course which allowed me to help teach and improve communication and empathy to our Staff Physicians, Residents, Fellows and all caregivers."

At Cleveland Clinic, our focus is on patients first – and our Concierge Medicine program is an extension of that focus. Cleveland Clinic's Concierge Medicine program offers personalized, comprehensive care while cultivating in-depth patient-physician relationships that support patients' health goals. A highly qualified healthcare team, led by board-certified physicians, keeps the focus on the patient and provides the world-class care for which Cleveland Clinic is renowned.

"Our vision for the Cleveland Clinic Concierge Medicine Program is to become a leading destination for top quality concierge healthcare while building an international network throughout the Cleveland Clinic enterprise and beyond," Dr. Piloto adds. "Being part of Cleveland Clinic connects our patients to one of the premier healthcare organizations in the world."

Call (833) 623-0938 or email WestonConciergeMedicine@ccf.org to learn more about this program.

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Accounting for the Future: Marc Egort's Strategic Financial Insight in Healthcare

BY DANIEL CASCIATO

In the complex and fast-evolving world of healthcare, the role of accounting professionals has never been more critical. South Florida-based CPA Marc Egort has built a reputation as a trusted advisor who helps healthcare providers navigate regulatory shifts, reimbursement challenges, and evolving financial strategies.

As the founder of a boutique CPA firm, Egort has combined his technical expertise with deep industry insight to help clients better understand their data and make more informed decisions.

A Career That Grew with the Industry

"What drew me was kind of by accident," Egort says. "My first job out of college was with a Medicare-certified home health agency."

That early experience, combined with mentorship from a CPA specializing in Medicare-related consulting, set the foundation for Egort's healthcare-focused practice. Originally intending to work solely as a consultant, he soon found himself expanding into tax, book-keeping, mergers, and business advisory work—all within the healthcare space.

Over the last two decades, he has watched the definition of healthcare expand dramatically.

"There are wellness clinics now, chiropractic clinics, pain management, and substance abuse centers. The scope of what's considered healthcare has increased over the last 25 years."

Understanding Reimbursement and Margin Pressure

Unlike many industries, healthcare providers often operate in a reimbursement-driven model. This creates unique financial pressures, especially as payers continue to tighten margins.

"Their biggest challenge is squeezing as much service from a reimbursement rate that is continuously stressed," Egort



Marc Egort

explains.

With contracts, regulations, and payment structures often out of their control, practices must learn to manage their resources with razor-sharp precision.

Strategy in a Shifting Regulatory Landscape

Regulatory updates around Medicare reimbursements, telehealth billing, and value-based care

can dramatically impact a provider's bottom line. Egort says it's all about identifying revenue opportunities and understanding the true cost of acquiring and managing patients.

"There's now movement toward contemplating the cost of acquiring that patient. Healthcare business owners have been motivated to take a deeper dive into more granular information about what drives their revenues and how to manage the cost of that service without compromising the quality of care."

The Hidden Risks of Non-Compliance

For smaller providers, the most common compliance issues come down to timing, documentation, and oversight.

"Oftentimes providers are penalized for late billing or incomplete billing," Egort says. "They may not have the budget for quality assurance or someone who can provide oversight into billing practices."

Financially, many also underestimate the full cost of delivering care—overhead, administration, and marketing all contribute.

"It's understanding that every cost that's incurred has some investment value to the practice," he explains. "Is this expense helping me generate revenue or helping me efficiently deliver care?"

Helping Clients Shift Their Mindset

Rather than simply onboarding new providers, Egort often steps in once a

practice recognizes the limits of its financial understanding.

"I usually step in the picture once they understand they have financial data that's not organized in a way that's helpful to them," he says. His role is to help transform providers into business owners with a strong grasp of deadlines, compliance, and actionable data.

"With business ownership comes certain tenets of responsibility. There's a thought process that dramatically changes their perspective on what their responsibilities are."

Preparing for Private Equity

Egort is especially attuned to the role accounting professionals play in preparing practices for acquisition. As private equity (PE) firms increasingly invest in healthcare, providers must be ready.

"There's no more important resource for a healthcare provider or practice than their accountant for this role," he says. Egort ensures his clients understand industry-standard financial reporting—accrual basis accounting, cost per patient analysis, and overhead metrics.

"PE firms are all about profit. If you're not prepared, a potential acquirer ends up making choices for you. You want to be in a strong position to understand the value of your organization."

Strategic Financial Advice for Healthcare Leaders

When asked what advice he gives

healthcare executives and practice managers, Egort emphasizes the importance of viewing your accountant as a strategic partner, not just a cost.

"If you're going to view your accounting professional as a cost to your business, I think you're missing a great opportunity," he says. "You're not going to allow yourself the full benefit of the value that your accounting professional can bring."

He encourages leaders to work with consultants who understand healthcare-specific metrics, revenue cycles, and compliance demands.

"We don't ask enough questions that change behavior. We don't ask enough questions that give us a better understanding of not only how we got here, but where we're trying to get to."

A Forward-Thinking Approach

With a background in both core accounting services and emerging sectors, Egort brings a future-focused perspective to his healthcare work. Whether preparing a practice for acquisition, advising on operational efficiencies, or demystifying complex financial reports, Egort remains a trusted partner for healthcare leaders looking to strengthen their financial strategies and build long-term success.

For more information, visit egortcpa.com.

Financial Profile

TRINITY HEALTH HOLY CROSS HEALTH

Elena Barberis, CPA

Vice President of Finance

Elena Barberis, CPA, is Vice President of Finance for Trinity Health Holy Cross Health in Fort Lauderdale and St. Mary's Health Care System in Athens, GA. She and her ministry-based teams provide financial and strategic planning and support to the CEOs, regional CFO, boards and leadership teams in addition to Trinity Health's finance department. Barberis previously spent 11 years at Jackson Health System in South Florida, rising to the position of Vice President of Finance. In 2020, she and her family relocated to the Atlanta area, where she joined Piedmont Healthcare as executive director of finance. Most recently, she was executive director and controller for Northeast Georgia Health System. A CPA in both Florida and Georgia, Barberis earned a Bachelor of Science in Communication and Political Science from the University of Miami and Master of Science in Finance from Florida International University. She is a member of the Healthcare Financial Management Association in Florida and Georgia, member of the Georgia Society of Certified Public Accountants, a board member of the Northeast Georgia chapter of United Way and has served as treasurer of various local boards.



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TOPIC

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Tuesday, July 8

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TOPIC

The Role of Data and Advanced Analytics
in Transforming Healthcare

DATE

Thursday, July 17

TIME

5:30 pm to 8:00 pm

LOCATION

Wellington Regional Medical Center

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ADVANCES IN TECHNOLOGY

Mount Sinai Medical Center Revolutionizes Patient Care Through AI-Powered Virtual Nursing

Artificial Intelligence is transforming healthcare, and Mount Sinai Medical Center is leading this evolution in South Florida. Earlier this spring, the medical center integrated a groundbreaking virtual nursing program into 160 inpatient rooms across their Miami Beach campus through Artisight's Smart Hospital Platform—redefining the delivery of patient care.

This advanced computer-vision technology, paired with a dedicated nursing command center, enhances patient safety, improves care quality, and supports the medical center's nursing staff in unprecedented ways. Artisight introduces an additional layer of oversight and care, ensuring patients receive attention precisely when needed.

The Artisight platform empowers care teams to monitor patients remotely around the clock, creating continuous observation. Staff can engage proactively, leveraging ambient sensors and artificial intelligence to identify and prevent incidents, such as patient falls, before they



BY DR. ALON WEIZER

occur. This predictive capability has proven invaluable in maintaining patient safety and preventing serious complications.

The command center's real-time audio and video capabilities have transformed how the medical center connects with patients. Physicians and nurses can quickly address patient questions through immediate communication, providing reassurance even when not physically present.

This constant connection has significantly enhanced the patient experience, with many expressing greater confidence knowing help is always moments away. The technology allows nurses to spend more meaningful time with patients, fostering stronger therapeutic relationships.

Beyond patient monitoring, Artisight streamlines critical nursing tasks assisting with discharge planning, admission assessments, and documentation processes. This shift has been transformative, with nursing staff reporting higher job satisfaction and reduced administrative burden.

From an operational perspective, the medical center has seen reductions in nursing turnover and overtime, creating a more sustainable work environment that benefits both staff and patients while cultivating stronger teamwork among care teams.

What sets this initiative apart is how it complements rather than replaces traditional nursing care. The technology serves as an intelligent assistant that enhances human expertise, creating a hybrid model combining AI's analytical power with skilled nursing professionals' compassionate touch.

At Mount Sinai Medical Center, the Artisight virtual nursing program exemplifies the medical center's belief that healthcare's future lies in thoughtfully integrating advanced technology with human expertise, demonstrating how innovation enhances the healing elements of care. This innovation reflects our commitment to combining compassionate care with cutting-edge solutions to meet the needs of our community.

*Dr. Alon Weizer is
Chief Medical Officer
at Mount Sinai Medical Center.*

Optimizing Hospice Care Through Technology and Telehealth

VITAS® Healthcare harnesses technology to provide 24/7/365 virtual support. Our telecare program ensures seamless, responsive consultations and care when it matters most, connecting patients and caregivers to VITAS clinicians for:

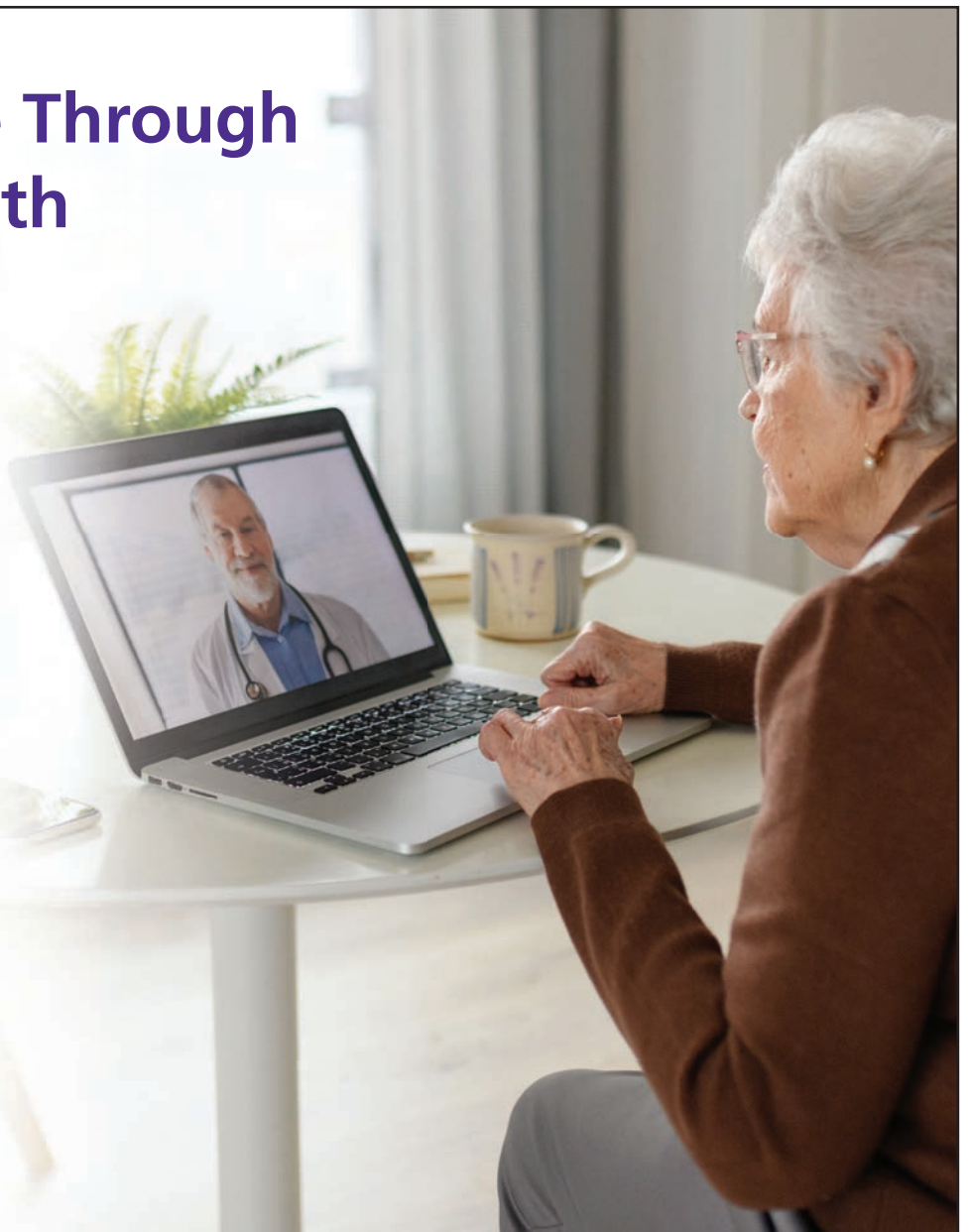
- Real-time, multi-faceted symptom assessment and support, which can reduce the need for the emergency department or hospitalization
- Medication guidance including alternate routes when patients can't swallow
- Emotional and clinical support while help is on the way
- Caregiver education, decision-making, and care planning
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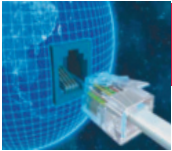
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ADVANCES IN TECHNOLOGY

Palm Beach Gardens Medical Center's Dr. Nishant Patel Achieves Landmark Milestones in Cryo Nerve Block and Encompass Surgical Technology

Palm Beach Gardens Medical Center announces that Dr. Nishant Patel, a board-certified cardiothoracic surgeon, has reached two major milestones in advanced cardiothoracic surgery: completing more than 300 Cryo Nerve Block (cryoNB) procedures and 250 surgical ablations for atrial fibrillation using the Encompass clamp, the most by any surgeon in Palm Beach County.

A trailblazer in his field, Dr. Patel was the first surgeon in the world to perform a human case using Encompass, a novel surgical technology that allows for safe and effective surgical ablation using radiofrequency energy. Encompass utilizes a magnetic guide for accurate clamp placement, custom energy delivery through a synergy algorithm, and uniform tissue pressure for parallel closure—all designed to streamline minimally invasive surgeries, improve outcomes and treat irregular heart rhythms like atrial fibrillation.

Dr. Patel is also the number one user of cryoNB therapy in Palm Beach County, having performed over 300 cases. This innovative, non-opioid therapy is designed to temporarily block pain signals using a freezing method that avoids long-term nerve damage. The technique enables patients to better manage post-operative pain and potentially return to daily activities more quickly.

The cryoNB system, developed by AtriCure, uses a sterile, single-use probe to safely disable specific nerves without harming their protective structures. Over time, the nerves naturally regenerate, gradually restoring sensation.

Dr. Patel has been using cryoNB for approximately 2½ years and has helped drive the adoption of this therapy as a safe, effective alternative to opioid-based pain management.



Dr. Nishant Patel

Cleveland Clinic First to Use Wireless, Catheter-Free Device to Monitor Bladder Dysfunction in Patients

Cleveland Clinic is the first to use the Glean™ Urodynamics System, the first wireless, catheter-free method of urodynamic monitoring following 510(k) clearance from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration in March.

Leveraging foundational technology generated from research conducted by Cleveland Clinic, Bright Uro created the Glean Urodynamics System which offers more comfortable, accurate testing and the ability to monitor bladder activity during normal daily activities.

Cleveland Clinic identified this critical unmet need in response to conventional urodynamic assessments (tests that demonstrate how well the bladder, sphincters, and urethra hold and release urine to determine the source of leaks or blockages), which have several limitations.

The FDA clearance is a prime example of a clinical innovation advancing from inception to reality and now being offered to patients, as researchers in Cleveland Clinic's Department of Urology and Lerner Research Institute in collaboration with researchers at Louis Stokes Cleveland VAMC and Case Western Reserve University invested more than a decade developing the original technology.

"After observing standard urodynamic testing over the past 20 years, our vision for this device was to address the shortcomings in current bladder testing," said Margot Damaser, Ph.D., leader of the research team and a staff member in the Biomedical Engineering Department of Cleveland Clinic's Lerner Research Institute. "We wanted to invent a novel solution that would take the monitoring out of an artificial setting and eliminate the need for a catheter, which can be painful and embarrassing."



Mount Sinai Medical Center Advances Chronic Disease Management with HealthSnap Remote Patient Monitoring

Mount Sinai Medical Center is enhancing patient care through advanced chronic disease management by utilizing HealthSnap's remote patient monitoring (RPM) technology. This innovative solution enables continuous at-home monitoring of critical health metrics, providing real-time insights into patient health status and significantly improving chronic disease outcomes.

HealthSnap empowers the medical center's physicians to closely monitor key health indicators, including blood pressure, blood glucose, weight, and oxygen saturation. This proactive approach allows clinicians to quickly respond to concerning patient values by adjusting medications, dietary recommendations, or arranging timely follow-up care, effectively reducing unnecessary emergency room visits and hospital admissions.

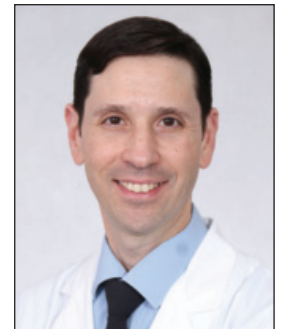
The main application involves monitoring blood pressure, an essential factor in managing chronic health conditions. Our data has shown clinically meaningful reductions in both systolic and diastolic blood pressure among participating patients. Achieving better blood pressure control and improving medication adherence substantially lowers the risk of serious complications such as cardiovascular and kidney disease.

The RPM initiative is rapidly scaling across 13 Mount Sinai locations throughout South Florida, poised to serve up to 10,000 patients. This comprehensive program delivers proactive management for a range of chronic conditions, including hypertension, diabetes, congestive heart failure, COPD, asthma, obesity, and osteoporosis.

Through HealthSnap's innovative platform, we're revolutionizing chronic disease management by enabling physicians to intervene swiftly when patient health metrics signal concern. Real-time monitoring empowers our clinical teams to provide tailored care that dramatically improves health outcomes while boosting patient satisfaction.

Initial results have demonstrated notable improvements in patient engagement and clinical outcomes, highlighting the effectiveness of telemedicine in chronic disease management. Additionally, physicians at Mount Sinai report increased professional satisfaction, attributing it to their enhanced ability to positively impact patient health and wellbeing. Likewise, patients express greater satisfaction and improved quality of life, as RPM technology reduces frequent ER visits and hospitalizations, facilitating better communication and support, particularly for our most vulnerable chronic disease patients.

Mount Sinai continues to prioritize patient-centered care through innovative technologies such as HealthSnap, reaffirming our commitment to excellence in chronic disease management and preventive care.



BY DR. ALON WEIZER

Dr. Alon Weizer is Chief Medical Officer at Mount Sinai Medical Center.

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KIDZ Medical Services Expanding Air Transport Program

BY VANESSA ORR

More than 20 years ago, KIDZ Medical Services' co-founders Albert R. Taño, M.D., and Jorge E. Perez, M.D., launched an air medical transport service to fly international neonatal patients — many of them preemies needing special treatment in the U.S. — safely and with a highly-trained care team. Now known as AIRZ (Air Medical Charters, LLC), KIDZ' air medical service has expanded into medical tourism, providing both children and adults access to expert physicians and high-quality healthcare services not readily accessible in their home countries.

AIRZ is a physician-owned and operated company specializing in adult, pediatric, and neonatal transport. The crew ensures the safe and efficient transfer of patients to specialized healthcare facilities across the U.S., Caribbean, Central, and South America.

Providing neonatal care in the air or on the ground requires a very specific set of equipment and healthcare staff training requirements. AIRZ' pediatric transports are taken to South Florida hospitals, like Baptist, South Miami, and Nicklaus Children's, and hundreds of patients have been transported safely since its inception.

"We started with a helicopter and now use a Lear 55 Jet," said Jorge Jordan, APRN, who leads the coordination of the medical team. But what makes their air medical service unique is the deep clinical expertise of the team, in addition to an experienced flight crew with the highest safety ratings.

"Our crew is divided into several areas, depending on the specialty they have," said Jordan. "We have EMT paramedics who also work for the city of Miami or Miami-Dade County who are trained in trauma. We have ICU respiratory therapists who know how to intubate or put patients on ventilators. We have nurses who are trained in caring for both adults and neonates; depending on the patient we are transporting, we pick from that group of team members for both air and ground transport."

All air transport staff have years of experience in the ICU and have received specific air transport training.

"When you're 50,000 ft. alone up there, you have to be able to make split decisions on patient care," said Jordan, adding that patients have ranged from premature babies to pregnant mothers to post-surgical patients that can't be transported home on com-



mercial flights because of medical needs.

Whether transported by air or ground, KIDZ makes sure that patients come first.

"We believe that patients are part of our family; we take care of them the same way we'd take care of our own parents, kids or grandkids," said Jordan. "We also believe in communication; when we're transporting a neonate, we talk to the parents constantly. We send them pictures from the air ambulance, when we land, when we get in the ground ambulance, and when we arrive at the hospital. We make them part of the transport."

Medical Tourism

According to CEO Wayne Brackin, there are a number of initiatives underway to make AIRZ' air transport services even more accessible.

"We currently have an active partnership with Nicklaus Children's Hospital to provide fixed-wing transportation, and we are in discussions with one of the major cruise line providers to be its preferred air medical transport," he

explained.

As a board member of the Greater Miami Convention and Visitors Bureau, Brackin is also working closely with the organization to assist in the evolving medical tourism business.

"Medical tourism is already substantial in South Florida; people come to Miami from South America, the Caribbean, and Central America in particular to access internationally known 'destination' physicians and the specialty technology available here," he explained.

"Depending on their country of origin, there are different levels of capability when it comes to healthcare," he added. "When they are looking for information about physicians with the best outcomes or the newest technology available for certain disease processes, they find it at South Florida healthcare institutions."

He notes that some government entities in island countries in Central and South America also contract with U.S.-based providers for care not available in their home countries.

"While we have the special expertise required to transport pediatric patients and neonates, we are unique among air transport companies in that we can take care of transporting patients of any age," he added.

Orlando Patient Travels to West Palm Beach for Dr. Jonathan Shaw's Advanced Hip Replacement at Palm Beach Orthopaedic Institute

Jonathan Shaw, M.D., is a local, fellowship-trained joint replacement surgeon at the Palm Beach Orthopaedic Institute in West Palm Beach, FL. He specializes in minimally invasive total hip and knee replacement, robotic surgery, revision joint replacement, and nonoperative care for hip and knee arthritis.

Dr. Shaw recently coordinated surgical travel for a patient living in Orlando, FL, to come to Palm Beach County for a life-altering procedure. Travel for joint replacement procedures is becoming increasingly common in arthroplasty, particularly due to the reduced recovery time and the growing feasibility of same-day discharge. The patient is scheduled to undergo hip replacement surgery to address end-stage arthritis. Travel to West Palm Beach is planned for the day before the procedure, with accommodations arranged near the Palm Beach Orthopaedic Institute.

The patient elected to travel to receive care from a trusted surgeon. Dr. Shaw

has arranged for postoperative physical therapy to be initiated in the patient's hotel room to support early recovery. Once the patient is stable and comfortable, typically within a day following the procedure, he will return to Orlando to continue his rehabilitation locally.

To learn more about Dr. Jonathan Shaw and the Palm Beach Orthopaedic Institute, please visit <https://www.pboi.com/JonathanShawMD> or call (561) 694-7776.



Dr. Jonathan Shaw

Baptist Health Announces 42nd Annual Echocardiography and Structural Heart Symposium



Miami Cardiac & Vascular Institute, part of Baptist Health South Florida, will be hosting its the 42nd Annual Echocardiography and Structural Heart Symposium on September 26-27, 2025, at the Loews Coral Gables Hotel in Coral Gables, Florida. This premier educational event convenes leading experts in cardiovascular care to explore the latest advancements in imaging technologies and minimally invasive treatments for valvular and structural heart diseases.

The symposium will feature presentations from Baptist Health physician-researchers as well as renowned speakers from institutions across the U.S. and the globe. The topics that will be discussed include:

- Comprehensive evaluation and management of aortic, mitral, and tricuspid valve disease, including current guideline updates and treatment strategies.
- Advanced echocardiographic and imaging techniques, such as 3-D imaging, strain analysis, CT, and TEE, for structural heart disease assessment.
- Multimodality imaging in clinical decision-making, particularly for hypertrophic cardiomyopathy, left atrial appendage, and valvular pathologies.
- Assessment and management of prosthetic heart valves, including detection and treatment of paravalvular leaks.
- Diagnostic challenges and controversial topics in structural heart care.
- Multidisciplinary, team-based approaches to optimizing outcomes in complex cardiovascular cases.

The symposium emphasizes a team-based approach to patient care, recognizing the importance of collaboration among cardiologists, surgeons, sonographers, and other healthcare professionals.

Healthcare professionals interested in attending the 42nd Annual Echocardiography and Structural Heart Symposium can register online at BaptistHealth.net/MiamiEcho. The event is designed for cardiologists, cardiac surgeons, sonographers, anesthesiologists, and other medical professionals dedicated to advancing their knowledge in echocardiography and structural heart disease.

For more information about the symposium, visit BaptistHealth.net/MiamiEcho.

Hanger Clinic Enters Clinical Services Agreement for Orthotic and Prosthetic Care with Premier, Inc.

Hanger Clinic, provider of orthotic and prosthetic (O&P) patient care, has been awarded a national group purchasing agreement for O&P care with Premier, Inc. The new agreement allows Premier members, at their discretion, to take advantage of pricing and terms pre-negotiated by Premier for O&P care with Hanger clinics across the country.

Premier is a technology-driven healthcare improvement company, providing solutions to two-thirds of all healthcare providers in the U.S. Playing a critical role in the rapidly evolving healthcare industry, Premier unites providers, suppliers, payers and policymakers to make healthcare better with national scale, smarter with actionable intelligence and faster with novel technologies. With integrated data and analytics, collaboratives, supply chain solutions, consulting and other services, Premier enables better care and outcomes at a lower cost.

Under this agreement, Premier members can access Hanger Clinic's comprehensive services to support care delivery for patients requiring orthotic and prosthetic interventions, including orthopedic trauma, spinal trauma, stroke rehabilitation, and amputee care. Hanger Clinic supports health systems driving towards a higher value of care by helping identify solutions that will improve patient outcomes and reduce length of hospital stays and potential readmissions.

One example of the post-amputation patient care that Hanger Clinic provides to healthcare systems is the Ampushield®, which has been clinically proven to optimize patient outcomes and reduce the length of acute hospital stays through contracture prevention. The Ampushield® also provides better wound protection, results in faster healing times, provides earlier ambulation, and reduces the risk of requiring a revision surgery due to falls.

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Kindred Hospital South Florida

Specializing in Medically Complex Patients

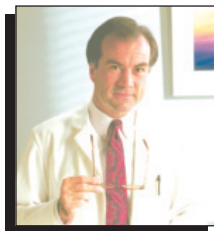


Kindred Hospitals are owned by Kindred Healthcare, Inc., a national network of Long Term Acute Care Hospitals (LTACH's).

Kindred Hospitals provide specialized, high quality care for acutely ill patients. For more than a decade, we have fine-tuned the art of medically complex care.

Our services range from complex catastrophic illnesses that require intensive care, post-surgical medical rehabilitation to patients suffering from chronic diseases requiring respiratory and rehabilitative therapies. Kindred Hospitals provide outcome-oriented cost effective care for patients with a wide spectrum of medical conditions.

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



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RISK strategies

How Will Your Malpractice Carrier Fight For You?



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

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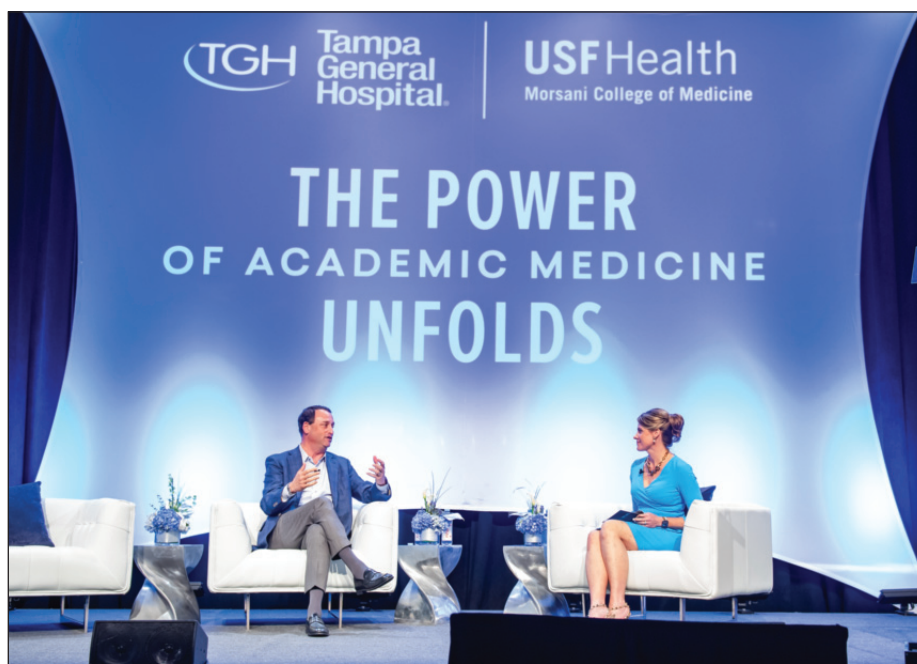
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Financial, Legal Profiles

Understanding Healthcare Law Is Vital to Protecting Businesses

BY VANESSA ORR

Healthcare is ever-evolving—just like the laws and regulations that govern patient care. Administrators, physicians, and healthcare professionals must understand their legal as well as medical responsibilities, especially as technological advancements make it increasingly challenging to stay current.

“There are many people getting into the healthcare space now that want to change how healthcare is delivered and make it more accessible,” explains Jennifer Jordan, Esq., the founder and managing partner of JLY Advisory, which serves as fractional general counsel to healthcare startups and other healthcare companies. “But many are unaware of the complexities involved in healthcare regulation.”

Jordan founded JLY Advisory following her career at McDermott Will & Emery and also served as in-house legal counsel for a number of hospitals including the Cleveland Clinic. A professor at Florida Atlantic University (FAU), she teaches healthcare law to students in the university’s master’s in healthcare administration program.

Working with start-ups, Jordan often finds that businesses have difficulty scaling in a way that avoids running afoul of regulations, ranging from FDA and DMS requirements to state lab licensing laws. Her company also guides clients through HIPAA regulations as well as helps them to understand the rules of marketing healthcare products or services.

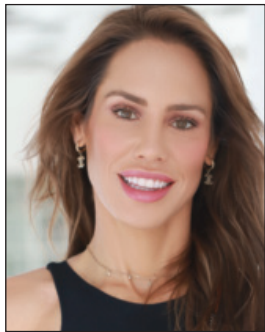
At FAU, Jordan lectures on more general healthcare legal information, which can range from regulatory issues to fraud and abuse laws, end-of-life care, employment matters, privacy and security, and ethical topics. She also focuses on technology, as many students will be joining healthcare startups or medical device companies that rely on new and emerging technology to provide services.

“All of my clients are working on integrating artificial intelligence (AI) into their businesses, and that technology raises a lot of questions,” she said. “Using software as a medical device to help diagnose patients is also a challenging topic as there are numerous rules around it.”

With such rapidly changing technology, Jordan understands how confusing it can be to try to keep on top of the latest developments.

“I know from my experience as a lawyer in both traditional healthcare settings, such as hospitals, and as in-house counsel for one of the largest OB/GYN groups in the country that they tend to be slow moving and behind the times,” she said. “Doctors are risk-averse humans; they are healers and are not trying to push the boundaries in business. They are satisfied with the way they’ve been doing things.”

She notes that while physicians are often innovative when it comes to curing illness, the adoption of tech-driven support systems and daily patient care solutions tends to lag behind. The biggest risk to this delay is that they are losing the ability to use



Jennifer Jordan

these technologies to their advantage.

“The capabilities of AI are so incredible that we should be thinking about how to implement it in hospital systems now and in the future,” she said. “Thinking ahead, it may be possible to use it to do things that don’t even exist today.”

Beyond missing the chance to enhance patient care and experience, healthcare companies may also face problems from a legal perspective if protocols are not in place for using these technologies.

“If software is used without proper protocols in place, there’s a heightened risk of miscommunication or misdiagnosis,” Jordan said. “If you don’t have the software in place—for example, software that tells patients how much medicine to take or double-checks to make sure they got the right medicine—this is also a liability. You don’t have to have the latest technology, but you do need to have the most widely accepted and understood tools.”

To stay informed, Jordan recommends subscribing to daily emails from trusted sources such as the American Health Lawyers Association or Women in Health Technology. She also follows subject matter experts on LinkedIn to see what people at the forefront of innovation are discussing. Working with a legal firm is also an option.

“The FDA and CMS are always coming out with new opinions or commentary, and we stay on top of this for our clients to let them know how it could impact their businesses,” she says, noting that no one wants to end up in a regulatory investigation. “If you’re starting or scaling a healthcare company, you do have a duty to be aware of the latest information. You have to protect your business.”

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Bradley S. Taylor, MD, Mph, Joins Baptist Health Heart & Vascular Care

Board-certified cardiac surgeon Bradley S. Taylor, M.D., MPH, has been named chief of cardiac surgery for the North Region and chief of quality and outcomes for Baptist Health Heart & Vascular Care. Dr. Taylor will lead the cardiac surgery program at Lynn Heart & Vascular Institute at Boca Raton Regional Hospital and Bethesda Hospital, while working closely with multidisciplinary teams across the health system on quality and outcomes in heart and vascular care. He has more than 23 years of experience in all areas of adult cardiac surgery and performs more than 400-450 complex cardiac cases per year.

Prior to joining Baptist Health, Dr. Taylor was an endowed professor and chief of the Division of Cardiac Surgery at the University of Maryland School of Medicine. He also served as the director of quality, director of coronary revascularization and co-director of the Center of Aortic Disease at the University of Maryland Medical Center.

Dr. Taylor earned his medical degree and a master's degree in public health at Emory University School of Medicine in Atlanta. He completed a general surgery residency and a cardiothoracic surgery residency at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center as well as a minimally invasive cardiac surgery fellowship at OLV Hospital in Aalst, Belgium.



Dr. Bradley S. Taylor

Holy Cross Medical Group Welcomes Family Medicine Physician Tasia A. Bradley, MD

Family medicine physician Tasia A. Bradley, M.D., has joined Holy Cross Medical Group.

Prior to joining Holy Cross, Dr. Bradley was a nocturnist for Lourdes Physician Group in Lafayette, LA, providing comprehensive, patient-centered in hospital care and collaborating with multidisciplinary teams. At the same time, she served as Associate Clinical Professor with the Louisiana State University Health Science Family Medicine residency in Lafayette.

A United States Air Force physician, Dr. Bradley also serves with the Louisiana Air National Guard in New Orleans, providing medical care and support for service members, where she actively participates in training and readiness programs for military personnel. She previously served as a National Registry Emergency Medical Technician Instructor/EMT Basic, delivering EMT training sessions and conducting evaluations for certification of new EMT candidates.

Dr. Bradley completed her residency with the Louisiana State University Health Science Family Medicine Residency and earned her Doctor of Medicine degree from the University of Medicine and Health Sciences in Saint Kitts and Nevis. She graduated from Southeastern Louisiana University in Hammond, LA with a Bachelor of Science degree and an associate's degree in allied health from the Community College of the Air Force in Montgomery, AL.



Dr. Tasia A. Bradley

Lee Health Names Ohio State University's Dr. Minka Schofield as New Chief Quality & Patient Safety Officer

Lee Health is pleased to welcome Dr. Minka Schofield as its new Chief Quality & Patient Safety Officer. A board-certified otolaryngologist-head and neck surgeon, Dr. Schofield brings more than 20 years of clinical experience along with a strong background in academic medicine and leadership.

Before joining Lee Health, Dr. Schofield served as a professor in the Department of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery at The Ohio State University's (OSU) College of Medicine, where she was appointed the director of the general otolaryngology division, medical director of surgical operations, and vice chair of diversity, equity and inclusion.

Dr. Schofield has also served as Chief of Staff of the OSU Wexner Medical Center, serving as a key liaison to senior leadership on behalf of medical staff during the COVID pandemic.

Dr. Schofield earned her medical degree and her Master of Public Health – Population Health Leadership and Management from The Ohio State University. She completed a general surgery internship at Mount Carmel Medical Center in Columbus, Ohio, and an otolaryngology-head and neck surgery residency at The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center.



Dr. Minka Schofield

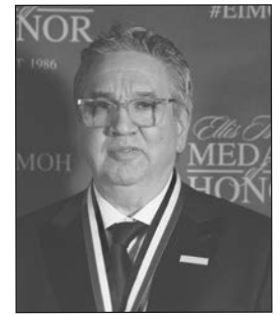
Dr. Eduardo Parra-Davila Honored with Ellis Island Medal of Honor for Dedication to Medicine and Global Impact

Good Samaritan Medical Center is proud to announce that Dr. Eduardo Parra-Davila, a general, colorectal, and bariatric surgeon, has been awarded the prestigious Ellis Island Medal of Honor. The award honors American citizens whose accomplishments in their field and service to others exemplify the spirit of America.

Dr. Parra-Davila was recognized alongside 79 other distinguished recipients for his contributions to robotic surgery, dedication to global medical education, and commitment to improving patients' lives through advanced surgical care.

With over 30 years of experience, Dr. Parra-Davila has performed more than 3,000 robotic surgeries, many at Good Samaritan Medical Center's state-of-the-art Robotic Surgical Institute. His minimally invasive approach reduces the need for open surgery, often shortening recovery times and lowering the risk of complications.

Dr. Parra-Davila's surgical expertise includes bariatric weight loss surgery, colorectal cancer treatment, hernia repair, and gastroesophageal conditions. Beyond the operating room, he has trained thousands of surgeons globally and contributed to significant research in robotic and minimally invasive surgery. He has performed surgeries around the world.



Dr. Eduardo Parra-Davila

Cleveland Clinic Physician Recognized with Research and Innovation Award

Marylise Boutros, MD, FACS, FRCSC, FASCRS, has been awarded the South Florida Hispanic Chamber of Commerce's Healthcare Champion International Research Innovation Award. This recognition highlights Dr. Boutros's outstanding leadership, commitment and contributions to the business community.

Dr. Boutros's dedication, innovation and tireless pursuit of excellence in the medical field are truly inspiring. As Regional Vice Chair of Research, Digestive Disease Institute at Cleveland Clinic in Florida, her commitment to medical research sets a remarkable example for her peers and the next generation of healthcare professionals.



Dr. Marylise Boutros

Family Medicine Physician Joins Cleveland Clinic Weston Hospital Executive Health Program

Board-certified family medicine physician Matthew Goldman, M.D., has recently transitioned from the Family Medicine department at Cleveland Clinic Weston Hospital to the Executive Health program.

The Executive Health program at Weston Hospital offers a personalized, same-day experience that includes comprehensive health assessments, advanced screenings, wellness coaching and coordinated care — all designed to accommodate the needs of individuals with busy schedules.

"Joining Executive Health has given me the opportunity to provide truly personalized, preventive care to patients who often put their own health last," says Dr. Goldman. "This program allows me to deliver high-quality care efficiently and comprehensively — something especially valuable to those with limited time."

Dr. Goldman is widely recognized for his clinical expertise in family medicine, prevention, and wellness. He has authored numerous articles in both academic and popular media and consistently earns top marks in patient satisfaction.



Dr. Matthew Goldman



E-mail Your Editorial Submissions to
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A message from our President

Will We Really See Prior Authorization Reform?

From Tom Murphy at the Associated Press, "Top U.S. health insurers vow prior authorization reform." [Sun-Sentinel, June 24] Quoted from the article, "Insurers said Monday that they will standardize electronic prior authorization by the end of next year to help speed up the process. They will reduce the scope of claims subject to medical prior authorization, and they will honor the preapprovals of a previous insurer for a window of time after someone switches plans." We will see.

Medical prior authorizations, while intended as a cost-control measure, often prove detrimental to patients, leading to delayed care, worsened health outcomes, and increased administrative burdens (cost) that interfere with the patient-provider relationship. At its core, prior authorization (PA) requires healthcare providers to obtain approval from a patient's insurance company before delivering certain medications, tests, or treatments. Though insurers argue this process ensures appropriate use of services and prevents unnecessary spending, in practice it frequently results in harmful delays and denials that compromise timely care.

And, with the repositories of "big data" being at insurance companies, surely analysis of that data shows that these changes can be safely and effectively implemented. So, why does it take a year?

One of the immediate negative impacts of prior authorization is treatment delay. According to surveys by the American Medical Association (AMA), a significant number of physicians report that PAs have led to delays in patient care, sometimes exceeding several days or even weeks. [The AMA views prior authorization as an overused, costly, inefficient, and opaque process that often leads to patient care delays and potentially adverse events.] These delays can be critical, especially for patients with chronic or progressive illnesses. For example, in cases involving cancer, heart disease, or mental health conditions, even short delays in initiating treatment can worsen prognosis or lead to complications that might have been preventable with prompt intervention.

Moreover, many prior authorization requirements are not based on the latest clinical guidelines or patient-specific information. This creates a system where insurers second-guess providers' judgment, despite not having the same level of



Jaime Caldwell

direct patient insight. In some cases, patients are denied treatments that their physicians consider medically necessary, forcing patients to either forgo care or switch to less effective alternatives. This can have both health and psychological consequences, eroding trust in the healthcare system and leaving patients feeling powerless in decisions about their own care.

The administrative burden of prior authorizations also affects patients indirectly. Physicians and clinical staff must often spend hours navigating complex and inconsistent requirements, diverting time and attention away from direct patient care. This not only contributes to provider burnout but also limits the capacity of clinics—especially those in underserved areas—to efficiently manage high patient volumes. For smaller practices, the resources required to manage PA

requests can be prohibitive, further contributing to disparities in access and continuity of care.

Additionally, prior authorizations can disproportionately affect vulnerable populations, such as the elderly, low-income individuals, or those with limited health literacy. These patients may struggle to understand or contest denials, and they may lack the financial flexibility to pay out-of-pocket while appeals are pending. This often leads to treatment abandonment or reliance on emergency services, which are both more costly and less effective than preventive or early-stage care.

In recent years, there has been increasing advocacy from medical societies, patient rights groups, and even bipartisan legislators to reform or streamline the PA process. Proposals include electronic prior authorization systems, standardized forms, and "gold card" programs that exempt high-performing providers from routine reviews. While some insurers have taken steps toward such changes, progress has been uneven and slow.

With elections looming, what we have witnessed is growing unrest by the insured about this antiquated process. After the recent death of UnitedHealthcare CEO Brian Thompson, we saw the frustration manifest and we also saw an election year issue come into focus. Is legislation that is more stringent in the works? ("Dr. Mehmet Oz called the practice "a pox on the system" that hikes administrative costs during his Senate confirmation hearing in March to lead the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.) It is time for the healthcare system to reduce one of its expensive barriers to appropriate care.

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

MAKINGROUNDS...MAKINGROUNDS...

Dr. Piloto Leads Cleveland Clinic's New Concierge Medicine Location in Weston

Robert Piloto, M.D., is leading Cleveland Clinic's newest concierge medicine location in Weston.

Dr. Piloto is board certified in internal medicine and a fellow in the American College of Physicians. His main interests are in general prevention of diseases like cardiovascular disease, cancer, hypertension, diabetes and obesity. He enjoys helping patients by preventing illness and diseases, as well as helping them heal their bodies and minds.

Working as a concierge medicine physician gives Dr. Piloto the opportunity to promote and practice preventative health medicine and provide life-improving counseling to encourage healthier lifestyles.



Dr. Robert Piloto



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Cover Story: Q&A with World-Renowned Nicklaus Children's Interventional Cardiologist, Dr. Shyam Sathanandam

Continued from page 1

How has your research in clinical trials impacted the infant population?

The intersection of medicine and technology has been at the forefront of my work since early in my career.

I served as a principal investigator for many clinical trials that resulted in FDA approval of life saving devices for newborns including the Amplatzer Piccolo Occluder, a transformative technology that enables bedside catheter-based closure of patent ductus arteriosus (PDA) in extremely premature infants, eliminating the need for surgery.

I've also pioneered groundbreaking procedures for pulmonary flow reduction in neonates with complex congenital heart disease, and stent therapies for infants.

In 2018, I executed and launched the International PDA Symposium, the first multispecialty global conference dedicated to advancing the management of Patent Ductus Arteriosus (PDA), a heart defect that can develop soon after birth and affects the way blood flows through a newborn's lungs.

What is your approach to treating neonates and infants with complex congenital heart disease?

Every child is born with their own uniqueness and for the babies born with CHD, we take great pride at the Nicklaus Children's Heart Institute in creating individualized and innovative treatment plans to ensure our patients live healthy lives beyond their childhood years. With a 97.5% survival rate for our heart surgery program, one of the best in the state, my team and I approach each case with strategic precision, always seeking the safest and most effective solution. Many times, we are able to use the least invasive approach, including many first-in-the-world procedures that were pioneered right here by our own cardiologists.

Most infants born with congenital heart disease require many surgeries in their early days of life. Can this be reduced?

Yes. I was a principal investigator in a clinical trial for specialized stent therapy which is a metal mesh tube that keeps blood vessels open for newborns, infants

and children with narrowing in the aorta or pulmonary artery. Because the stent is made of expandable mesh, the device expands as the child grows which reduces surgeries needed. Solutions like stent therapy take into account the child's growth as they age as well as the improved quality of life that comes from spending less time in a hospital.

Our journey with patients begins in the womb, through advanced fetal diagnosis and fetal cardiac interventions. Early detection allows us to plan for delivery and immediate postnatal care, giving newborns the best possible start.

As children grow, we continue to offer minimally invasive catheter-based procedures to complex surgical interventions, tailored to needs. Since CHD is a lifelong condition, we also provide specialized care for adolescents and adults with congenital heart disease (ACHD), ensuring a smooth transition and continuity of care throughout every stage.

While not all surgeries can be avoided, especially in the most complex cases, the future is promising. With ongoing clinical trials, evolving technology and a deep commitment to innovation, we are mov-

ing closer to a world where babies born with CHD face fewer surgeries, shorter recoveries and healthier lives.

How is virtual and augmented reality integrated in cardiac interventional procedures?

Virtual reality and augmented reality are becoming powerful tools in pediatric interventional cardiology, offering ways to enhance precision, planning, education and outcomes.

Here at Nicklaus Children's, we use VR and AR to aid with all procedural planning. One of the most impactful uses of VR and AR is in visualizing complex congenital heart anatomy before an intervention. These technologies allow our cardiologists and surgeons to create immersive 3D models and walk through the anatomy virtually, gaining a spatial understanding of structural abnormalities and simulate procedures, to determine the safest and most effective approach.

We also utilize AR for real-time guidance during catheter-based interventions, including overlaying 3D anatomical structures onto the patient in the cath lab using AR headsets or displays.

Cover Story: Dr. Adriana Bonansea-Frances Becomes 115th President of DCMA

Continued from page 1

She has since served as a MDCMA board member, secretary, vice-president, president-elect and chair of its Women in Medicine committee.

Following Her Calling

As a young medical student in Argentina, Dr. Bonansea-Frances chose to follow in the footsteps of her father, who was a physician in the small town where she grew up.

"I had originally decided to go into psychology, but after my pediatrics rotation at medical school residency, I knew that that was where I wanted to stay," she explained, noting that she choose to concentrate in Allergy/Immunology as genetics and immunology play a part in roughly 90 percent of diseases.

After finishing her Ph.D., she decided to emigrate to the U.S. as the country had made major strides in immunology, in part as a result of research into the HIV virus. "There was more information here than in Argentina in the 1990s, which presented more opportunities," she said.

Presidential Goals

A strong proponent of both physicians and patients, Dr. Bonansea-Frances hopes to use her platform to advocate for doctors while ensuring that patients receive accurate medical information.

"Every year, we go to Tallahassee to talk to Florida's representatives and senators about the challenges facing the medical field and to share information about things that affect our ability to practice and to push for changes on certain laws," she explained. "I want to continue this advocacy."

She also plans to team up with other medical associations, such as the Florida Medical Association, as well as other Florida counties to expand the reach of the organization.

"My second goal, which I believe is even more important at this time, is prevention—that includes trying to overcome the misinformation that the public has received about things like basic science and vaccines," she added. "I want to encourage medical students and residents to work with us in that area by providing proper information to the public and physicians."

"With all of the misinformation going on in the past few years, the public doesn't trust us," she added. "We have to work to regain that trust, and assure that accurate medical information is given to the public."

To this end, Dr. Bonansea-Frances hopes to increase public outreach by having the MDCMA participate in health fairs and travel to underserved areas to try to reach a wider audience.

"We have already been working with commissioners and mayors in different areas to find ways to meet with people; we start by taking participants' blood pressure and checking their glucose levels, but we also talk to them about issues like diabetes, hypertension and obesity," she said.

Dr. Bonansea-Frances also hopes to launch a YouTube channel featuring talks on these topics, and to recruit more members to the MDCMA in order to reach more people.

"When you look at the number of physicians in Miami-Dade County, it's surprising that there are not more members," she said, noting that membership includes free access to attorney services as well as a journal that publishes members' academic

and research work.

MDCMA also offers members free access to continuing education through specific CME courses that are required for license renewal, such as medical error, domestic violence and human trafficking training.

While she has big goals, the MDCMA's new president believes that small steps forward can make a difference.

"In terms of being able to communicate with the public, one year is not a lot of time to make these changes, but we can at least start these prevention programs and start reaching out to the community," she said.

"Our most recent president, Dr. Patricia-Ares Romero, started mental health programs and while all of those issues haven't been solved in one year, I plan to continue those programs in the future. If I can make small but good changes, that can help the next president to continue to do the same thing."

To learn more about the Miami-Dade County Medical Association, visit <https://miamimed.com> or call (305) 324-8717.

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Cover Story: Enhancing Patient Satisfaction Through Authorization Transparency

Continued from page 1

3. **Navigating Unclear Guidelines:** Confusing guidelines and policy changes can cause uncertainty for providers.

4. **Managing Communication Challenges:** Miscommunication between insurers and providers can lead to delays or denials, adding to patient stress.

5. **Addressing Service Changes:** Modifications to services, procedures, or care level can impact authorization.

Financial Fallout

Issues in the authorization process can cause financial stress for both patients and providers. Some common financial impacts include:

- **Unexpected Costs:** Without authorization, patients might face significant out-of-pocket expenses.

- **Denied Claims:** Services without approval can lead to denied claims, leaving patients or providers to cover the costs.

- **Increased Administrative Burden:** Managing authorizations consumes time and expensive resources.

- **Revenue Delays:** Authorization issues can delay billing and revenue collection.

- **Unexpected Bills:** Surprise medical bills can financially strain patients, affecting future care.

Authorization Transparency Checklist

Effective communication is the cornerstone of patient satisfaction, and transparency in the authorization process can make the difference between a positive and a negative care experience.

Use the checklist below to help enhance communication between patients, providers, and insurers during authorization process:

- **Streamline Authorization Systems**
 - Identify where workflows can be streamlined or steps that can be eliminated to reduce redundancy.

- Implement efficient workflows for timely authorization management.

- **Develop Clear Communication Methods**

- Create communication channels that foster open dialogue between providers, patients, and insurers.

- Personalize patient updates to keep patients informed about their specific cases, especially during delays.

- Assess patient communication cadence and provide regular updates to help ease patient concerns about treatment approval and mitigate misunderstandings.

- **Educate and Empower Staff and Patients**

- Conduct staff training or professional development courses to keep employees up to date on changing insurance and authorization policies.

- Provide patient information sessions about insurance guidelines and coverage that impacts their needs. Informed patients are more proactive and engaged in their care.

- Ensure patients have access to knowledgeable staff for guidance and answers.

- **Leverage Technology to Help Automate Tasks**

- Assess existing technology and resources to understand where automation can help streamline requests.

- Use electronic health records and management systems to automate requests.

- Consider using patient portals or apps for real-time authorization tracking.

- **Verify Accurate Documentation Across Authorizations**

- Maintain thorough documentation to support authorizations and appeals.

- Regularly update documentation to maintain accuracy and prevent errors.

- **Develop Processes to Appeal Strategically**

- Develop robust processes for appealing denials with clear medical justification.

- Leverage artificial intelligence (AI) and automation to help streamline denial management.

- **Collaborate with Insurers**

- Assess communication methods with insurers to enhance collaboration and navigate recurring challenges.

Enhancing Care with Communication

As the healthcare landscape evolves, prioritizing clear communication will be key to helping deliver exceptional care. Remember: Transparency isn't just an option — it's essential. If your organization is looking to improve revenue cycle and the patient experience, contact BDO to discuss your needs.

Sabina Kotelnik, Assurance Principal,
BDO, can be reached at
(954) 989-7462
or skotelnik@bdo.com.

Contact:
Angelo Pirozzi, Managing Director,
The BDO Center for Healthcare
Excellence & Innovation
(561) 909-2100 / apirozzi@bdo.com

DCMA Announces Inauguration of Adriana Bonansea-Frances, MD

The Dade County Medical Association (DCMA) is proud to announce the inauguration of its new president, Adriana Bonansea-Frances, M.D. The transition of leadership took place on Saturday, June 14th, 2025, during the 115th DCMA Presidential Inauguration Gala.

The event celebrated the accomplishments of the immediate past president, Patricia Ares-Romero, M.D., and welcomed Adriana Bonansea-Frances, M.D., as the first Argentinean-born president —and seventh female physician— in the association's 122-year history. Having two female presidents lead the association two years in a row marks a significant milestone in the DCMA's ongoing commitment to diversity and excellence in medical leadership.

Dr. Bonansea-Frances brings a wealth of experience and a passion for advancing medical practice and patient care in Miami-Dade County. In her inaugural address, she emphasized the importance of prevention. "As President of the DCMA, one of my key priorities will be to expand the association's efforts to educate the general public on the importance of prevention and obtaining medical and health information from legitimate sources."

The DCMA's Presidential Inauguration Gala was also an opportunity to honor the service of Dr. Patricia Ares-Romero, whose tenure has been marked by significant contributions to the association and the broader medical community. Reflecting on her accomplishments, Dr. Ares-Romero highlighted that "We are officially changing our name from the Dade County Medical Association to the Miami-Dade County Medical Association. This change better reflects the county we represent and the physicians who call it home. Our new logotype, to be launched in the days to come, symbolizes our enduring dedication to advancing healthcare in Miami-Dade County."

During the evening, Dr. Bonansea-Frances expressed her gratitude to the DCMA leaders that will work with her this year, including the Board of Directors, Advisory Members, Physicians in Training, and Medical Student Representatives. They bring a wealth of experience and a shared commitment to advancing the medical profession and improving healthcare in Miami-Dade County.

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Dr. Patricia Ares-Romero (left) and
Dr. Adriana Bonansea-Frances
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WHAT'S NEW...WHAT'S NEW...WHAT'S NEW...

Holy Cross Health Family Health Center Opens in Oakland Park in June 2025

A ribbon cutting ceremony marked the opening of The Holy Cross Health Family Health Center in June. The Center addresses the diverse needs of the local community and serves as a centralized hub for a wide array of healthcare services for patients of all ages, as well as job-readiness and support service programs for adults.

Through a comprehensive community health needs assessment conducted in 2021, it became clear that accessible outpatient health care services were urgently needed in east Broward County for adults and children. Services at the Holy Cross Health Family Health Center will include primary care, annual wellness check-ups, immunizations, social services, pediatric therapy, community education and support, laboratory services, medical nutrition therapy, and culinary medicine.

Spanning 15,000 square feet, the facility is located on the first floor of the Holy Cross Medical Plaza in Oakland Park and is the only healthcare facility in eastern and northern Broward County to provide pediatric occupational therapy, physical therapy and speech language therapy under one roof. The office features a low stimulation room for pediatric patients with sensory sensitivities, such as individuals on the autism spectrum. Feeding therapy is available for infants and toddlers who have trouble swallowing and patients can learn how to feed themselves using adaptive utensils.

In addition to health care services, the Family Health Center will also host workshops on resume writing, interviewing skills labs, personal finance and budgeting to assist adults with gaining employment and self-sufficiency.



The Holy Cross Health leadership team and Board of Directors members celebrate the opening of the Holy Cross Health Family Health Center
PHOTO CREDIT: ROBERT MAYER, HOLY CROSS HEALTH

Lee Health Expands Plans for New Fort Myers Campus to Meet Growing Community Needs

In response to the rapid population growth and sustained demand for high-quality healthcare in Southwest Florida, Lee Health is expanding its plans for its new Fort Myers medical campus. Lee Health approved an additional \$150.5 million investment to enhance the upcoming facility, including a new patient tower and an onsite child-care center.

The expansion will increase the hospital's capacity by 92 beds, including 48 acute care beds, 20 skilled nursing unit beds, and shelved space for an additional 24 acute care beds. This addition ensures the new Lee Health Fort Myers campus will support the growth of the community, where it serves as the healthcare system of choice for residents and visitors.

The \$820 million capital investment also includes the development of an on-site

child development center. The new facility will relocate the existing Lee Memorial Child Development Center to the new campus, providing a vital resource for Lee Health team members and reinforcing the system's dedication to supporting its workforce.

The campus is located at the intersection of Colonial and Jones-Walker Boulevards, spanning 53 acres. Lee Health Fort Myers campus will be constructed in phases and is expected to open in early 2028. The plans now include:

- A hospital with a capacity of up to 260 beds, 236 beds completed at opening
- A Medical Office Building, home of the Lee Health Musculoskeletal Institute
- 18 operating rooms, a 44-bed emergency department, and up to 24 ICU beds
- An onsite child development center for team members

Pediatric Patients Get a Special Delivery



Rita Case, president and CEO of Rick Case Automotive Group (left), and Caitlin Stella, president and CEO of Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital, with one of the donated quilts.

Broward County Property Appraiser Marty Kiar's Outreach Program in partnership with Rita Case, president CEO of the Rick Case Automotive Group, Golfer Paul Azinger's Family Compassion Center and One More Child, in partnership with Bealls department stores, made a special delivery to pediatric patients at Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital in Hollywood, FL.

"When I got the call about where I thought these donations would have the most impact, I immediately thought of Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital," said Rita Case. "For children, coming to the hospital can be very frightening for them. We want them to feel at home and be comforted while they are here. That's what makes this donation so important."

Patients received toys, puzzles, shoes and blankets, along with beautiful, colorful handmade quilts. Students throughout the country submitted artwork for the quilts that were then made by the loving hands of women throughout the U.S. who weaved the artwork into the quilts, which are donated by One More Child.

Memorial Healthcare System Continues to Set National Standard in Care for High-Risk Pregnancies

Memorial Healthcare System's nationally recognized High-Risk Pregnancy program at Memorial Regional Hospital continues to lead the way in specialized care for women with Placenta Accreta Spectrum (PAS), a complex and potentially life-threatening condition. Since its inception in 2016, Memorial's PAS program has treated more than 270 confirmed cases, with exponential growth year over year, positioning it as one of the busiest accreta programs in the country.

"From the very beginning, our mission has been to provide the highest standard of care to mothers facing this incredibly challenging diagnosis," said Dr. Julie Kang, Medical Director of High-Risk Obstetrics Surgery at Memorial Healthcare System. "With each case, our experience grows, and so does our ability to ensure safer outcomes for both mother and baby."

Placenta Accreta Spectrum is a serious pregnancy complication affecting approximately 1 in 1,000 deliveries in the U.S. It occurs when the placenta grows too deeply into the uterine wall, making it difficult to separate after delivery and increasing the risk of severe bleeding, early delivery, hysterectomy, or even loss of life. It is most commonly linked to previous cesarean deliveries.

This program, which offers a 24/7 on-call team of experts, reinforces Memorial's commitment to delivering the highest level of care to expecting mothers and their babies, particularly in cases where complications, such as placenta previa and placenta accreta, pose significant risks.

Nationally, PAS carries a 7% maternal mortality rate. Yet, Memorial Healthcare System proudly reports a 0% mortality rate within its program. Other program highlights include:

- Less blood loss and shorter hospital stays compared to national averages
- Low Intensive Care Unit admission rate of 15%
- 24/7 on-call, multidisciplinary team of high-risk obstetricians, anesthesiologists, surgical experts, maternal-fetal medicine specialists, and perinatal nurse navigators
- Comprehensive patient navigation, from diagnosis through delivery and postpartum recovery

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

Better Together Launches Call Center for Broward County Residents

Broward Health and Memorial Healthcare System are proud to announce a significant milestone in their Better Together collaboration: the launch of a dedicated call center that connects residents to nearby healthcare services across Broward County.

"Better Together has gained significant momentum as the initiative's governance committee has convened every month to focus on existing needs related to primary care, maternal health and food insecurity," said Shane Strum, President & CEO of Broward Health and Interim CEO of Memorial Healthcare System. "The committee, comprised of leaders from Broward Health, Memorial Healthcare System and other community organizations, is identifying barriers people are facing to access these resources and innovative ways we can meet their needs."

Residents can now call (844) 711-0794 and a representative will link them to primary or maternity care services, such as brick-and-mortar physician offices or mobile health units, in convenient and easily accessible locations.

"This call center is more than just a phone number; it's a lifeline for families who have struggled to navigate the complexity of healthcare," said Melida Akiti, corporate transformation executive at Broward Health. "By listening to our community and working collaboratively with partners across the county, we're removing barriers and bringing care directly to those who need it most."

Working together, Broward Health and Memorial Healthcare System are addressing the most urgent healthcare challenges impacting our community, which will ultimately lead to improved outcomes, including:

- Fewer patients presenting at Emergency Departments because of a lack of primary care physician.
- Fewer Broward County residents with uncontrolled hypertension and diabetes.
- More mothers receiving prenatal care in their first trimester of pregnancy.
- Fewer babies born with low birth weights.
- More people connected to food resources or assistance programs.
- Fewer households facing meal deficits.



Better Together Governance Committee

Another exciting development is Better Together's new agreement with the University of Florida to capture detailed block-level data across Broward County. By gathering data at the city block level, rather than by zip code, we're gaining a more precise and nuanced view of who lives in our community. This advanced analysis will guide the governance committee in making data-driven decisions regarding where to direct resources.

This pioneering initiative is already gaining national attention. America's Essential Hospitals, the nation's leading advocate for people facing barriers to healthcare access, recently visited the two healthcare systems in hopes of replicating this unique delivery model at other safety-net hospitals across the country. We are proud to serve as an example of how to utilize forward-thinking methods to bring care to the people most in need.

St. Mary's Medical Center Invests in Major Facility Upgrades to Meet Growing Community Needs

St. Mary's Medical Center is investing more than \$30 million in a series of major expansions and renovations across key departments, reinforcing the hospital's commitment to improving the patient experience and enhancing care for the West Palm Beach community and beyond.

These upgrades come at a time when the demand for high-quality, compassionate care continues to grow, particularly for children and critical care services. With an emphasis on patient comfort, increased access, and advanced care delivery, the enhancements span several high-impact areas of the hospital.

Pediatric Emergency Department

A \$7 million expansion and renovation project will begin in Q3 to grow and modernize the Pediatric Emergency Department. Once complete, the unit will feature 16 total rooms, including six new treatment rooms and a new fast-track care area for less acute patients. The newly expanded, pediatric-friendly waiting room will provide a welcoming and comfortable environment for children and families.

Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU) and Pediatric Oncology and Intermediate Care Unit

In Q2, construction began on an \$11 million expansion of the PICU and Pediatric Step-Down Unit. The project adds five PICU rooms and four step-down rooms, increasing capacity to 19 PICU and 16 step-down beds. These updates will help meet the growing demand for specialized pediatric critical care and provide a seamless continuum of care for young patients transitioning out of the ICU.

Adult Intensive Care Unit (ICU)

To further support patients requiring intensive care, a \$9 million expansion of the Adult ICU will begin in Q3. The project will add 15 new rooms, bringing the unit's total capacity to 41 beds, helping ensure timely access to lifesaving care in a modern, healing environment.

Adult Emergency Department

The \$6 million Adult Emergency Department upgrade is nearing completion in Q3. This renovation adds six new treatment rooms, a dedicated fast track area for minor emergencies, a transition care area for patients awaiting inpatient placement, and three new recliners in the fast-track space. Once complete, the department will have a total of 26 rooms to better serve patients with speed and efficiency.

Northstar Anesthesia Expands in Florida in Historic Partnership with Tampa General Hospital North

NorthStar Anesthesia recently began its new partnership with Tampa General Hospital (TGH) North to provide anesthesia care and management services at three TGH North facilities: Florida Endoscopy and Surgery Center, TGH Spring Hill Hospital, and TGH Brooksville. This partnership is a milestone for NorthStar, as an important partnership in the ever-expanding Florida healthcare market.

This partnership will streamline anesthesiology services across all three sites and provide the expert quality care that NorthStar brings to each partnership. Through its partnership with NorthStar, TGH North will expand its service offerings, including a newly introduced cardiac program this fall, alongside other specialized treatment options. The partnership streamlines anesthesiology services across three sites, providing NorthStar's high quality care to TGH. A unique feature of the partnership between NorthStar and TGH North is that it will prioritize work-life balance for clinicians by introducing a dynamic approach to scheduling. All of TGH North's existing anesthesiologists were converted to full-time employee status, a shift from the 1099 contractor model that TGH North previously utilized. This redesignation matches NorthStar's ongoing commitment across each of its partnerships to address staffing issues, promote transparency, and champion predictability.

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

Baptist Health Foundation Receives \$1 Million Gift from George Fernandez to Benefit Baptist Health Cancer Care In Key West

Baptist Health Foundation announced that it has received a \$1 million donation from George Fernandez benefiting an endowment for Baptist Health Cancer Care Key West. The gift will provide ongoing support for facilities, equipment, programs and other cancer care resources.

"We're extremely grateful to George Fernandez for this significant gift," said Wendy Reilly Gentes, Assistant Vice President of Development at Baptist Health Foundation. "He understands the needs of the Key West community, and his generosity is leading the way in transforming healthcare in the area. His support will benefit many cancer patients who will now have access to lifesaving care without having to travel far from home."

A resident of Key West, Mr. Fernandez became interested in supporting Baptist Health Cancer Care after watching the only provider in Key West leave the area, forcing his good friend to seek treatment elsewhere before losing his battle with cancer. He was impressed by Baptist Health's commitment to expanding cancer care throughout the Keys, and opening a center in Key West providing chemotherapy and radiation oncology to fill this critical need.

"This mission is personal to me," said Mr. Fernandez. "Like many, we've experienced the problems our friends and loved ones have encountered in our community in need of cancer care. I felt that this gift would be the best way to give back to the Key West community, the place that — as the self-appointed goodwill ambassador for the past 32 years — I'm very proud to call my forever home."



George Fernandez

FAU Awarded \$1M to Prevent Medication-Related Harm, Falls in Older Adults

Researchers from Florida Atlantic University's Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine have received a \$1 million grant from the Florida Medical Malpractice Joint Underwriting Association to launch a new initiative: the Geriatric Emergency Department Pharmacologic Harm Prevention Project (GREAT PHARM). This program seeks to reduce falls and other adverse drug events (ADEs) among older adults by using pharmacogenomic-guided prescribing, a personalized approach that tailors medications to an individual's genetic profile.

As America's population ages, the risks associated with polypharmacy — taking multiple medications simultaneously — are becoming increasingly urgent. In the United States, nearly 1 in 4 adults aged 65 years and older falls each year, making falls the leading cause of injury-related death in this age group. These falls account for more than 36,000 deaths and more than 3 million emergency department visits annually. Many of these falls are preventable and closely linked to medication-related complications.

The problem is especially acute in South Florida, which has one of the highest concentrations of older adults in the country. A significant percentage of these individuals are on five or more medications daily, increasing their risk of harmful drug interactions, confusion, dizziness and eventually, falls. Certain medications, such as sedatives, antidepressants, antipsychotics, antihypertensives and opioids, are particularly associated with a 60% to 70% increased risk of falling. Furthermore, older adults on four or more medications are one-and-a-half times more likely to experience a fall, and each additional medication increases the risk by up to 21%.

To address this pressing issue, the GREAT PHARM project will implement a randomized controlled study involving older adults who visit emergency departments following a fall. Participants in the intervention group will receive pharmacogenomic testing to guide safer prescribing, with results shared directly with their primary care providers for medication optimization. Pharmacogenomics is a type of personalized medicine that uses your DNA to help doctors choose the safest and most effective medications for you. The control group will receive usual care. Patients will be followed for 12 months, during which researchers will monitor ADEs, repeat ED visits, fall recurrence and patient-reported wellbeing.

"Our goal with GREAT PHARM is to take the guesswork out of prescribing for older adults by using pharmacogenomics to tailor medications to each individual's genetic profile. We believe this approach will significantly reduce adverse drug events — especially serious outcomes like falls — and improve how patients feel day to day," said Richard Shih, Ph.D., principal investigator and professor of emergency medicine in FAU's Schmidt College of Medicine. "This isn't just about reducing harm; it's about enhancing quality of life and empowering physicians with precise, evidence-based tools to make safer, more effective prescribing decisions."

The project also will include quantitative and qualitative analyses. In addition to measuring clinical outcomes, researchers will assess the prevalence of harmful drug-gene combinations and abnormal drug levels in patients with specific genetic profiles. Additionally, they will explore patient experiences and identify potential barriers and enablers to incorporating pharmacogenomic testing into routine care.

Palms West Hospital Breaks Ground on Patient Tower

HCA Florida Palms West Hospital has broken ground on a new 42-bed patient tower that will transform the hospital and help meet the growing healthcare needs of the western communities.

"Today isn't just about turning dirt and signaling the start of a large-scale construction project. Far more profoundly, it's about turning a new page in the healthcare story across our entire region that will never be erased. This groundbreaking symbolizes our unwavering commitment to progress, innovation and, most importantly, the health, safety and welfare of our community. We are not just constructing a building; we are building a healthier tomorrow for generations to come, ensuring access to advanced care and a brighter future for all," said Jason L. Kimbrell, chief executive officer of HCA Florida Palms West Hospital.

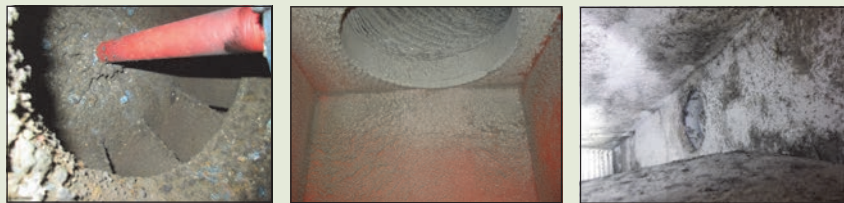
The tower expansion, which was announced in March of 2024, will stretch the footprint of the hospital nearly to Southern Boulevard and include a new hospital entrance, main lobby, registration area, coffee shop, academic classrooms, an auditorium and courtyard. The tower's 42-beds will be dedicated to patients of the hospital's Robotic Center of Excellence. While the initial plans are for a one-floor expansion, the tower is being developed to grow to five stories. The design is inspired by a five-star hotel with high-end appointments.

The tower project is one of many investments HCA Healthcare is making in HCA Florida Palms West Hospital over the next 18 months. Additional expansions include a 10-bed emergency room expansion, a second cardiac Cath Lab and a free-standing emergency room in West Palm Beach. These projects, along with the tower are expected add 150 new jobs to the community.

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