

AMERICA'S HEALTHIEST HOMETOWN

A weekly report on The Villages' efforts to become "America's Healthiest Hometown" compiled by Daily Sun Ombudsman **Larry D. Croom**. Email larry.croom@thevillagesmedia.com. Or call him at 753-1119, ext. 9366.

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Did you know?

RN Carol Reid, a nurse navigator with The Villages Health, is a big fan of the 1992 comedy-drama film, "A League of Their Own," starring Geena Davis, Tom Hanks, Rosie O'Donnell and Madonna.

Medicare Q&A: Pete Clarkson, CEO of North/Central Florida for UnitedHealthcare Medicare & Retirement

Pertinent information for beneficiaries

What will happen if I don't make changes to my coverage during the open-enrollment period?

The good news is, for most people, nothing will happen at all. You'll automatically be re-enrolled in your current plan. But that doesn't mean you should kick back and relax during the open-enrollment period. Plans can change from year to year, as can your health status and budget. So it's important to take advantage of this opportunity to review any changes to your current plan and assess if it's still going to meet your needs for the year ahead. If not, you have until Dec. 7 to review the other plans available in your area and make a switch if you'd like.

UnitedHealthcare did a survey in 2013 called the Medicare Made Clear Index and found that more than 60 percent of seniors say they never have shopped for Medicare coverage. I encourage you to avoid becoming part of this group. The decisions you make about your health care



Clarkson

coverage are some of the most important decisions you'll make all year. It's important to give them the time and attention they deserve.

How do I find out if my plan is changing next year?

You should have received your Annual Notice of Change earlier this fall. The ANOC provides an overview of any changes in your plan's benefits and costs that will go into effect in January. Some plans also will send separate letters or call their members to explain any changes for the year ahead. The reason? They don't want their members to be caught off guard by any unexpected changes when they begin using their benefits in January. Surprises are not a good thing when it comes to your health care coverage, so make sure you spend some time reviewing your ANOC and other materials you might receive in the mail from your plan so you have a solid understanding of your benefits for 2015.

Noel moves back to Colony in role as physician adviser

By **LARRY D. CROOM**
DAILY SUN OMBUDSMAN

THE VILLAGES – Patients who see Dr. Karla Noel will find her right where she started her Villages Health career – the Colony Care Center.

The former medical director of the Pinellas Care Center said she decided to return to Colony recently and take on a new role as physician adviser on two committees that are vitally important to The Villages Health's care centers.

One addresses the requirements of being designated as patient-centered medical homes, while the other charts the course for the electronic medical record that stores vital information about each patient.

Noel said the move also allows her more time to spend with her patients – something that was at the top of her priority list when making the change in assignments.

The graduate of Indiana



Noel

University School of Medicine said she's enjoying her role as the only physician on a steering committee that is working hard to help each Villages Health primary facility move up and obtain the status of a level 3

patient-centered medical home – the highest designation awarded by the National Committee for Quality Assurance.

And she said the other steering committee that she sits on is quite passionate about continuing to make improvements to the electronic medical record so that it's easier for doctors to use and continues to contain up-to-date information about every Villages Health patient.

"I really equate the electronic medical record as being the ship's wheel," Noel said. "You've got the spokes coming out that go to different aspects, but it's the key to really keep things going and flowing. It's got to be integrated and a well-oiled machine."

Words of thanks



Peter Travers / Daily Sun

Dr. Kimberly Giovannelli, center, talks with Jean and Bill Scott, of the Village of Orange Blossom Gardens, during the recent patient-appreciation fair at the Santa Barbara Care Center. Sheri Harwood, project manager for the patient-appreciation fairs who also serves as manager of the Lake Sumter Creekside Care Center, said similar events were held at each primary care facility over the past several weeks to thank patients for their support.



George Horsford / Daily Sun

Dr. Reed Tuckson, managing director of Tuckson Health Connections, offers tips for Villagers to live long, healthy lives during a recent presentation at Savannah Center. Tuckson, a longtime primary care physician who also served as executive vice president and chief of medical affairs for UnitedHealth Group, says it's important for patients to understand that they are the "star player" on their health team.

Becoming 'Dr. You'

'Doctor In The Mirror' author Tuckson offers tips for living longer, healthier lives

By **LARRY D. CROOM** / DAILY SUN OMBUDSMAN

THE VILLAGES
When it comes to your health, Dr. Reed Tuckson has a simple message for Villagers – look in the mirror.

"You are seeing the best doctor you will ever meet," said the managing director of Tuckson Health Connections, who also has served as the executive vice president and chief of medical affairs for UnitedHealth Group. "Who knows more about you than you? Who makes more decisions every day about your life than you? And who loves you more than you?"

Tuckson brought his message to Villagers last week during a presentation at Savannah Center on becoming "Dr. You." The event was put on by The Villages Health and sponsored by UnitedHealthcare.

Tuckson, who also served as commissioner of public health for the District of Columbia, based the presentation on his book, "The Doctor in the Mirror," which points out that living a longer, healthier life must start with you.

"You're going to have other doctors on your team, but they're on your team," he said. "You're the star of this show. You are the star player. Everybody else is a supporter to you."

Tuckson, who also will be teaching an online course available to Villagers through the website thebigknow.com, offered a variety of tips on staying healthy, such as stop smoking, use alcohol in moderation, practice safe sex and partake in exercise on a regular basis.

"There is no other community in America where people exercise as often as you do, as

regularly or consistently at your ages," he said. "But I'm asking those of you that are really good at this to reach out to those who are not doing it. Bring them into your circle."

Tuckson said according to United Health Foundation's 2014 America's Health Rankings, 80 percent of seniors have at least one chronic condition, while 50 percent have two or more. But he said the number that really concerns him is the fact that 36 percent are battling four or more chronic illnesses.

"Everyone of us who has any illness, our responsibility is to make sure we manage that problem so that it doesn't get any worse," he said. "That's an awful lot of work that we have to do. But it's the right work and it's the right thing to do."

Along those lines, Tuckson said it's extremely important to select the right doctor and to have an excellent relationship with your medical providers. He added that it's essential to come to doctor's appointments with legitimate questions you expect to be answered.

"Why would you go

The Big Know

Those who wish to learn more about taking charge of their health are encouraged to sign up for an online course titled "Becoming Dr. You: Healthier, Happier Living in The Villages." The free course, which is sponsored by UnitedHealthcare, lasts four weeks and will involve about an hour of learning each week. Participants will explore their lifestyle, home and family, evaluate their medical needs and build a personal health plan. Villagers can sign up at thebigknow.com. The course will be directed by Dr. Reed Tuckson, managing director of Tuckson Health Connections. Tuckson previously served as the executive vice president and chief of medical affairs for UnitedHealth Group and is a former commissioner of public health for the District of Columbia. A similar course will be offered in January through The Villages Lifelong Learning College and will be facilitated by The Villages Health.

through all the trouble to get stuck with a needle, to get all the blood drawn, to have them poke around inside of you, and then at the end of the day, you have no idea what they're talking about," Tuckson said. "Information is interesting but it doesn't mean diddly-squat if you don't act on it."

Tuckson also addressed the importance of having a living will and speaking with family members to make end-of-life decisions, as well as the importance of becoming an organ donor. And he stressed the need to find things that motivate you on a daily basis. "Whatever it is that causes you to exercise or to eat properly, whatever that dream is, please protect it," he said. "If you see a friend and their spirit goes out, reach over and blow it back in. Share a little of your spirit with the other spirit."

Tuckson, who also has served as senior vice president for programs of the March

of Dimes Foundation, said he is always impressed when he visits Florida's Friendliest Hometown.

"I am just so amazed by the humanity, the sense of people having this nurturing spark that says, 'I want to live the fullest, healthiest life that I can live,'" he said. "What you see here really is this gigantic bonfire of enthusiasm and support for health and support for life."

Dr. Joe Hildner, chief medical officer of The Villages Health, said he was thrilled to see the audience of several hundred people so involved in Tuckson's interactive presentation.

"They were jazzed and thirsty for engagement," he said. "The people that came embody this whole approach to health care where, 'I'm the center of this. I want to be in charge. I need your help but I would like to be responsible for my own health and my own health care.' That's what people want."