

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**
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For information

For information about The Villages Health, call 352-674-1700 or visit thevillageshealth.com.

Did you know?

Dr. Catherine Horner, who practices medicine at the Sharon Morse Building, is a big fan of the classic 1939 Civil War movie, “Gone With The Wind.”

Fixing health care: All about PA-C Jack Redding

Primary care doctors and other medical providers have been recruited as part of an initiative to revamp health care right here in Florida’s Friendliest Hometown. The Villages Health is partnering with USF Health to bring in family doctors, care providers and specialists who will work as a team, all in the best interests of serving patients. This weekly feature will introduce these innovative medical providers who have joined this effort.

Why did you become a physician assistant?

I was an orderly in a nursing home when I was 17 and then I joined the service and it was just a natural progression to go into the medical field there. I was an aeromedical specialist in the Air Force for four years. I got out and went to Lake-Sumter Community College and was actually working toward a nursing program. But then I went into the Navy and I was a hospital corpsman for several years before I became a physician assistant. It was a natural progression from what I started out with.

What’s best about being a physician assistant?

I get to do just about anything that I want to do, especially being in a family practice. It’s a varied field and we get to do all kinds of different things. I may see a patient that’s 94 and my next visit is a newborn.

Why did you decide to practice in primary care?

I like the hands-on. I like the interaction. I’ve been here for 14 years, so I’ve seen kids that I’ve treated and now they’re parents. They have their own kids and they’re bringing them to us



Care Center: Belleview
Age: 57
Certified: PA-C
Undergraduate: George Washington University (via U.S. Navy)

and I just love that. I love the family aspect of it.

What is your health care philosophy?

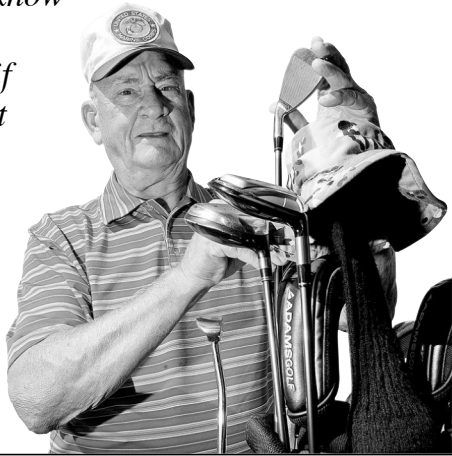
I believe in being a patient advocate. I like to treat every patient as I would treat a family member. I guess that sounds cliché, but it’s really true. I think when you have that kind of philosophy in mind you’re going to treat the patient with respect and try to give them the best health care you can.

Next week Find out all about about Susan Doyle, a physician assistant at Colony Care Center.

Bad experiences with paper documents Patient Portal allows immediate access

“Just going and getting a document from a doctor before required notification of a week. They’ll have it for you and it will be at the desk – maybe – when you go in to pick it up. Here, I’ve got access to my health records online. If I want to know what he (Dr. Dave Jordahl) is saying, if I want to know what he’s thinking, I can go look it up. And that’s good.”

Edward Stafford,
Village of Sanibel and Colony Care Center patient



Atlanta

Sleepless in America: Nearly 9 million adults use prescription sleeping pills, according to study

By **MIKE STOBBE**
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ATLANTA — Can’t get enough shuteye? Nearly 9 million U.S. adults resort to prescription sleeping pills — and most are white, female, educated or 50 or older, according to the first government study of its kind.

But that’s only part of the picture. Experts believe there are millions more who try options like over-the-counter medicines or chamomile tea, or simply suffer through sleepless nights.

“Not everyone is running out to get a prescription drug,” said Russell Rosenberg, an Atlanta-based sleep researcher. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention study was based on interviews with about 17,000 adults from 2005 through 2010. Study participants were even asked to bring in any medicines they were taking. Overall, 4 percent of adults said they’d taken a prescription sleeping pill or sedative in the previous month. The study did not say whether use is increasing. But

a CDC researcher calculated that use rose from 3.3 percent in 2003-2006 to 4.3 percent in 2007-2010. That echoes U.S. market research — as well as studies in some other countries — that indicate an increase in insomnia in recent decades. “Sleep disorders overall are more prevalent than what they were,” said Dr. Ana Krieger, medical director of New York’s Weill Cornell Center for Sleep Medicine. That could be due to a number of factors, experts said. Some include obesity-related

sleep apnea, the rise of social media and other electronic late-night distractions and financial worries from the recent recession. Earlier studies have tried to track pill use through prescription sales, but that offered a flawed view. For adults, the recommended amount of sleep is seven to nine hours each night. Previous CDC research suggests at least a third of adults get less than that. Doctors offer tips for good sleeping that include sticking to a regular bedtime schedule, getting exercise each

day and avoiding caffeine and nicotine at night. By some estimates, nearly 10 percent of Americans suffer chronic insomnia and may seek a physician’s help. Inadequate sleep has been tied to the start and worsening of a range of diseases and conditions, including diabetes, heart disease, obesity and depression. The CDC study results confirm some patterns that doctors have been observing for a while. They include: ■ Women are more likely than men to take sleeping pills, 5 percent versus 3 percent.

■ More whites take pills — nearly 5 percent, compared to 2.5 percent of blacks and 2 percent of Hispanics. ■ Prescription use increases with age, to 7 percent of those 80 and older. The findings may have been influenced in part by who had health insurance and access to doctors who would prescribe sleeping pills, said Yinong Chong, the study’s lead author. But clearly people tend to have trouble sleeping as they get older, due not only to aches and physical changes but also to emotional burdens, experts say.



George Horsford / Daily Sun
Cory Coggins, a certified medical assistant, works on a patient’s chart Tuesday in the huddle zone of Colony Care Center.

Collaborative care

Villages Health doctors cover for each other to ensure seamless care

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

Primary care physicians practicing under The Villages Health umbrella proudly live by the old adage “I’ve got your back.” That’s because those doctors have “buddies” who cover for them when they’re on vacation, at professional conferences or just need a helping hand on a busy day. And the coverage is much more than just a cursory glance at a list of patients — it involves daily meetings in the huddle zones inside the primary care centers.

“Medical needs can come any time of day or night, and if you’re off, your patients still need you,” said Dr. Joe Hildner, chief medical officer of The Villages Health. “It’s a lot better when the person who’s there works very closely with you. It makes it easier to be a good doctor and to be available for your patients even when you aren’t there.” Dr. Karla Noel, who practices at Colony Care Center,

said the buddy system is an important step in building camaraderie amongst the entire medical staff. “It adds to the family atmosphere,” she said. “You’ve got somebody you can go to and that helps to ease the burden and we share the load that way.” And when her buddy covered for her, Noel said, she doesn’t feel like she’s missed a beat with her patients. “We have access to the

same electronic record, so it’s very easy to go back into the notes from a previous visit,” she said. Dr. J.D. Steed, medical director of the Belleview Care Center, said it’s important for him to know patients well when he’s serving in the role of buddy, hence the importance of talking with the primary physician and learning about the patient lineup in advance. “Sometimes there’s just colorful stories, this guy was dropped on the beaches of Normandy, or something like that,” he said. Dr. Dave Jordahl, medical director of Colony Care Center, said there are times when physicians get overwhelmed with patients and a variety of other factors and that’s when the buddy physician can really make a difference. “To be able to spread that out significantly reduces stress,” he said. “I have been in situations where you can feel

like you’re the only physician and that doesn’t happen here.” For Dr. Robert Reilly, the idea of having a buddy is important because he knows his patients will be treated as if he were there. “You’re kind of acting as an extension of them for that time and the only way you’re able to do it is you get to know them so well,” he said. “And it ensures that if a patient has a concern on a day when you’re not there, it’s not waiting three, four, five days to be addressed.” The Villages Health Chair Dr. Elliot Sussman said physicians feel a responsibility to their patients that can sometimes get in the way of a balance between work and life. “That’s not healthy for the doctor and it’s not healthy for the doctor’s practice,” he said. “With that buddy system, you can feel very comfortable that your patients are going to be superbly cared for. It doesn’t get any better.”