

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

Contact The Villages Health at 352- 674-1700 or visit the website at thevillageshealth.com.

Did you know?

Dr. Daniel Whinnen, of the Belleview Care Center, is a big fan of the popular 1970 movie “MASH,” which came out when he was just 2 years old.

Fixing health care: All about PA-C Jamie Kinsey

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 inspired by my husband (Rick). He went to PA school quite a few years ago and he’s very happy in what he does. And it was kind of a natural progression from paramedic to physician assistant. We do a lot of the same things, but on a higher level.

How does a paramedic background help you?

The years that I spent doing physical exams and treating patients with medication and the skills that I learned, IVs and things like that, have really helped me as a PA.

What is your health care philosophy?

People don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care. In other words, you can have all of the education and knowledge in the world, but if you can’t relay to people that you really care about them and you really want to take good care of them, then all of your knowledge is useless.

Why did you choose primary care?

The relationships with patients. I love taking care of the little grannies that remind



Care Center: Belleview
Age: 40
EMT, paramedic training: College of Central Florida
Associate’s degree: Emergency medical services at College of Central Florida
Bachelor’s degree: Physician assistant studies at Miami Dade College

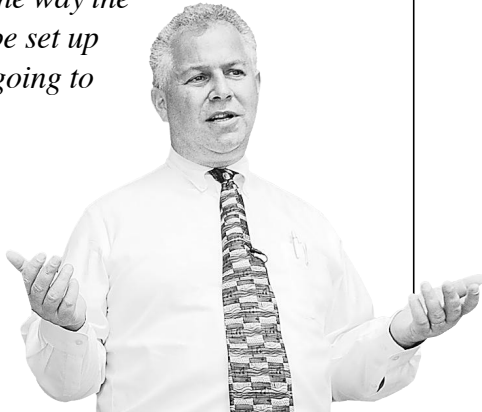
me of my granny, taking care of the moms who remind me of my mother, taking care of the new moms who have new babies. There’s such a relationship with these people. It’s also just interesting because we treat everything from in-grown toenails to significant heart problems.

Next week Find out all about Sue Schueler, an advanced registered nurse practitioner at the Sharon Morse Building

Changing health care across America How can Villages Health inspire students?

“They get to see people that love primary care. I think a lot of the reasons that people choose their careers is somebody inspires them to make a decision because that person is either incredibly gifted at what they do, is very inspiring with what they do, or they demonstrate or model something somebody finds really attractive. I think the way the environment is going to be set up here for health care, it’s going to be very, very potentially inspiring for students to select primary care.”

Dr. Jeff Lowenkron, chairman, department of comprehensive medicine in The Villages



George Horsford / Daily Sun

Construction continues recently at The USF Specialty Care Center, which is scheduled to open in November.

Specialists onboard

USF Specialty Care Center nearing completion

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

The final pieces are falling into place for the new USF Health Specialty Care Center. The building is nearing completion and several specialists have already joined the USF Health team and will soon be working as partners alongside the primary care doctors from The Villages Health who practice in innovative, high-tech care centers, all of which carry the prestigious designation of patient-centered medical home.

“It’s three weeks or so until the building gets turned over to us, which is about three weeks early,” said USF Health’s Dr. Jeff Lowenkron, chairman of the department of comprehensive medicine in The Villages. “There’s a lot of interest from the physician side, so I think there’s reality checks that, yes, in fact, this is going to happen.”

Lowenkron said he hopes to have the specialty care center open for business at the beginning of November. And when the doors open, he said, patients will find several physicians waiting to take of their needs, including:

■ Dr. Kathy Steepy, an OB/GYN who practices in The Villages, as well as two of her nurse practitioners and office staff;

■ Dr. Adrian Finol, a cardiac thoracic surgeon who practices in The Villages;

■ Dr. David Ethier, an orthopedist who practices in Belleview; and

■ Dr. Reed Panos, a plastic surgeon from Champaign, Ill. In addition, Lowenkron said he’s talking with other specialists from several disciplines, including cardiology, pulmonary, neurology and gastroenterology, as well as other orthopedists.

“Honestly, we’re making good progress,” he said. “When you have something a little more tangible to look

at, like a building, people start to say, ‘OK, I think I’m interested.’”

Not surprisingly, Lowenkron said, the specialty care team is anxious to move into its new home and is quite happy to be ahead of schedule.

“It gives us an extra few weeks to go through the nitty-gritty, to make sure that it’s up and functioning well,” he said. “When we started the design, we didn’t necessarily know exactly who would be in the building. So you hope to multi-purpose as many things as you can. But as you get closer and closer, those types of pieces have to be worked out.”

Barbara Bowman, administrative director of the center, said she’s looking forward to seeing the building evolve from a dream into reality – a “warm and inviting” facility where patients will receive quality specialty-based care.

“We are working hard to ensure that our systems and processes work for the patients and are easy to use,” she said. “There is enormous anticipation for each of us working on the project, and we can’t wait to share it with the patients and community for whom we have the privilege of providing service.”

Lowenkron said he

believes the specialists who have joined the USF Health team and those that will be coming aboard in the future will be excellent teammates for the primary care doctors who are practicing under The Villages Health umbrella.

“We wanted to make sure we built an integrated care-delivery model from the beginning,” he said. “In my mind, that’s all around collaboration and collegiality. So we’re doing that by design, which should help as we go forward.”

Dr. Elliot Sussman, chair of The Villages Health, said the system of care being implemented in Florida’s Friendliest Hometown will eliminate many problems, including differences in records, repeated or unnecessary testing and issues with medications.

“Having USF Health and a specialty center here, staffed with people who believe in this model, who want to get on the bus of making The Villages America’s Healthiest Hometown, that’s terrific,” he said. “Specialists understand the power of this model. I think they understand that the usual and customary practice of medicine in the United States is not sustainable. We need new ways – new and different answers – and that’s what this initiative is all about.”

Medical providers share details of sweeping health care initiative

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

THE VILLAGES – When it comes to health care, most people have plenty of questions.

Why do I need a primary care doctor? What happens if I need a specialist? Where do I go to seek treatment? What is this I’m hearing about The Villages Health and these 21st century “Marcus Welby”-style doctors who practice in innovative care centers?

Hundreds of area residents got answers to those questions and more this week when The Villages Homeowners

For information

For information or to sign up with The Villages Health call 352-674-1700 or visit thevillageshealth.com.

Association hosted a special meet and greet health care session at La Hacienda Center.

Villages Health and USF Health officials were on hand to discuss the primary-care-driven health care initiative that’s sweeping through Florida’s Friendliest Hometown, as well as the specialty care component that complements the effort. Villagers also got a

chance to meet some of the medical professionals who will staff the new Santa Barbara Care Center, which opens in October and is located at 1575 Santa Barbara Blvd., near The Villages Regional Hospital.

Amie Deak, Villages Health wellness consultant and educator, said having a primary care doctor who knows you well is of utmost importance. In fact,

she added, having that close relationship can oftentimes help keep patients from spending time in a hospital.

“We believe that 100 percent of you need good primary care,” she said. “But less than 10 percent of you, with good primary care, would actually need to go the hospital.”

Amy Wixted, program director of USF Health in The Villages, said Villagers should take pride in the system that’s being designed here because it came about largely as the result of focus groups and a survey that USF Health conducted spring 2012 that resulted in

33,199 responses.

“We held 50 focus groups and we had over 800 Villagers come in to tell us the good, the bad and the ugly,” she said. “They wanted a strong primary care center, so that they had good working relationships with their primary care physicians, that they felt listened to and heard when they went into the office.”

She said Villagers also ranked great specialty care high on the list, which is why USF Health brought a new specialty care center to the community. The facility, located in the old wellness center building next

to the Sharon Morse Building, is scheduled to open in the first part of November.

Dr. Robert Reilly, who practices at Colony Care Center, said it’s important for any doctor to know their patients well. That will be accomplished, he said, because new patients already will have filled out necessary paperwork.

“That information enters your patient electronic health record before you even come in the first time and are shaking the hand of your new doctor,” he said. “That first time that you’re in the care center, you really are getting care.”