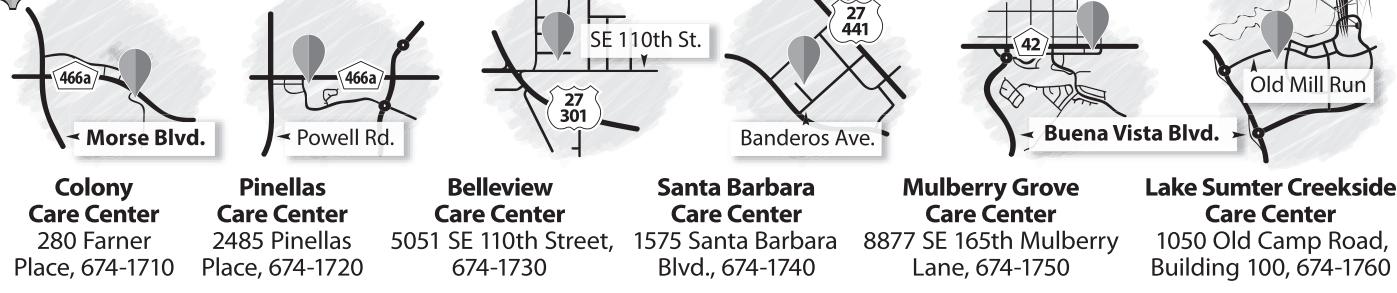


THE VILLAGES HEALTH

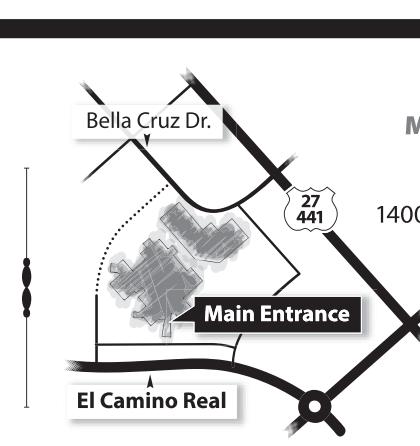


MEDICAL CAMPUS

Specialty Care Center
1400 N. U.S. Highway 27/441, Building 810, 674-8731

The Villages Regional Hospital
1451 El Camino Real, 751-8000

Urgent Care: 751-8863



america's healthiest hometown



George Horsford | Daily Sun

From left, Dr. Christine Stopryra, registered medical assistant Lauren Vincent and Dr. Robert Reilly look over a patient's electronic medical record recently at the Creekside Care Center.

An Important Tool For Doctor and Patient

Electronic medical records can be key for physicians outside the realm of primary care.

By LARRY D. CROOM
Daily Sun Ombudsman



There are many advantages to using an electronic medical record, and Villages Health providers say the many benefits it provides to patients are invaluable.

In fact, according to Dr. Elliot Sussman, chair of the health-care initiative here, readily available electronic medical records can provide key information for physicians, especially those outside the realm of primary care.

"What if there is an emergency and you need to go to the hospital," Sussman said. "How much better it is and how reassuring if 'gosh, this is a funny EKG. I don't like the look of your T waves.' And then it turns out that you can easily tap into your electronic record and your EKG has looked that way for the last 10 years. You don't have to worry about it."

Dr. Robert Reilly, medical director the Creekside Care Center, agreed.

"A lot of our patients obviously travel and spend time up North for parts of the year," he said. "If they happen to get sick while they're up there, their records can be easily accessed electronically. So duplicative tests and things like that aren't done when they go get care somewhere else."

Linda Arredondo, manager of the Specialty Care Center, said that ability to eliminate unnecessary tests is not only a safety net for patients, but also a surefire way to cut down on the costs of their medical bills.

She said an example of that kind of improved care might come into play with a patient with a persistent cough who visits an emergency room in a different area. Because of the patient's complaint, she said, the doctor there might want to order a chest X-ray or a CAT scan, for example.

"If you've just had something in the last week or even in the last month, you can pull that up and tell them, 'Look, I've already had this done, I don't need another one,'" Arredondo said. "It really allows patients to advocate for themselves."

Reilly said another important feature of the electronic record is that it shows physicians a complete medication

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Medical director,
Creekside Care Center

COMING MARCH 1
Electronic record provides statistical data, ability to track trends.

list — something that is extremely important in assuring that treatments are done safely and effectively.

"The doc there can look and say, 'Wow, this is great because now I see all the medications you're supposed to be taking. I can see all the things that you've had done down at your primary care patient-centered home in Florida,'" Reilly said. "It's a real powerful tool and I think it just makes good sense."

For Dr. Laura Cloukey, a primary care physician at the Pinellas Care Center, one of the top features of the electronic medical record is the ability to communicate through a secure online patient portal. She said that kind of important communication came into play recently when she had a question for a patient whose PSA number was climbing.

"I just shot him a message saying, 'Can you refresh my memory, what was your old PSA? This is your new one,'" she said. "Then we collectively were able to communicate electronically about that and make up a plan."

Dr. Christine Stopryra, medical director of the Mulberry Grove Care Center, echoed those sentiments, adding that she thoroughly enjoys the email interactions she has with her patients.

"I'm one of those crazy people, I'll check my email at 10 o'clock at night," she said. "And if you have a question, I'll answer it. It's not a problem."

MEET A DOCTOR

Dr. Laura Cloukey received her undergraduate degree from the University of Massachusetts and her medical degree from the University of New England's College of Osteopathic Medicine. Cloukey came to The Villages Health from Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, which is affiliated with Harvard University. She practices at the Pinellas Care Center.



1

Why did you decide to become a doctor?

Because I thought it was really, really important to know, if people are in distress, what started it? What caused it and is there anything possible that I can do about it? If there is something, I will. I'm the first one to chime in. I'm there with my mind, fully capable of thinking in times of patients' needs.

2

What is your philosophy of health care?

It's very simple. Ninety percent of my job gets done the moment the patient starts talking. I just sit there and let them talk because the stories are within them. Then I just turn it around in some medical language, come up with a plan that we both can agree on and then enact the plan, hopefully for a good outcome.

3

How will it feel if this initiative is picked up and used in other communities and you were in on the ground floor?

I think it would be fantastic. That's the whole reason why some of the best doctors are coming here, because we want to be part of the pilot. We want to be part of progress. Everybody wants to be successful, not just personally, but as a collective group effort. It's about the team.

4

Can what's happening here change health care across America?

Absolutely. What's really interesting about what's happening here is that I think the buy-in is going to be even better than what everybody expects. With electronic health records, we can collect data, down to a finite degree of what we want to look at — across 110,000 people. That's a wonderful study environment. It will prove measures that need to be proved about how to prevent patients from debilitating illnesses and improve their quality of life.

ASK A DOCTOR

Why is patient-centered medical care so important for a patient?

Answer Provided by DR. DAVE JORDAHL
Medical director,
Colony Care Center



I think the whole health care issue we're having here in this country is best dealt with by putting that patient at the center and then getting a really good primary care physician. When you bring those two individuals together, that's a great way to start fixing the health care system.

Why should patients have a primary care doctor in their lives?

Answer Provided by DR. ROBERT REILLY
Medical Director,
Creekside Care Center



Primary care literally means first care, so it's the first place that you go when anything is wrong. It's the doctor that knows you from head to toe. And quite frankly, it's the most important phase of your care, because that's where everything begins and ends.

When you have a problem, whether the primary care doctor handles it himself or herself or needs the assistance of a colleague to do that, it's always in the context of you as a whole person — as a patient. It's not just a series of diseases listed on a piece of paper. I would know you by name and you'd be my patient, who I've taken care of for some time. I know about your family and I know what your likes are and your dislikes.

So as your primary care doctor, I know all that about you. So if you have something come up that's affecting your health, I can work with you, understanding where you're coming from to know how we should best manage that and what the next best step should be. So primary care really should be at the center of your care, with help on the periphery from everything else, but always coming back into the middle. So it's incredibly important.

DID YOU KNOW?

Registered Nurse Denice Sullivan, Pinellas Care Center manager, is a big fan of the 1983 comedy "Vacation," which starred Chevy Chase and Beverly D'Angelo.

