

THE VILLAGES HEALTH

Colony Care Center
280 Farnier Place, 674-1710

Pinellas Care Center
2485 Pinellas Place, 674-1720


Belleview Care Center
5051 SE 110th Street, 674-1730

Santa Barbara Care Center
1575 Santa Barbara Blvd., 674-1740

Mulberry Grove Care Center
8877 SE 165th Mulberry Lane, 674-1750

Lake Sumter Creekside Care Center
1050 Old Camp Road, Building 100, 674-1760

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



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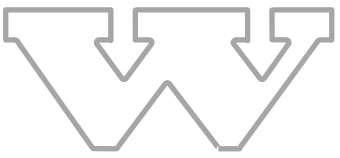


Peter Travers | Daily Sun
Dr. Christine Stopyra, a former comptroller in the medical field, says she is looking forward to the challenges she will face as medical director of The Villages Health's Mulberry Grove Care Center.

Stopyra Ready for New Challenge at Mulberry

Goals for new medical director include focus on service, constantly improving practice.

By **LARRY D. CROOM**
Daily Sun Ombudsman



THE VILLAGES
When Dr. Christine Stopyra recently agreed to become medical director of the Mulberry Grove Care Center, she had one goal in mind – service.
“That’s been the theme throughout my life, whether it was when I was a waitress as a teenager, as a paramedic, coming up the health care ladder and even now as medical director,” said Stopyra, who joined The Villages Health a year ago, starting at the Creekside Care Center. “That’s what’s fun about my job. Half is obviously medical knowledge, but the other half is serving people and how much fun that can be.”
Stopyra, who served five years in the Navy and also enjoyed a highly successful career in accounting, said she is very excited about the opportunities to constantly improve the overall medical practice at Mulberry Grove.
“We do that first and foremost

by educating ourselves and one another, and working collaboratively for the good of the patients,” she said. “Every morning, from 7:40 to 7:55, is education time for the entire group. We talk about medical subjects that are relevant to our patients, our practice and our professional development.”
So far, Stopyra added, that daily gathering is paying off.
“The proof is in the pudding,” she said. “Everything about our practice is improving since we started to have this kind of a model.”
Along those same lines, Stopyra said she wants to provide continuing education opportunities for her medical staff.
“I want to provide a place where our staff can rise up in their own career and resources for that,” she said. “I also want us to become a teaching facility for medical students and residents.”
Dr. Elliot Sussman, chair of The Villages Health, echoed those sentiments, adding that he believes Stopyra’s Navy background is a big plus for her.
“Dr. Stopyra has truly excellent leadership and managerial skills,” he said. “She was very interested at this point in her career of continuing to spend the majority of her time caring for patients, but also having a



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DR. CHRISTINE STOPYRA
medical director, Mulberry Grove Care Center

COMING MAY 3
Jamie Kinsey, a physician assistant at the Belleview Care Center, shares stories from her days as a paramedic in Marion County.

platoon of other providers for whom she was working with and ultimately responsible for. We needed a medical director at Mulberry and she was eager to move.”
Dr. Jeffrey Lowenkron, chief medical officer of The Villages Health, agreed, adding that he appreciates Stopyra’s positive attitude.
“She comes in with just an incredible outlook of, ‘I want to do whatever I can to make things better,’” he said. “The real winners in all that, of course, are the patients.”
Lowenkron said he also is delighted to see Stopyra’s drive to make improvements on a daily basis.
“She steps up and leads by example,” he said. “She speaks with confidence and people trust her. She genuinely cares about those that she sees as patients and those that she works with in her center.”
Stopyra said she appreciates the opportunity to lead a care center, as well as the opportunity to deal with various challenges on a daily basis.
“I have to be in a career where I’m challenged in a bunch of different areas,” she said. “Monotony bores the heck out of me. If I have to do the same thing all the time, I’m not very happy. I’m a multitasker and I like to be in charge of things. I like to see outcomes, so it’s sort of a natural recipe for stepping into a role like this. And as long as we have constant process improvement in every way, it will be enjoyable.”

MEET A DOCTOR

Dr. Denise Kennedy is a primary care physician at the Creekside Care Center. She received her undergraduate and medical degrees from Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio. Kennedy completed her residency training at Good Samaritan Family Practice and is certified by the American Board of Family Medicine.



1
Why did you decide to become a doctor?
If you asked me that 10 years ago, I don’t know if I would have been able to answer you. But now I can. I’m a nurturer and it’s just my natural sense to help heal. As I grow older, this is what I realize.

2
What is your favorite thing about being a doctor?
Taking care of people. I think my favorite part is the relationships with people. I like getting to know them and figuring out, not just what their physical ailment is, but what’s going on emotionally, because that is so important to their physical health. I like taking care of people – the whole body.

3
What is it like to treat patients who are active and into their health?
It’s challenging, but it’s also refreshing because they want to do better for themselves. If I tell someone to go follow this diet because it’s going to help your health overall, they’ll do it. Or they’ll exercise. But on the other hand pushes us a little harder because we have to stay on top of our game, because they’re going to make us be on top of it.

4
Can what’s happening here change health care across America?
I think so. Our goal is to place the patient more in the center of it. It’s about being available, being there and listening to the patients. You don’t have the time or the ability to do that in practices where you see someone in 15 minutes. So if everybody picks up the same model, then essentially, we’re going to be taking care of people better than we ever have before because we’re going to have the time to do it. And we’re going to have all the resources to be able to do this.

ASK A DOCTOR

Would you agree that anyone along the path of providing medical care can make or break the experience for patients?

Answer Provided by DR. J. STEPHEN LONG
Colony Care Center



Absolutely. Over the years, I’ve had many patients who have told me that they’ve gone to doctors’ offices and they love the physician, they love the nurses or they love somebody there. But one person just really rubbed them wrong. So they actually left the practice because of that particular person who really offended them or just did not give them proper, appropriate care.

Why did you decide to become a primary care doctor?

Answer Provided by DR. UYEN ANH NGUYEN
Colony Care Center



It’s the usual answer, but to help people and to make their lives better. Most doctors go into the profession because they honestly want that. They don’t want to make a lot of money. They don’t want a prestigious life or whatever. But we really do want to help folks be healthier in general. I know it’s such a cliché, but it’s true.

What is the importance of having physician extenders — physician assistants and nurse practitioners?

Answer Provided by DR. STEPHEN FISCHER
Belleview Care Center



They improve the patient’s access to us. They give us the opportunity to see more people and to see them faster. So they really are extenders of us — an extra set of hands.

DID YOU KNOW?

Dr. Frank Melidona, a primary care physician at the Santa Barbara Care Center, is a big fan of the 1987 hit movie “Moonstruck,” starring Cher, Nicolas Cage, Danny Aiello and Olympia Dukakis.

