



Forecast C2

Clouds, storms

Today's high: 87

Tonight's low: 68

The Villages®

DAILY SUN

Classifieds.....F1-F12
Puzzles.....D7
Lifestyles.....D1-D12
Local.....C1-C10
Obituaries.....C4
Sports.....B1-B10
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Travel & Leisure....E1-E10

\$1.00

SUNDAY, MAY 19, 2013

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Inside today's Daily Sun



Oxbow upsets Orb at Preakness

Oxbow led from start to finish on a windy day at Pimlico Race Course to win the Preakness and ruin Orb's bid to capture the Triple Crown.

Sports B1

Archery club gives tips to the next generation

More than 30 fifth- through eighth-graders participated in The Villages Archery Club's nine-week Buffalo Adventures archery program.

Local C1

Up to 60 injured in Virginia parade crash

An elderly driver may have suffered a medical emergency before plowing into dozens of hikers marching in a parade, injuring about 50 to 60.

Nation A3



Syria's Assad says he won't step down

Syrian President Bashar Assad said he won't step down before elections and that the United States has no right to interfere.

World A18



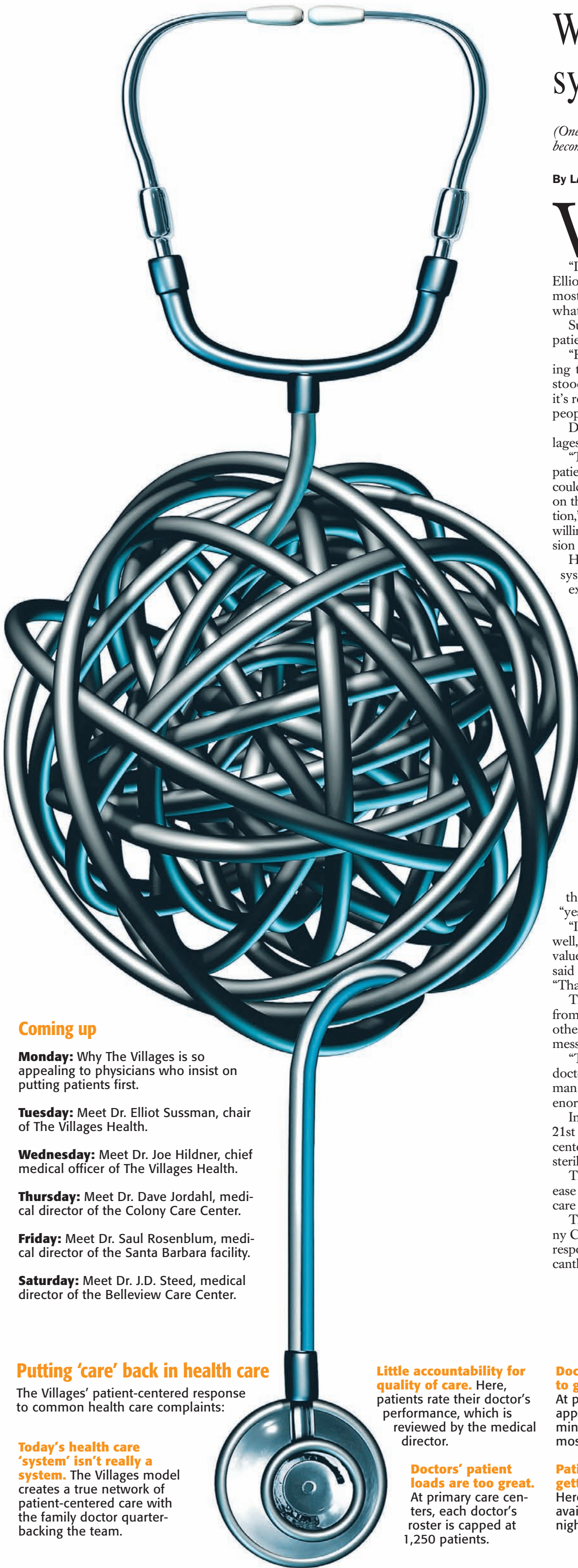
Today's Charity
Trisomy 18 Awareness



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Vol. 16 Issue 139

America's Healthiest Hometown

FIXING HEALTH CARE



Why today's medical system is such a mess ...

(One in an ongoing series on The Villages' efforts to become "America's Healthiest Hometown.")

By LARRY D. CROOM / DAILY SUN OMBUDSMAN

Villages Health and USF Health officials are in agreement when it comes to the state of health care across the United States. It's a mess, and someone's got to clean it up.

"It's really broken in a bunch of ways," said Dr. Elliot Sussman, chair of The Villages Health. "I think most importantly, the patients don't feel like they get what they want."

Sussman said health care should be centered on patients' strong bonds with their family doctors.

"Health care used to be about patients really feeling that their doctor knew who they were, understood them, understood their values," he said. "Now it's really not about people anymore. That's not what people want in health care."

Dr. Joe Hildner, chief medical officer of The Villages Health, agreed.

"The thing that I hear the most consistently from patients is that they just wish they had a doctor they could get to know, a doctor who did not have his hand on the doorknob when you're trying to ask your question," Hildner said. "They want a doctor who would be willing to think out loud and involve them in the decision making, that sort of care, that warmth."

Hildner said another issue is the way the current system incentivizes technology – and to a large extent, volume.

See PROBLEMS, A5

... and how it's being revolutionized here

By LARRY D. CROOM / DAILY SUN OMBUDSMAN

Can Florida's Friendliest Hometown be the exception to the rule when it comes to health care issues?

Medical professionals from across the country have joined together with a resounding "yes!"

"It gets back to having a physician who knows you well, who knows what you're about, who knows your values and understands your history and your family," said Dr. Elliot Sussman, chair of The Villages Health. "That's a primary care physician."

The Villages is recruiting dozens of such doctors from around the country and working closely with other health care providers to eliminate the medical mess that plagues many communities.

"The first call you make is to your primary care doctor, and she or he is going to have the time," Sussman said, explaining the model that steers clear of enormous "patient panels."

Instead, The Villages is building a system around 21st century Marcus Welbys in bright, innovative care centers that offer a welcome contrast to the common sterile doctor's office.

They also maximize electronic record-keeping to ease the access for patients and other members of the care team.

The approach is already working well at the Colony Care Center, where each primary care physician is responsible for no more than 1,250 patients – significantly less than the typical family doctor.

See SOLUTIONS, A5

Coming up

Monday: Why The Villages is so appealing to physicians who insist on putting patients first.

Tuesday: Meet Dr. Elliot Sussman, chair of The Villages Health.

Wednesday: Meet Dr. Joe Hildner, chief medical officer of The Villages Health.

Thursday: Meet Dr. Dave Jordahl, medical director of the Colony Care Center.

Friday: Meet Dr. Saul Rosenblum, medical director of the Santa Barbara facility.

Saturday: Meet Dr. J.D. Steed, medical director of the Belleview Care Center.

Putting 'care' back in health care

The Villages' patient-centered response to common health care complaints:

Today's health care 'system' isn't really a system. The Villages model creates a true network of patient-centered care with the family doctor quarterbacking the team.

Little accountability for quality of care. Here, patients rate their doctor's performance, which is reviewed by the medical director.

Doctors' patient loads are too great. At primary care centers, each doctor's roster is capped at 1,250 patients.

Doctors don't have time to get to know patients. At primary care centers, appointments last up to 30 minutes – twice as long as most doctors allow.

Patients have trouble getting medical records. Here, electronic records are available to view, day or night.

Doctor's offices are sterile and impersonal. Primary care centers are designed for a warm, homelike experience.

Medical costs are out of control. Primary care centers compensate doctors for quality of care, not quantity of patients seen or procedures performed.

“If you’re so busy doing imaging studies or technical procedures that you don’t have time to really involve the patient, then patients really almost feel as if they’re the victims of the care rather than the reasons for the care.”

—Dr. Joe Hildner,
chief medical officer of The Villages Health

PROBLEMS, from A1

“Each patient will come to that relationship with a different set of values,” he said. “If you’re so busy doing imaging studies or technical procedures that you don’t have time to really involve the patient, then patients really almost feel as if they’re the victims of the care rather than the reasons for the care.”

Dr. Saul Rosenblum, incoming medical director for the Santa Barbara Care Center, said the “fee-for-service model” is largely to blame.

“There’s little listening and little hands-on care,” he said. “You just kind of take care of the patient, in some ways as little as possible, and then move on so that the next payer comes in. The public is not comfortable with it, and I think physicians who care about their patients are looking for alternatives.”

Those alternatives have been hard to find in a system that places the needs of hospitals and specialty physicians over those of patients, said Dr. Stephen Klasko, CEO of USF Health and dean of the Morsani College of Medicine at the University of South Florida.

“What other industry allows each entity to not only set their prices, but determine how much of each unit the ‘customer’ needs?” Klasko asked. “So if a radiologist chooses to do two MRIs when only one or none is needed, that person gets paid for the extra, unnecessary work. We need to incentivize patient-driven care that promotes optimal

utilization of resources.”

The problem is compounded by a shortage of primary care physicians and the large patient load they must carry to remain profitable. In many offices, the ratio of patients to doctors exceed 2,000 to one.

“The typical primary care doctor is working really hard,” Hildner said. “You have a lot of mammogram reports and phone calls coming in. You need to move quickly, just to stay open. So patients often feel that the doctor doesn’t have the time that he or she would like to spend with the patient. It’s not as if the doctor wants to keep moving that fast. He or she just simply often has no choice.”

Dr. Dave Jordahl, medical director at Colony Care Center, can relate. Before moving here, he handled a patient load between 2,000 and 2,400. The maximum patient load of doctors at Colony: 1,250.

“I heard about one doctor who had 6,000 patients,” Jordahl said. “I’ve known physicians who had three to four thousand. That’s insanity.”

In addition to patient load, Sussman said escalating health care costs must be addressed.

“From the point of view of our country, it’s just bankrupting us,” he said. “For the last 30 years, it’s been going on twice the normal inflation rate.”

Sussman said patients should not tolerate inferior quality in their health care.

“It’s kind of like going to the finest restaurant and saying, ‘boy this food tastes terrible,’ and then getting food poisoning on the way home,” he said. “It just doesn’t make any sense.”



Bill Mitchell / Daily Sun

Pam Iserloth and Patti Bonner work at the front desk of the Colony Care Center on County Road 466A.

Keep the health questions coming

It’s been one week since I invited you on an exciting health care journey that’s now fully under way.

I asked you to send me your health care questions so I could map out future stories, and you answered the call en masse. Many of you want to know more about:

- The Villages Regional Hospital expansion.
- The urgent care facility across the street from the hospital.
- The primary care centers set to open soon.
- The medical professionals who will staff those centers.
- USF Health’s connection to The Villages Health.
- The Specialty Care Center that will open in October.
- How Medicare and Medicare Advantage plans factor in.
- How to sign up and when to do so.

Our ongoing reporting will tackle these and other issues, starting with developments in primary and specialty care, then moving into the world of insurance and Medicare.

This journey wouldn’t be possible without you. It’s my goal to answer every question you send, so please keep them coming!

If you have a health care question you’d like to have answered, please email it to larry.croom@thevillagesmedia.com. You can also send your question to the Daily Sun, 1100 Main Street, The Villages, FL 32159, Attn.: Larry Croom. Or call him at 352-753-1119, ext. 9366.



LARRY D. CROOM
DAILY SUN

“If you have the time to coach people, to address issues, you will eliminate many of the problems, be it diabetes, hypertension, heart disease. There are tons of health issues that can be addressed, given enough time.”

—Dr. Saul Rosenblum,
incoming medical director at the Santa Barbara Care Center

SOLUTIONS, from A1

This will be the experience for patients at other care centers scheduled to open over the next few months – Santa Barbara, Pinellas Park, Mulberry Grove and Lake Sumter Creekside.

“From the physician standpoint, it allows you to be more patient-centered so you can spend that time, you can explain things, you can stay up-to-date on the most recent advances in medicine,” said Dr. Dave Jordahl, Colony’s medical director.

Dr. Saul Rosenblum, incoming medical director at the Santa Barbara Care Center, agreed that all good primary care doctors want to spend more time with their patients.

“If you have the time to coach people, to address issues, you will eliminate many of the problems, be it diabetes, hypertension, heart disease,” he said. “There are tons of health issues that can be addressed, given enough time.”

That time, 30-minute appointments instead of the 15-minute appointments most doctors schedule, is key to a strong doctor-patient relationship.

“In many ways, the doctor is the unrelated relationship in the family,” Rosenblum said. “He’s someone you can lean on when you have a problem, someone who’s available, someone whose judgment you trust. That needs to be restored.”

Dr. Joe Hildner, chief medical officer of The Villages Health, often sees Villagers playing sports and dancing at the town squares and knows the value they place on their active lifestyle.

He hopes those patients will always feel comfortable visiting their primary care center.

“If you’re just going to talk about depression or your back pain or whatever, you want to just hop on your golf car and zip on over to Dr. Joe,” he said. “Maybe you’re seeing the health coach about smoking cessation or your blood pressure. We’re trying to just be that approachable, dressed-down, not-intimidating place. It’s your place; it’s your medical home.”


Hildner expects the positive outcomes of the move to patient-centered care to turn heads across the rest of the country.

“We have patients that are engaged, a facility that supports that different way of doing things and doctors that get it,” he said. “We’re going to have the thing that everybody wants: Better clinical outcomes, lower costs, and in the meanwhile, experiences by both patients and provider that are just enormously more positive.”

Four or five years from now, Hildner said, “people will look at this thing and say, ‘they got it right.’ But it was a gamble, the stake in the ground that we’re going to start with primary care. Nobody has ever done that.”



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The Villages Center for Health
The skill to heal. The spirit to care.®



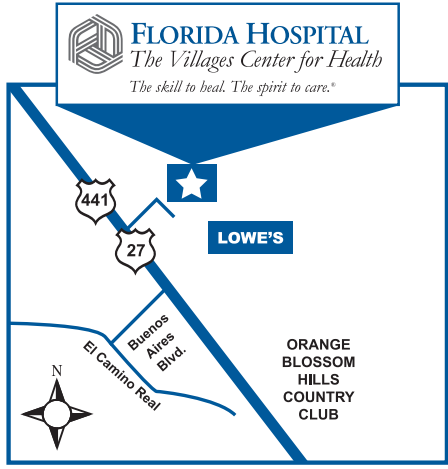
LIVING
Healthy,
LIVING
Happy

Wednesday, May 22
10 a.m.


MODERN DAY
Melanoma

Wednesday, June 19
10 a.m.


Please join world-renowned Surgical Oncologist, Douglas Reintgen, MD, FACS, and Florida Hospital North Pinellas Director of Oncology, Rosemary Giuliano, ARNP, for two different opportunities to learn more about how to take charge of your health.



The Villages Center for Health
8575 NE 138th Lane | Lady Lake, FL 32159



DOUGLAS REINTGEN, MD, FACS
Surgical Oncologist



ROSEMARY GIULIANO, ARNP, MSN
Nurse Practitioner

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