

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**. Email larry.croom@thevillagesmedia.com. Or call him at 753-1119, ext. 9366.

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

Did you know?

Dr. Michael Wald, a primary care physician who practices at the Mulberry Grove Care Center, is a huge fan of the Pittsburgh Steelers.

Fixing health care: All about RN Karen Price

Primary care doctors, specialists 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 the innovative medical providers who have joined this effort.

Why did you decide to become a nurse?

I have a family full of nurses, but it wasn’t my first track. I originally went to Ohio University for physical therapy. But I ended up kind of by default in nursing. I got lucky, because I wouldn’t have changed a thing. It’s afforded me a lot of opportunities that I never would have had. I ended up on the path that I was supposed to be on all along, I guess.

Are you excited to be part of The Villages Health?

Yes. It was like an “aha” moment. It’s been harder and harder to practice medicine over the last decade – 15 years even – because of the way the path has gone and losing control of direct patient care. So this was finally somebody doing the right thing for the patients.

What is your personal philosophy on health care?

Patients come first and should, no matter what they come to us with. Sometimes it’s routine visits, but first and foremost, the patients have to come first. That’s why it’s so exciting being here, because that’s what it’s all about, being patient-centered.



Care Center: Colony
Age: 46
Responsibilities: Clinical supervisor (Colony Care Center), as well as an oversight role with all Villages Health clinical supervisors to ensure coordination and collaboration across all care centers.
Nursing degree: Belmont College (St. Clairsville, Ohio)

People in the medical profession are in this business because of the patients. We wouldn’t have jobs and we wouldn’t be able to do what we do if the patients didn’t exist. So that needs to always be the primary focus and should have always been the primary focus.

Next week Find out all about Dr. Tomas Perez, a primary care physician who practices at the Pinellas Care Center.

Creating America’s Healthiest Hometown

What is your philosophy on health care?

“I deeply enjoy and value the relationships I have with my patients. My mission is to create an environment that encourages them to be open and honest about their beliefs and goals regarding their health. Enabling that depth of communication, along with maintaining strong interdisciplinary relationships, will promote a model of patient care that respects the dignity and individual needs of each patient.”

Dr. Aya Olejeme,
Bellevue Care Center



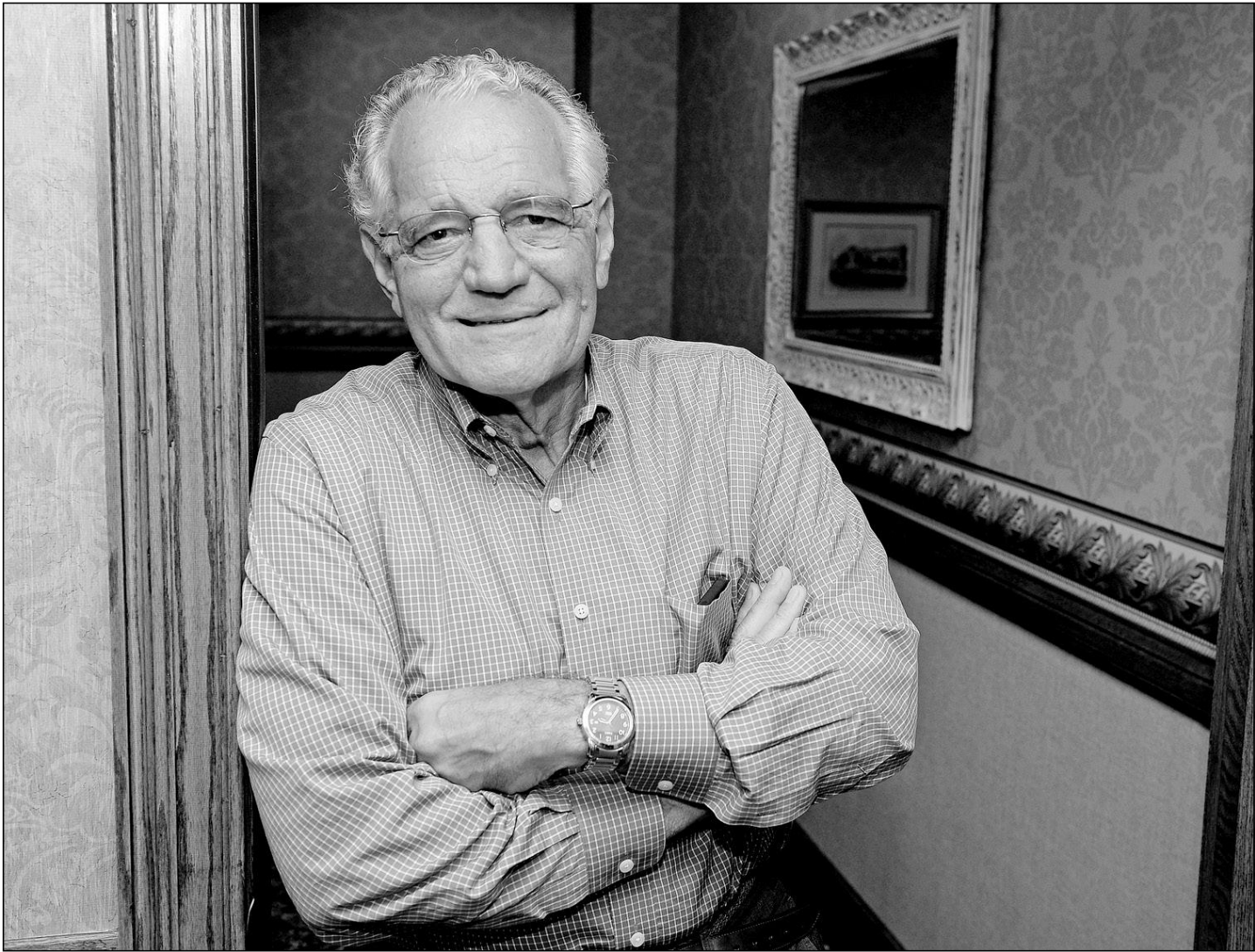
Care Centers in The Villages

Primary care

- The Villages Health Colony Care Center**
280 Farner Place, 352-674-1710
- The Villages Health Santa Barbara Care Center**
1575 Santa Barbara Blvd., 352-674-1740
- The Villages Health Pinellas Care Center**
2485 Pinellas Place, 352-674-1720
- The Villages Health Mulberry Grove Care Center**
8877 S.E. 165th Mulberry Lane, 674-1750
- The Villages Health Lake Sumter Creekside Care Center**
1050 Old Camp Road, Building 100, 674-1760

Specialty care

- USF Health Specialty Care Center**
1400 N. U.S. Highway 27/441, Building 810
352-674-8731



George Horsford / Daily Sun

Dr. Jordan Cohen, former physician-in-chief and chairman of the Department of Medicine at Michael Reese Hospital and Medical Center in Chicago, says he hopes other communities take a close look at the health care initiative in The Villages and then emulate it across the country.

Commitment to patients

Longtime health care leader praises Villages Health model, dedication to strong relationships

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

After a recent visit here, Dr. Jordan Cohen was quite clear when expressing his thoughts on the health care initiative that is sweeping through Florida’s Friendliest Hometown. “I’m blown away,” said Cohen, who serves as president emeritus of the Association of American Medical Colleges. “The Villages Health is really a very creative and very important thing that’s being established here.”

Cohen, a longtime primary care doctor and nephrologist, said he’s very impressed to see that The Villages is putting together a care-delivery model completely centered around patients. “One of the reasons that we are in such trouble in health care in the United States is that we have a system that really is not a system. It’s a collection of fragmented pieces that are not coordinated and not aligned to patient’s needs,” Cohen said. “We’re in health care because we want to serve people. The patients are the center of the whole enterprise and everything that’s done ought to be done from the perspective of the patient, the patient’s family and what makes sense for them.” Cohen said another important element is that all Villages Health primary care facilities carry the prestigious designation of patient-centered medical homes, meaning they are held to extremely high standards established by the National Committee for Quality Assurance. “I think it communicates the degree to which the system has recognized the need for being patient friendly, patient oriented and patient centered,” said the Harvard

Medical School graduate. “I think that comes across both in the architecture, in the way it’s set up with living rooms rather than waiting rooms, and with the rooms being fitted out with chairs rather than examining tables. I think all of that not only symbolizes, but actualizes the commitment to patients and their families. And I think that’s carried through in the way the doctors are approaching their responsibilities.” Cohen said in many ways, The Villages Health model is a throwback to the days when he first graduated from medical school. “In many respects, the profession has stretched the doctor-patient relationship to the point where it’s in some places barely recognizable as a real relationship,” he said. “To really establish a relationship, where the doctors really get to know the patients and the patients really get to know their doctors, is something that used to be very common when I started out. People had doctors and they used them as counselors to see them through long-term problems.” Cohen, who also has served as dean of the College of Medicine at Stony Brook in New York, said he’s aware that other communities are

taking a hard look at The Villages Health and he wouldn’t be surprised to see it copied in other locations. “I hope they take a second look and a third look,” he said. “And I hope they emulate what you’re doing here. I think that’s what the country needs.” Cohen said he believes the model being implemented in The Villages also will prove to be a cost-saving venture. “There’s no reason to think it’s not going to be, particularly if the unnecessary duplication and the unnecessary testing is eliminated,” he said. “If people can be encouraged early on in their encounters to take better care of themselves, to monitor their health and do the kind of preventative things that primary care physicians are well-positioned to encourage, I think that’s also going to be a major factor in reducing the overall cost of health care.” Dr. Elliot Sussman, chair of The Villages Health, said he’s very happy to have Cohen onboard as a trusted adviser, calling him one of the most distinguished educators and thought leaders in America. “He really brought this idea of focus on training medical students and opening their eyes to how exciting primary care could be as a career in the 21st century,” Sussman said. “He was here to really think about what those connections between USF, an academic health center, and The Villages Health could be. We spent a lot of time focused on how we could train medical students and residents to be the primary care doctors of the future and what an enticing career choice that would be.”

Larry D. Croom is the ombudsman for The Villages Daily Sun. He can be reached at 753-1119, ext. 9366, or larry.croom@thevillagesmedia.com.

The Dr. Jordan Cohen File

- Currently:**
- President emeritus of the Association of American Medical Colleges; emeritus professor of medicine and public health, George Washington University
- Age:** 79
- Education:**
- Medical doctor** (Harvard Medical School, 1960)
 - Undergraduate** (Yale University, 1956)
 - Military service** (Army Medical Corps, Walter Reed Army Institute of Research, 1969-71)
- Hospital appointments:**
- President, Medical Staff, University Hospital, Stony Brook, N.Y. (1988-94)
 - Physician-in-Chief and Chairman, Department of Medicine, Michael Reese Hospital and Medical Center, Chicago (1982-88)
 - President, Medical Staff, New England Medical Center Hospital, Boston (1975-76)
 - Chief, Renal Service, New England Medical Center Hospital, Boston (1971-82)
 - Director, Division of Renal Disease, Rhode Island Hospital, Providence, R.I. (1965-71)