

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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Did you know?

Dr. Jack Hocutt, who practices medicine at the Colony Care Center, is a big fan of the popular 1985 movie, “Back to the Future.”

Fixing health care: All about ARNP Sue Schueler

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 nurse practitioner?

I always knew that I would go into health care. When I was a little girl, my hero was my uncle, who was a doctor. I just always knew that I wanted to help people, and I learned that from him.

What is your personal philosophy on health care?

To treat patients like you want to be treated. To form a bond with them and let them know I really care about them. I’m really big on looking them in the eye and forming a relationship. I like to encourage them and empower them to take care of themselves. If you explain to a patient what you want them to do and why you want them to do it, they’re much more likely to follow up.

Why is primary care so important?

One of the blessings of what we’re trying to do here at The Villages Health, from my standpoint, is we want patients to have a medical home – a patient-centered medical home – someplace they can come to first. We will know our patients and they will know us. Because of the way the system is set



Care Center: Sharon Morse Building
Age: 66
Certified: ARNP
Bachelor’s degree (nursing): University of Louisville
Master’s degree (nurse practitioner track): Spalding University (Louisville, Ky.)

up, we are not overburdened with the number of patients to the point that we lose sight of what’s important. And if we can’t provide for them what needs to be done within the realm of primary care, then we can refer them on. But it’s just so important to come through us first.

Next week Find out all about Brittany Gagnon, a physician assistant who practices at Colony Care Center.

Health care initiative in The Villages Can it make a difference across the country?

“There is a lot of interest nationally in what we’re doing here. This initiative clearly has the ability to change the manner in which care is delivered to the beneficiary. We think it can be more personal. We think it can be more local. We think that we can provide better quality outcomes. We can have a more informed beneficiary/patient as a result of this patient-centered medical model. We are thrilled to have an opportunity to be a part of this and we believe that this has the ability to really transform how care is delivered at the primary-care setting.”

Pete Clarkson,
CEO of North/
Central Florida for
UnitedHealthcare
Medicare & Retirement



Medicare resources

To learn more about Medicare, you can visit one of the four UnitedHealthcare MedicareStores in The Villages. Those are located at:

Lake Sumter Landing
1049 Lake Sumter Landing,
391-5262

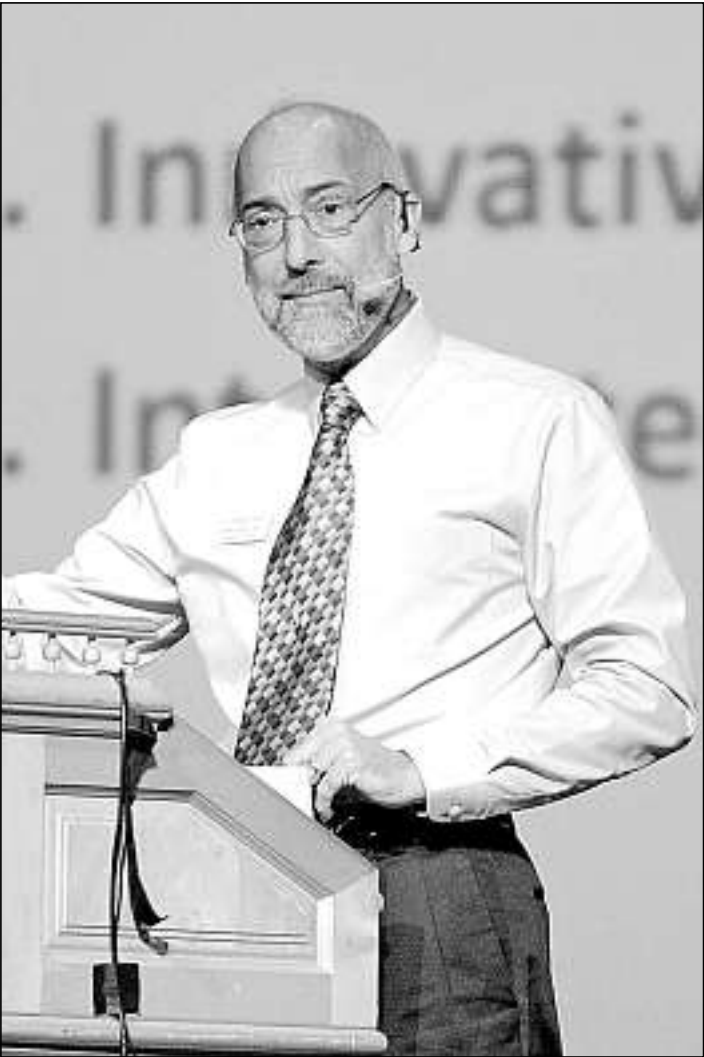
Brownwood
2617 W. Torch Lake Drive,
674-1240

Spanish Springs
979 Del Mar Drive,
674-7160

La Plaza Grande
1124 Bichara Blvd.,
460-7924

Information is also available at:
■ medicaremadeclear.com
■ medicare.gov
■ 1-800-Medicare
■ Serving Health Insurance Needs of Elders, 1-800-963-5337 or send an email to information@elderaffairs.org.

Shaping the future of health



Peter Travers / Daily Sun

Dr. Joe Hildner speaks during a USF Health in The Villages seminar at Savannah Center.

Hildner praises Villagers for input into primary-care-driven model

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

THE VILLAGES – The face of health care is changing quickly in Florida’s Friendliest Hometown, thanks in large part to vital input and guidance from Villagers.

That message was among the information shared earlier this week by Dr. Joe Hildner, of The Villages Health, during a presentation sponsored by USF Health at Savannah Center. Hildner’s portion of the talk centered on the importance of providing an integrated, primary-care-driven system that always centers on the patient.

“We’re inventing something that doesn’t exist,” said the chief medical officer of The Villages Health. “It’s coming together and we’re investing a lot of resources and time, finding out what are your needs, what are your desires and preferences, what are your frustrations with access to health care.”

Hildner pointed out that the system of health care that’s being put into place in The Villages came about largely because of a survey conducted by USF Health in spring 2012 that generated a whopping 33,199 responses.

“This really will have the fingerprints of the Villagers, themselves, all over it,” Hildner said. “We’re going to invent a better way. And we are, above all else, patient-centered. That’s the driving principle that guides everything – all decisions.”

Hildner, who shared the stage with USF Health’s Dr. Jeff Lowenkron, said the benefits of being partners with an academic institution are immeasurable.

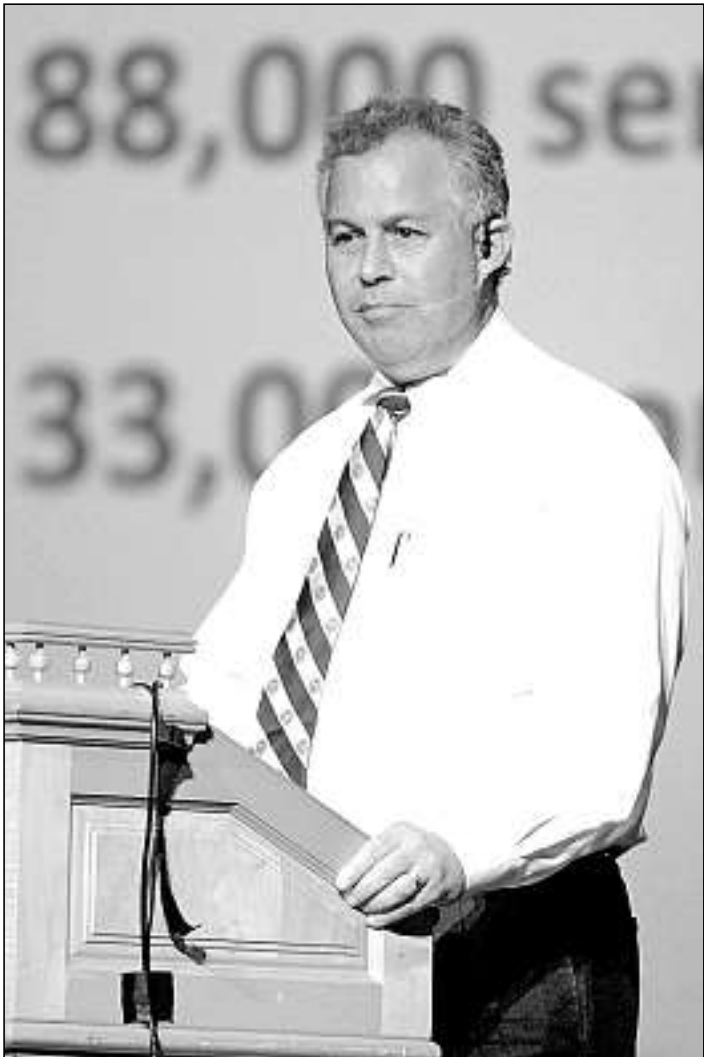
“You practice medicine, you don’t learn how to do it in four years and go out and be a doctor the rest of your life,” he said. “The best way to try to remain current and have the benefit of that on-going learning is to be connected to a university, where it’s being discovered and being taught.”

Along those same lines, Hildner said, he’s quite proud of the fact that medical providers who work for The Villages Health are innovative and enjoy thinking outside the box.

“A lot of things in medicine are traditional and we like some of them,” he said. “But a lot of things are just not right anymore. We need to continue to update how we do things and break out some fresh ideas and get rid of some old habits.”

Hildner said it’s no secret that a large part of the success of the health care initiative in Florida’s Friendliest Hometown lies largely with the physicians who are recruited to join the effort.

“You have to be one of those doctors that really gets energized by the practice of medicine and are optimistic about where medicine is going,” he said. “We’re looking for doctors that don’t want to just render health care. We want doctors who want to transform it and to invent a better way of getting this thing accomplished.”



Peter Travers / Daily Sun

Dr. Jeff Lowenkron speaks during a USF Health in The Villages seminar at Savannah Center.

Lowenkron says integrated care offers best outcomes for Villagers

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

THE VILLAGES – It’s vitally important for excellent health care – both primary and specialty – to be available in the local community.

And that local care must meet the needs of Villagers, who through focus groups and the largest single health survey of older Americans ever conducted, took the time to explain what they want and how they want that care delivered.

That topic was among several discussed by Dr. Jeff Lowenkron, USF Health’s chairman of comprehensive medicine in The Villages, during a recent presentation sponsored by USF Health at Savannah Center.

“In the true sense of a community-academic partnership, we’ve been working with people here to design and build an integrated care-delivery model around the needs of the patient,” he said.

While the health care model that’s being implemented in Florida’s Friendliest Hometown is a primary-care-driven-model, Lowenkron said it’s essential to have great specialists available to complement the primary care doctors working under The Villages Health umbrella.

“Our goal is to keep as much health care here in The Villages as we can,” he said. “There will be some conditions that are better served in the larger academic medical center. But most conditions should be cared for here in the community.”

Lowenkron said the USF Health Specialty Care Center, which is located in the old wellness center facility near the Sharon Morse Building and The Villages Regional Hospital, is scheduled to open in November. He said the goal is to offer a variety of specialties, such as gynecology, neurology, cardiology, pulmonary, orthopedics, gastroenterology, thoracic surgery, orthopedics, plastic surgery and general surgery, to name a few. Other specialties could be added as the need arises, he said.

“Whomever the physician, our expectation is that they’ll collaborate with primary care to assure that the patient’s best interests are kept central,” he said.

Part of that collaboration, he added, comes from the use of an electronic medical record that will be shared by Villages Health and USF Health doctors.

“We’re going to assure high-quality care and we’ll be able to share that information, in real time, back with the primary-care physicians,” he said.

As health care continues to change and evolve in The Villages, Lowenkron said there’s no doubt that other communities can learn from what’s happening here. With that in mind, he said, USF Health has applied for a mutimillion-dollar grant from the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services to study the outcomes for three years, starting in spring 2014.

Care Centers in The Villages

Primary care

The Villages Health Colony Care Center
280 Farner Place
(Opened December 2012)

The Villages Health Santa Barbara Care Center
1575 Santa Barbara Blvd.
(Opening in October)

The Villages Health Pinellas Care Center
2485 Pinellas Place
(Opening in November)

The Villages Health Mulberry Grove Care Center
(Opening in spring 2014)

The Villages Health Lake Sumter Creekside Care Center
(Opening in spring 2014)

Specialty care

USF Health Specialty Care Center
Located in old wellness center facility near the Sharon Morse Building
(Opening in November)