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Real Estate



Charles Michelson

Building the Hospital of Tomorrow: Rehabilitate, Renovate, or Replace?

BY CHARLES MICHELSON,
AIA, ACHA, LEED AP

The healthcare landscape in South Florida is rapidly evolving, driven by advances in medical technology, shifting patient demographics, and changing healthcare delivery models. As architects, we are uniquely positioned to influence the future of healthcare by designing environments that enhance patient outcomes, improve operational efficiency, and adapt to future needs. The question often arises: Should we rehabilitate, renovate, or replace existing hospital infrastructure? Each approach has its merits and challenges, and the optimal solution often depends on a variety of factors including cost, sustainability, and the specific needs of the community.

Rehabilitating existing hospital structures can be a cost-effective and sustainable option, which focuses on maintaining the building's character while upgrading its systems to meet modern standards.

In South Florida, where many hospitals were built decades ago, rehabilitation can provide a way to preserve the building yet modernize the medical services provided.

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Revolutionizing Healthcare Supply Chain Management: Baptist Health South Florida's Partnership with Salesforce and the HealthChain Application

BY DANIEL CASCIATO

In the ever-evolving world of healthcare, supply chain management is one of the most complex and critical components. For Baptist Health South Florida, managing over 70,000 purchase orders monthly across thousands of suppliers is no small feat. Historically, this volume of transactions has led to a persistent challenge: invoice match exceptions. These exceptions, caused by discrepancies between purchase orders, receipts, and invoices, demanded significant time and effort to resolve. However, with implementing the innovative HealthChain application in partnership with Salesforce, Baptist Health has significantly transformed its supply chain operations.

George Godfrey, Chief Supply Chain Officer and Corporate VP of Shared Services at Baptist



George Godfrey

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Dr. Jyotsna Chawla

Monkeypox in Florida: Navigating the Emerging Health Crisis

BY JYOTSNA CHAWLA, PHD, MS, MS

The World Health Organization has declared a global health emergency for mpox, formerly known as monkeypox. Florida is facing a formidable public health challenge, with more than 100 mpox cases reported this year, over half of which involve residents from South Florida. This rise in monkeypox cases mirrors a global trend, where increased international travel and close human contact are accelerating the virus's spread across multiple counties.

Monkeypox: From Origins to Outbreaks

Monkeypox, often referred to as mpox, belongs to the Orthopoxvirus family, which also includes smallpox and cowpox viruses. The virus is divided into two main clades: Clade I, primarily found in Central Africa, is associated with more severe disease, and Clade II, more common in West Africa, typically causes less severe illness. The eradication of smallpox in 1980 was a monumental public health victory, but it left populations with waning immunity, creating an environment where monkeypox could thrive. Recent outbreaks, particularly involving the new Clade 1b variant, have demonstrated the virus's ability to spread far and wide, challenging global health systems in a world that once believed smallpox was a thing of the past.

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Alzheimer's

Louis and Anne Green Memory and Wellness Center to Expand Services, Research Opportunities in South Florida

BY VANESSA ORR

The Louis and Anne Green Memory and Wellness Center (MWC) in Boca Raton, an integral component of Florida Atlantic University's (FAU) Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing, is expanding its services in South Florida. Not only is it working to create additional clinical, educational and research projects with Acts Retirement-Life Communities' St. Andrew's Estates in Boca Raton and Edgewater at Boca Pointe, but the center will soon be opening a satellite facility on Florida Atlantic's Davie Campus.

According to Dr. María de los Ángeles Ortega, associate dean of clinical practice and professor and director of the MWC, these expanded services and the resulting research will help to improve health care delivery for persons living with Alzheimer's and related dementias. In addition, Florida Atlantic students from a number of different departments will gain hands-on experience in the intricacies of geriatric care and cog-



Dr. María de los Ángeles
Ortega

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Publisher's Note

***The only thing more overrated
than natural childbirth is the joy
of owning your own business ...***

Yes, I said it. Both are hyped up to mythical proportions, like you're about to enter some exclusive club where everyone wears a sash that says, "I did it the hard way!" Spoiler alert: The sash is itchy, the club snacks are stale, and the membership fees are non-refundable.

Let's start with natural childbirth (and my admittedly male perspective.) The way people talk about it, you'd think it's the pinnacle of human achievement—right up there with climbing Everest or finishing a marathon. But unlike those accomplishments, childbirth doesn't come with a medal. It comes with a screaming, tiny human who has absolutely zero respect for your sleep schedule. And sure, many women get a certain primal satisfaction in doing it without drugs—until they realize that this isn't the 1600s, and modern medicine exists for a reason. (Trust me, Carol never even considered it.) All the gritted teeth and heroic pushing is just a ticket to a conversation where someone (like me) inevitably says, "Well, you could've just asked for the epidural."

Now, let's talk about owning your own business (and this is something I am a pro about). It's the entrepreneurial dream, right? The ultimate expression of freedom and self-determination. You picture yourself as a captain of industry, making bold decisions from the corner office. The reality? You're more like a janitor who's also the receptionist, accountant, and IT support. Instead of feeling liberated, you often feel like you've traded a 9-to-5 for a 24/7.

People love to romanticize being your own boss, but they never mention the constant, low-grade anxiety that comes with it. The joy of entrepreneurship, much like childbirth, is often advertised by people who are clearly blocking out the most painful parts. "Be your own boss!" they say. "Set your own hours!" they say. They conveniently leave out the part where "your own hours" translate to "every waking hour and then some." Multiply that by 2, when both you and your wife are self-employed in the SAME business.

And don't get me started on the financial side of things. You thought childbirth was expensive? Try running a business. Every dollar you earn feels like it's already earmarked for something else—taxes, fees, health insurance, a surprise repair for that thing you didn't know could break. The "joy" of owning a business quickly turns into a game of survival, where the ultimate goal is just to make it through another year without having to update your LinkedIn to say "open to work."

So, the next time someone tells you that natural childbirth or owning a business is the most rewarding thing you can do, take it with a grain of salt. And maybe an epidural. And a really good accountant. (And then there are the good days when I wouldn't trade it for the world!)

Charles Felix



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Fall Risk Evaluations Would be Game Changer for Medicare Beneficiaries



BY MIGUEL GARCIA,
PT, DPT, EDD

Juan is a 74-year-old male who was involved in a motorcycle accident approximately 10 years ago resulting in multiple fractures. Juan overcame his injuries and regained his overall independence at home and in his immediate community, ambulating without any assistive device.

Committed to his ongoing recovery, he registered for our community-based Falls Prevention Program at the University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences, Miami Campus (USAHS Miami.) The multi-faceted program challenges individuals at risk for falls to complete a functional obstacle course that mimics day to day mobility, view educational presentations on how to reduce the risks for falls, engage in dynamic gait training, and learn martial arts-based movements to facilitate falls. While Juan was relatively independent, he found significant challenge with all aspects of

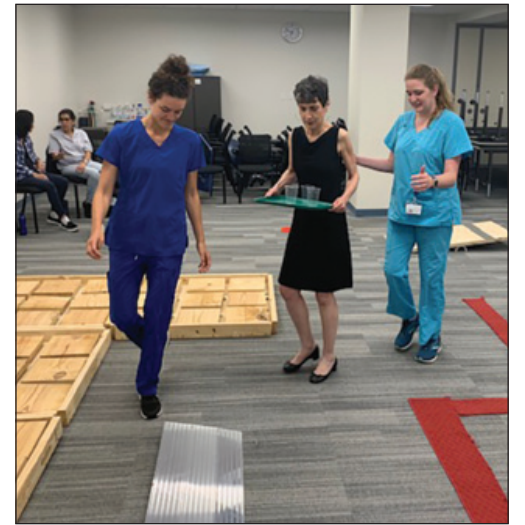
their physician at a wellness visit, changes the conversation about what causes falls and how to prevent them.

A report from The Moran Company found physical therapy is associated with significant reductions in hospitalizations, emergency room visits, and opioid use in the Medicare population when patients consult a PT after a fall.

A referral to a physical therapist who can effectively evaluate an individual's risk for falling, identify intrinsic and extrinsic risk factors for falling, and provide a comprehensive plan of care to address these factors can significantly impact the individual's quality of life and lead to a measurable reduction in total healthcare spending.

Our patient Juan offers good insight into the role of physical therapy. While Juan had attained his immediate independence following the motorcycle accident, he still lacked the confidence to effectively integrate with the community at large because of his fear of falls and ongoing balance deficits. We were able to educate Juan on the extrinsic factors in his home and immediate community that increased his risk for falls and how to mitigate such risks. We also provided extensive balance and gait training using our multi-modular obstacle course and walking exercises. With mass repetition, Juan learned how to create the balance strategies necessary to prevent a fall if he were to lose balance. While the program led to significant improvements in Juan's balance and overall awareness, a risk for falls still existed. This risk was addressed by teaching Juan how to safely fall using martial arts-based techniques to decrease the risk of injuries if he were to fall.

Physical therapy can have a significant impact on the lives of individuals at risk for falls or with a history of falls. The SAFE Act would be an absolute game-changer for these individuals as it allows them to receive early interventions and timely care from professionals who are experts in various aspects of falls prevention including movement analysis, environmental modification, and functional mobility treatment.



Dr. Miguel Garcia is Associate Professor, University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences, Miami. For more information, visit www.usahs.edu.

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Empowering Communities: How Wellvana Is Transforming Healthcare Delivery in South Florida

BY DANIEL CASCIATO

In an era where healthcare systems often seem overwhelming and impersonal, Wellvana, a primary care and management services organization (MSO) headquartered in Nashville, is taking a different approach.

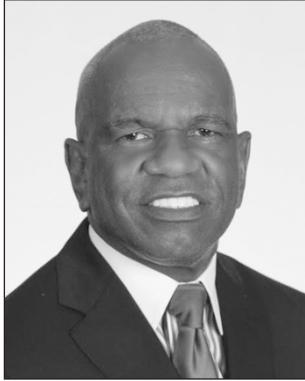
Through its partnership with South Florida's healthcare providers, Wellvana focuses on re-engaging communities, educating patients, and empowering primary care physicians. At the helm of this mission is Readus Smith, Market President - National Partnerships at Wellvana, whose passion for community-centered healthcare drives significant change, particularly in underserved areas.

A Community-Centric Mission

"Our company is a large MSO/primary care organization, and one of the missions we're focusing on this year is getting back into the communities," Smith explains.

Wellvana has entered into a decade-long agreement with the largest Pentecostal and Christian denomination in the U.S., which comprises around 14,000 congregations, to ensure that community members are aware of the healthcare facilities and plans available to them.

A stark reality drives the initiative: many communities, especially underserved ones, lack primary care resources. "The hospitals have taken over a large population of the physician groups, and



Readus Smith

we've taken the community doctors out of the communities—it's hurt us," Smith notes. This disconnection has led to significant gaps in preventive care and chronic disease management.

Smith's role as Secretary of General Health and Business for the Church of God in Christ (COGIC) has given him a unique perspective on community challenges. With over 6 million members, including 1.8 million seniors, COGIC provides a broad platform for healthcare outreach. Yet, despite these numbers, only 33% of these seniors were familiar with Medicare Advantage and its options.

"We're trying to put the care back in the physician and nurse practitioner's hands and give people that option on a first-line defense," says Smith.

Overcoming Challenges in Implementation

Smith shares that one of the major challenges Wellvana has faced is earning the trust of physicians. Many have been jaded by past experiences and false promises, making it difficult to convince them that a new model can work. However, Smith remains optimistic.

"You give me 10 doctors who believe and are willing to do the work, and I'll show you 10 successful practices," he asserts.

Wellvana's approach is grounded in simplicity and care. They aim to change

the model and improve healthcare outcomes by focusing on providing proper care without exorbitant costs.

"Our biggest challenge is, can you believe in what we're doing, and can you work toward it?" Smith asks.

Leveraging Technology for Better Outcomes

Wellvana distinguishes itself through its use of advanced analytics and data systems to improve healthcare delivery.

"We have a very strong analytics and data system," Smith explains. This system tracks each doctor's performance, patient needs, and real-time coding accuracy. For instance, it can identify if a patient is overdue for an annual wellness visit or if discrepancies in their care need to be addressed.

One standout feature of Wellvana's approach is its high-touch care management, which Smith describes as "utilization on steroids." This proactive system goes beyond merely tracking patients; it seeks to understand and resolve the root causes of frequent emergency room visits or other costly healthcare behaviors.

Smith recalls a case where a woman visited the ER 37 times in 98 days simply because she didn't know of alternative options like urgent care. After Wellvana intervened, she hasn't been back to the ER since.

Benefits for Providers and Patients

Wellvana's model benefits both providers and patients by fostering education and accountability.

"We make it so that the provider understands his responsibility, but we also educate the patient," says Smith. By

ensuring patients understand the importance of preventive care, like annual wellness visits, Wellvana helps reduce the long-term costs associated with untreated conditions.

The results speak for themselves. "I have taken some doctors' readmission rates down 39% in the first six months," Smith proudly shares. This success is a testament to Wellvana's commitment to educating patients and holding providers accountable.

A Call to Action

As Wellvana continues to expand its reach, Smith emphasizes the importance of community engagement. "Let's get back engaged. Let's get back to the table. Let's work together to develop a valuable solution that can work for the patients, doctors, plans and coding teams," he urges.

Smith's message is clear: the healthcare system can work for everyone, but it requires a collective effort. By bringing primary care back to the forefront and prioritizing community needs, Wellvana is leading the charge in transforming healthcare delivery in South Florida and beyond.

In a final reflection, Smith draws a parallel between the hospitality and healthcare industries, emphasizing the importance of choice and engagement.

"There's no difference in the hotel industry and the hospital industry, but one difference: people go to hospitals because they have to, people go to hotels because they want to. We need to get those two back on the same track."

For more information, visit [wellvana.com](https://www.wellvana.com).

Nicklaus Children's Hospital's Project ADAM Outreach Initiative Saves Lives – Five and Counting!

For every minute that a cardiac arrest event persists, the chances of survival reduce by 10 percent. Nicklaus Children's Heart Institute is leading a community initiative aimed at preventing sudden cardiac death, a leading cause of death among adults and children nationwide. In the last 18 months, the program has provided training to address sudden cardiac arrest events for staff at all 332 Miami-Dade County Public Schools, as well as an array of private and charter schools in Miami-Dade and Broward counties.

Nicklaus Children's Hospital's Heart Institute, a regional leader in the care of children with congenital heart defects, is proud to be the South Florida affiliate of Project ADAM, an organization dedicated to offering free life-saving training and education to counter sudden cardiac arrest. Through the program, staff at participating schools learn how to perform CPR, use automated external defibrillators (AED), and develop a site-specific response plan. Participating schools receive a two-year Project ADAM recognition and commit to performing a minimum of 1 drill annually, upon completion of training.

Since the launch of the program in



Project ADAM-trained team at Joella Good Elementary, where a member of the team helped save a child who experienced sudden cardiac arrest.

2022, three students and 2 adult staff members have been resuscitated by school employees trained by the Heart Institute's Project ADAM outreach team. The effort is paying off and saving lives. In May, a 9-year-old boy at Joella C. Good Elementary School in Hialeah became the fifth person saved by Project

Adam-trained school staff members. Thanks to their lifesaving skills, the boy was awake and responsive by the time EMS arrived. The reach of Project ADAM training extends even beyond the school campus. Staff members of Booker T. Washington Senior High School jumped into action to save the life of a 17-year-

old American Heritage School football player, who went into cardiac arrest.

"The training that is being offered through Nicklaus Children's Project ADAM is a passion that we all share as champions for children," said Matthew A. Love, President and CEO of Nicklaus Children's Health System, parent organization of Nicklaus Children's Hospital, the region's only freestanding specialty hospital dedicated exclusively to children. "We offer heart-saving training to any school seeking to empower staff to address sudden cardiac arrest events and are immensely proud of the trainees who have used their new skills to save lives. They are true heroes, first anticipating the need for preparedness, then completing the training, and leaping into action when a cardiac arrest occurred."

Project ADAM at Nicklaus Children's is made possible in part by generous organizations including Firehouse Subs Public Safety Foundation and the Coral Gables Community Foundation.

Nicklaus Children's Hospital is one of two affiliate Project ADAM children's hospitals in Florida.

To learn more, please visit nicklauschildrens.org/ProjectAdam.

Physician Wellness: A Professional Imperative

In today's demanding healthcare environment, physicians are expected to provide exceptional care while balancing the pressures of a rapidly changing medical landscape. The result is a growing concern that too many of our colleagues are grappling with burnout—a silent but pervasive issue that can affect every aspect of a physician's life, from professional practice to personal well-being.

As practicing psychiatrist and President of the Dade County Medical Association (DCMA), I am acutely aware of the challenges faced by our community. The high levels of stress, emotional exhaustion, and the overwhelming demands placed on physicians have led to an alarming increase in burnout rates. Physician wellness is not just a personal issue; it is a professional imperative that directly impacts the quality of care we provide to our patients.

In response to this urgent need, a few years ago, the DCMA launched the Physician Wellness Program, a resource designed to support members through challenging times. Access to the Physician Wellness Program is more than just a benefit of membership; it is a lifeline for those who are struggling under the weight of their responsibilities.

The LifeBridge program is a confidential and voluntary service available at no cost to all DCMA members. It provides access to four free counseling sessions with certified professionals who specialize in working with healthcare providers. Recognizing the unique pressures faced by physicians, the program was designed in conjunction with the Florida Board of Medicine as a pre-clinical initiative, ensuring that no medical record is created through participation. This important feature allows our members to seek help without fear of jeopardizing their licensure or professional standing.

One of the most significant barriers preventing physicians from seeking the help they need is the concern over confidentiality. Many fear that reaching out for support could lead to negative repercussions, both personally and professionally. At DCMA, we understand these concerns, which is why LifeBridge has been structured with the highest regard for privacy. When a member schedules an appointment through the private 24/7 wellness line, their identity is protected. The DCMA does not keep client-specific records, and the clinicians, while maintaining confidential records as a standard practice, do not reveal any physician's identity.

This commitment to confidentiality allows physicians to access the support they need without fear. DCMA Physician Wellness Program counselors, who have extensive experience working with healthcare professionals, offer flexible hours and personalized care to accommodate the demanding schedules of our members.

The Physician Wellness Program reflects the DCMA's ongoing dedication to the well-being of our physician community. We recognize that to provide the best care for others, physicians must also take care of themselves. DCMA supports physicians member through the challenges of our profession, offering a safe, confidential space to address the stress and burnout that too often go unspoken.

If you or someone you know is feeling the strain of our profession, I urge you to take advantage of this invaluable resource. Help is just a phone call away at 888-948-9555. Remember, seeking support is not a sign of weakness, but a step towards preserving the strength and compassion that brought us to this noble profession in the first place.

Together, we can ensure that our community of physicians remains resilient, healthy, and ready to continue delivering the highest quality of care to our patients.

Find out more about the DCMA's Physicians Wellness Program at <https://miamimed.com/page/PhysicianWellness>

Dr. Patricia Ares-Romero is President, Dade County Medical Association, Inc.



BY PATRICIA ARES-ROMERO, MD, FASAM

When It Comes To Patient Care, Benchmark the Best

PART 5

For the past few months, we have been looking at what the best health systems and independent medical providers are doing to drive patient care. These innovative organizations are focusing on key initiatives which are driving referrals, long-term loyalty and ultimately increased revenues. This month the focus is on improving the culture as it relates to operational excellence or continuous quality improvement.

The old saying, what got you here won't get you there, could never be truer than in the medical arena. The best of the best is constantly looking at how they drive patient care and asking the simple question, 'how can we get better?'

These organizations are getting a two for one benefit by involving the staff in developing ideas on how to find a better way, every day. Not only do the teams develop and test ways to improve the overall patient experience, but there is also an inherent improvement on staff engagement in the process. Involving the patients, both directly and indirectly, is also key. Feedback both positive and negative is gold if you are looking to improve things. Whether it be by asking the patient directly, looking at survey data, or by examining trends in patient returns or referrals, determining ways to improve on what is working or change what is not, is huge. When we speak with customers about their approach to continuous improvement, there are generally two reactions. There is either a list of key things they are focused on or a vacant stare. If your team is in the latter category, there is no time like today to get started. Huddle up and brainstorm the biggest opportunities you have, or roadblocks patients are facing when they come to you for care. Ease and impact the list and focus on trying to improve the top couple of items. Once you get those going in the right direction, pick two more. Before you know it, you will see great things happening which will drive revenues to unexpected new heights. Enjoy the journey!

Jay Juffre is Executive Vice President, Total Customer Experience, ImageFIRST. For more information on ImageFIRST, call 1-800-932-7472 or visit www.imagefirst.com.



BY JAY JUFFRE

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ACHE of South Florida Member Spotlight: Laura Denoux

BY LOIS THOMSON



Laura Denoux

In an interesting turn of events, a television show started Laura Denoux on her career path in healthcare. Denoux, vice president & chief development officer at Holy Cross Health – a member of Trinity Health – had previously worked in sales and marketing for leading global companies in the technology and beauty sectors. That was until she became a contestant on the NBC reality TV show, "The Biggest Loser."

"I was a contestant from 2008 to 2009," she said. "When I went on the show and lost a significant amount of weight, I said, 'I'm not going back to my old ways and old habits.' I wanted to change my life and work in the health and wellness industry."

The opportunity came when a friend who worked at the American Heart Association was transferring from the Miami to the New York office. She said they were looking for a sales and marketing leader with a passion for improving the health and well-being of the community, and told Denoux she thought she'd be a great fit for the role. "Sure enough I applied and that's how I started in healthcare." Denoux spent almost four years there as director of development, then more than 10 years at Baptist Health South Florida as director of development and corporate partnerships, and now nearly two years at Holy Cross Health.

Denoux said her responsibilities at Holy Cross Health include "the operational and strategic leadership of the health system's fundraising efforts; campaigns; donor engagement; principal, major, annual, and planned giving; corporate partnerships; events; board engagement; concierge services; grateful patient and clinician fundraising programs; fund management; staff recruitment and development; and community relations." In addition, she serves as a philanthropy leadership council member, working with peers at other hospitals to roll out new programs, procedures, and best practices so that all of Trinity Health is working cohesively on fundraising efforts.

Denoux is grateful for her transition to healthcare, stating, "I have the privilege of contributing to people's well-being and supporting the community in improving their health. Every day brings new challenges, and no two days are ever the same."

In addition to helping the community, Denoux is interested in encouraging other philanthropy leaders to become involved with ACHE – American College of Healthcare Executives – as she herself did several months ago. Her reason for joining was that as part of an executive leadership team and being surrounded by healthcare administrators, "I felt if I'm really going to help set the strategic priorities and be part of the decision-making of the hospital – I needed to have a deeper understanding of the healthcare industry overall."

Her intent was to "learn more so that I could bring that experience to my day-to-day work in philanthropy, and also be able to further the mission and help support my colleagues at the executive level." Now, after attending various ACHE events and meeting other members, she said she is getting more exposure to healthcare leaders and learning ways to overcome challenges in healthcare. "It definitely has been an exciting opportunity for me."

Since joining ACHE, however, Denoux has discovered that few development and philanthropy leaders are involved with the organization, and she would like to urge others to join. In emphasizing the importance, she explained that Holy Cross is currently engaged in several large capital projects. "We're going to be building a new CT for our emergency department and a new family health center, in addition to renovating the whole outpatient rehabilitation center at the hospital. All of these capital projects will be funded 100 percent by philanthropy."

She continued, "Many assume that joining ACHE is only for healthcare executives or administrators, but I see it as a valuable opportunity for anyone in the industry, regardless of their position," Denoux said. "I encourage those who are passionate about healthcare, even at a junior level, to get involved with ACHE. It's an excellent platform for networking and learning, especially for young professionals."

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A Doctor's Dilemma: Private Equity or Patient Care

BY VANESSA ORR

In the past few years, private equity acquisitions have increased in the healthcare space, resulting in concerning issues for both doctors and patients. According to a recent *Wall Street Journal* article, private equity firms have \$2.4 trillion on hand to invest, and *The Keckley Report* notes that these firms have spent more than \$1 trillion over the past 10 years in healthcare acquisitions alone.

"COVID-19 played a big role in this trend because it exposed a vulnerable side of the U.S. healthcare system by creating challenges that the system was not ready for," explained Kyla Murphy, Professional Liability Advisor, National Healthcare Practice with Risk Strategies. "Physicians became bogged down with patient visits, paperwork, staff shortages, and increasing costs and compliance issues that made it hard to run a practice and as a result, increased physician burnout. Private equity firms came in promising to provide administrative, financial, and clinical support, though their main goal was to buy, improve, and resell these practices to larger firms."

To this end, private equity firms work to cut costs and produce revenue quickly, with the result of putting patient care and quality in jeopardy. This can include using lower-quality products, hiring less expen-



Tom Murphy



Kyla Murphy

sive employees, firing more experienced employees, limiting practice hours, and pressuring clinicians into providing unnecessary care and procedures in an effort to increase the bottom line.

"This is a conflict for clinicians; their oath and everything they do is about caring for patients and ensuring that they are receiving appropriate care," said Tom Murphy, SVP National Healthcare Practice, Risk Strategies. "Cutting corners to streamline costs can negatively affect proper care, and doctors don't like ordering unnecessary tests as they not only don't benefit patients but can actually harm them."

Private equity firms will argue that there is no conflict of interest when they purchase a healthcare company because since

they are making an investment, they have a vested interest in making sure that it performs properly. However, having physicians order unnecessary tests to get bigger reimbursements or buying up all the medical practices in one territory so that healthcare companies are forced to negotiate with a monopoly can cause major issues for patients and doctors alike.

"There is also a large concern about how this may damage physicians' reputations and the future lawsuits and claims that could result," says Kyla Murphy. "What physicians need to realize is that their reputations are their most prized possessions."

These same firms have also become interested in specialty groups, including orthopedists, primary care physicians, gastroenterologists, radiologists, and anesthesiologists, and as a result, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has begun investigating this monopolization of the industry. On March 5, 2024, the FTC, Department of Justice (DOJ), and Department of Health & Human Services (HHS) launched a joint investigation into healthcare acquisitions by private equity firms.

"Personally, I think it will slow down some private equity purchases, though no one really knows what the total effect will be," said Tom Murphy.

While there may be some negatives concerning these private equity acquisitions, there is the opportunity for them to make positive changes to the system—such as streamlining care in such a way that it could save money for Medicare and Medicaid—if they do things the right way.

Private equity is not just about saving money. These firms typically spend large sums of money and inject large amounts of capital in order to grow the practice/business and increase profitability over time.

"Doctors are finding that running a practice is increasingly stressful and exhausting with all the costs and compliance issues they must follow while at the same time trying to treat patients, and federal government insertion into that has made it worse," said Tom Murphy.

"Private equity has seized upon this and comes in to streamline things to make running a practice more cost-effective," he continues. "The key is whether it will harm patient care. Only time will tell."

For more information, contact Kyla Murphy at kyla.murphy@risk-strategies.com or Tom Murphy at tmurphy@risk-strategies.com or call 800-966-2120.



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KIDZ Medical Neonatal Nurse Practitioner Celebrates Three Decades of Care

BY VANESSA ORR

For more than three decades, Jorge Jordan, APRN, has been providing life changing medical care to young patients, and assurance to families while their children are being cared for by KIDZ Medical Services, a South Florida multispecialty practice that cares for neonatal, pediatric and women's health patients across 15 office locations and 19 hospital partner sites.

Jordan also plays a lead role in transporting extremely sick patients to higher-level facilities to meet their needs, all while training the next generation of nurse practitioners and physician assistants to carry on this legacy.

While Jordan originally planned to be a doctor, his father died when he was 16 and he could not afford to go to medical school. Instead, he was accepted to the Jackson Memorial Hospital School of Nursing, which gave him the opportunity to work in the NICU, pediatric ICU, emergency room, Cath Lab, SICU and



Jorge Jordan

trauma center, among other locations.

"Whenever overtime was offered anywhere, I took it," Jordan explains of his depth and breadth of medical knowledge. "That's how I earned the experience that I have."

He later worked for a nursing agency, during which time he met neonatologists Dr. Albert Taño and Dr. Jorge E. Perez, the founders of KIDZ Medical Services.

They witnessed Jordan's passion and suggested that he train to become a nurse practitioner (NP), also encouraging him to seek admittance to Georgetown University's program. Jordan was later employed by KIDZ, and he became the first nurse practitioner to work in a community hospital NICU and today serves as the director of nurse practitioners and physician assistants at KIDZ Medical Services.

"Dr. Taño and Dr. Perez had the foresight to bring nurse practitioners into community hospitals to provide much needed coverage because there was a shortage of neonatologists," explained

Jordan. "I was the first nurse practitioner at South Miami, Homestead, Baptist, Hialeah, North Shore and Palmetto hospitals—anytime we opened at a new hospital, I was the first NP there."

In addition to his directorial role, Jordan also helps with fixed wing air and ground transport for babies who need to be moved from Level 1-2 facilities to a Level 3 facility like South Miami Hospital. "It can get very complex; these are very sick babies that need a higher level of care," says Jordan of patients that may be extremely premature or suffer from respiratory problems, among other issues. "You never know what you'll be dealing with until you get there, and this is where our experience becomes key."

Jordan empathizes with his tiny patients' parents, who are also going through a traumatic time. "It's very important to speak to the families to let them know what's going on with their newborns—they often feel helpless, because the NICU is a whole new world," he explains. "Going through those double doors can be very scary, and it's our job to ensure they know their baby is in the best care."

Jordan has been involved in many milestone cases during his tenure,

including being a part of the team that took care of the smallest, youngest baby ever born at Baptist Hospital at 21 weeks and transporting a 22-week-old baby to South Miami Hospital to receive Level 3 care.

"Both children are doing great; in fact, one just celebrated her quinceañera," he said.

Jordan was also integral in helping to resuscitate a child born with no heart rate to a drug-addicted mother, who was later adopted by a waiting couple. "That couple had been trying to do IVF and adopt for years, and they were the happiest parents in the world," he said. "I'm truly blessed to be a part of their lives."

Jordan finds passing on his knowledge by training new PAs and nurse practitioners extremely rewarding, and this helps the KIDZ Medical organization continue to grow. "KIDZ has grown significantly through the shared vision of Dr. Taño and Dr. Perez, who worked hard to make it what it is today. But despite the growth, it's still like a big family," he said. "I talk to them almost daily and can call anytime, day or night. They truly have the best interests of patients and KIDZ' employees at heart. I am who I am because of them."

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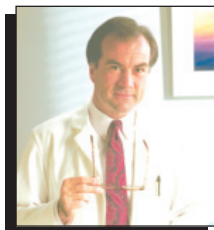


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ImageFIRST Launches 4th Annual HeroesFIRST Contest

ImageFIRST® proudly announces the launch of their 4th Annual HeroesFIRST Contest where ImageFIRST Associates recognize exceptional Healthcare Heroes who go above and beyond to enhance the patient experience. HeroesFIRST celebrates individuals who align closely with ImageFIRST's Values – Be Safe, Be Honest, Be Respectful and most of all, Be Remarkable.

The nominations for Healthcare Heroes are currently underway by ImageFIRST Service Teams and Customer Advocates in their respective markets across the country. Twenty exceptional finalists will be selected nationally from the nomination period and entered into an online vote. The top eight heroes (four on the East and West Coasts) with the most votes will receive prizes totaling \$16,500 for representing the best in patient experience.

Nationwide voting will open on Monday, September 16, and remain open until 11:59 pm ET on Friday, October 4. Winners will be announced on Tuesday, October 15. The top eight finalists (four on the East and West Coasts) with the most votes will be awarded prizes totaling \$16,500.

For more information or to cast your vote after September 16, please visit heroes.imagefirst.com.



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The Shift from Denial Management to Denial Prevention in Healthcare

Denial management is a critical function in any high performing revenue cycle. However, as health-care providers grapple with an uptick in claim denials—a trend partly fueled by payers' adoption of artificial intelligence (AI) tools — the financial burden of managing these denials has escalated to unsustainable levels.

A recent report by Becker's highlighted the percentage of initial denials overturned varies by payer category, with Commercial payers at 60.5%, Medicare Advantage at 52.7%, Medicare at 50%, and Managed Medicaid at 49.7%.

The cost of successfully appealing these claims exceeded \$20 billion last year. This financial strain is compounded by delayed cash flows, further jeopardizing the financial stability of these organizations.

In response to the mounting challenges of denial management and its financial repercussions, BDO advocates for a proactive shift in strategy and resources from denial management to denial prevention. While achieving a completely denial-free revenue cycle may be an idealistic goal, addressing preventable denials at their root cause can significantly diminish collection costs and expedite cash flow.

BDO's approach for establishing a denial prevention function is comprehensive and multifaceted, focusing on the following key areas:

1. **Root cause analysis:** Conducting a focused assessment of the root causes of



BY ALFREDO CEPERO

denials by payer and denial categories.

2. **Collaborative process development:** Partnering with practice and service line leaders to devise processes that tackle root causes directly and foster collaboration on resolving denials and payment disputes.

3. **Automation opportunities:** Identifying opportunities for automation to prevent denials, which involves evaluating the functionality of RCM systems, clearinghouse tools, and the potential of emerging AI products.

4. **Denial review process with payers:** Establishing a denial review process with major payers to examine denial volumes, the cost of denial management, and payment variances.

5. **Metrics and continuous improvement:** Documenting baseline denial metrics and their financial impacts, setting improvement targets, and continuously monitoring performance. This also involves adjusting the people, processes, and technology involved to consistently reduce denial volumes.

The shift from managing denials after they occur to preventing them before they happen represents a critical evolution in revenue cycle management. By addressing the issue at its source, health-care organizations can not only reduce the cost of collections but also improve their overall financial health through accelerated cash flow.

Alfredo Cepero, Principal, Assurance Market Leader, BDO, can be reached at (305) 420-8006 or acepero@bdo.com.

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The Value of Florida Hospitals to Communities

Florida's hospitals are the heartbeats of their communities. Generally, when we see the Blue "H" sign for the nearest hospital, we think about that one large facility providing emergency care, lifesaving surgeries, treatment for serious illnesses, maternity care, and many other vitally important hospital-based services. In reality, Florida's hospitals are all of that and so much more.

Every three years, hospitals undertake an elaborate process to determine their community's health needs through a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA). This comprehensive survey broadly reviews the needs of a community, such as rates of diabetes, cardiovascular disease, substance use disorder, mental illness and many other pressing community health needs. The results of these surveys help to shape the priorities of hospitals and health systems and their partnerships with other community organizations to improve the health and well-being of the individuals and families in their communities.

Hospitals are helping to bridge gaps in social services that negatively impact well-being and health outcomes for children and adults. Many times, these initiatives are closely aligned with local or state health department priorities – such as helping moms into early prenatal care, tackling housing instability for those with mental illness, supporting nutrition programs to address food insecurity, or developing innovative programs to overcome transportation barriers.

Comprehensive care is not just a throwaway line for hospitals. According to an FHA survey of its members, last year, Florida's hospitals invested \$6.2 billion in community benefit programs across the state, to promote and support healthy communities, extending their mission well beyond the walls of



BY MARY C. MAYHEW

the hospital. Hospitals are engaged in efforts to support educational goals for children, to expand access to preventive services, to support free clinics, to expand access to dental care, to enhance healthcare literacy, to improve the array of services for our elderly, and to address the ever-growing need for community-based mental health services.

Additionally, each hospital adopts a financial assistance policy for patients in their communities who are uninsured or do not have the means to pay for their care despite having health care coverage. With 2.6 million Floridians lacking health care coverage and another 4.4 million Floridians covered by Medicaid, hospitals absorb a large portion of costs associated with caring for these popula-

tions. FHA member hospitals incurred \$5.1 billion in costs associated for patients receiving free care, financial assistance or coverage through means tested programs in 2022.

All of this work and community engagement is supported by more than 322,000 hospital and health system staff and the ripple effect of so many other jobs that are created locally because of these comprehensive efforts.

While these survey numbers provide dollar values to the investment and impact of hospitals, we know that the true reward is invaluable; these community benefit programs improve the lives of millions of Floridians, every single day by getting to the heart of health and taking a holistic approach to well-being.

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*Mary C. Mayhew is the Florida
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A message from our President

Under a Harris/Walz Administration, “What Might We Expect?”

We thought that we knew what the healthcare implications would be in a rematch of Biden/Trump. Well, that comfort level quickly dissolved when we learned that President Biden decided to endorse Kamala Harris as the next President of the United States. In some sense, the slate was clean.

Let us take a minute and look for some hints we might find in the platforms of both national political parties. First, the Republican National Committee (RNC) had their convention in mid-July and their voices were somewhat mute in terms of what we might see from a Republican administration given the reelection of former President Trump.

Borrowing from Paul Keckley, “The RNC healthcare platform boils down to two aims: ‘protecting Medicare’ and ‘granting states oversight of abortion services. Promises to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act, once the staple of GOP health policy, are long-gone as polls show the majority (even in Red states (like Texas and Florida) favor keeping it.” (Note: Given the reports about some of the findings from the release of the Project 25 report, I am not sure about the “protecting Medicare” part of their platform.)

At the recent Democratic National Convention held in Chicago, I think we saw more of the healthcare veil being lifted in terms of what we will see if we have Democratic majority led by a Harris Administration.

Again, to quote Paul Keckley, “Women’s health and access to abortion, excess profitability by “corporate” drug manufacturers, hospitals and insurers, inadequate price transparency, uneven access and household affordability will be core themes in speech-



Jaime Caldwell

es and ads, with a promise to reverse the Dobb’s ruling by the Supreme Court punctuating every voter outreach.” Given that I have not fully digested, the implications of what healthcare might look like if some of the Project 25 proposals become law, let us take a few minutes to look at what we can see under a continued Democratic Administration

I think we will see an expansion of eligibility in one of our federal healthcare programs (Medicare, Medicaid) or a shoring up of the Affordable Care Act given that there is more national support for the Affordable Care Act than there was during the Obama Administration.

Given that both Harris and Walz have expressed strong commitments to equity, particularly racial and economic disparities, I suspect that their administration will focus on equity in healthcare. Could this possibly lead to population health on steroids?

I think we might also see more focus on something that has been a growing issue since 2020 (COVID isolation). A Harris/Walz administration might push for greater integration of mental health services into primary care, expanding funding for mental health programs, and addressing the opioid crisis with a public health approach. (Imagine that, a refocus on public health!)

Some of the more obvious areas that might be addressed includes reproductive health and rights; healthcare workforce and infrastructure; pharmaceutical pricing and regulation [expansion of drug price negotiation]; climate change and healthcare [have we not witnessed this summer some growing impacts of global warming]; healthcare innovation and technology (have we forgotten about AI in healthcare?); and, probably, Veteran’s healthcare improvements.

These next few months leading up to the national general election will be exciting. I think we will see the different party’s positions changing and becoming clearer and I will update this article as those new positions become known.



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Heart Symposium Discusses Rapid Changes in Cardiovascular Disease

BY LOIS THOMSON

"The basics stay the same, but the treatments keep changing." That is the purpose behind the 41st Baptist Health Echo & Structural Heart Symposium, and the comment was made by Dr. Elliott J. Elias who, along with Dr. Damian F. Chaupin, is co-director of the symposium.

Dr. Elias, medical director of Cardiac and Structural Imaging at Baptist Health Miami Cardiac & Vascular Institute, said the conference is a way to get the community together and "educate them on all of the different topics that are important in cardiovascular disease." He acknowledged that cardiology is changing rapidly: "With all the new advancements and techniques that companies are coming up with – more and better iterations of the devices they already have – what we were treating even last year has changed."

Dr. Chaupin, cardiologist, Baptist Health Miami Cardiac & Vascular Institute, agreed. "People are living much longer these days, and valve disease has become so common, but now there are more new options than ever to treat it." He concurred that the symposium is "to create more awareness in the community about valvular heart disease, structural heart disease, and interventions we can provide patients."

The two-day symposium is scheduled for September 27 – 28 at the Lowes Coral Gables Hotel in Coral Gables, and according to Dr. Elias, topics will range from the core principles of echocardiography and the advanced imaging techniques that are important in the treatment of modern-day patients. "We have broken it down and we have a topic for the different valves – the aortic, tricuspid, Mitral. A sonographer will build the foundation for that topic on the valve disease and then we'll talk to the structuralist – the person who does these transcatheter procedures – who will show difficult or complex cases they've done. Then we round it out with a surgeon's view, so the audiences will hear different perspectives of when you would do surgery versus not."

Dr. Chaupin will be lecturing on Artificial Intelligence and Echocardiography, which he said is of particular interest to him because of all the radical changes being seen now in computing. He said AI is starting to make its way more and more into radiology and the field of echocardiography each year.



Dr. Elliott J. Elias



Dr. Damian F. Chaupin

"We're beginning to see AI tools help identify things we could never see before on our own."

Dr. Elias will speak on a variety of topics: "My background is in imaging for transcatheter therapy, which basically is therapy for those patients who would be better suited to not go the surgical route. Transcatheter therapy, or what's noted in our title, structural heart treatment, is planning imaging such as CT and Echo, and that's what we'll go over in the symposium. We will also go over the basics of diagnosing these diseases and how to treat them using the updated guidelines."

According to Dr. Chaupin, the symposium is designed for cardiologists, but others in the community also have a great interest,

such as primary care physicians who take care of these patients. "We used to have one patient being taken care of by one doctor, but now we may have several doctors who participate in the patient's care. Their interest seems to be increasing, too, because a lot of people have never even seen some of the technology we're using in the hospital."

Dr. Elias added, "We have a lot of students within the community who are going to sonography school or have just graduated. This gives them a chance to come to a local symposium and learn different imaging techniques and learn about the valve disease they're treating. They don't realize how much care they're involved in with these patients. So I think this highlights their importance and gives them a chance to learn from their peers, which is something I think is unique to our symposium, rather than just having general physicians talking about these things."

The conference is expected to attract a large attendance, and Dr. Chaupin credits the speakers. "People will have a chance to listen to some of the great cardiologists at this conference – people who come from prominent institutions in the United States – who have been doing this for decades. They travel all over the world, and are involved in some of the biggest conferences given each year. So it's great to see them all come together locally in Miami for us to listen to and have them provide more insight into structural heart disease."

For more information about the symposium, visit <https://cmeonline.baptisthealth.net/echo-symposium>.

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St. Mary's Medical Center Unveils 6 New ER Bays

St. Mary's Medical Center recently unveiled six new emergency department bays in the adult care area. This is phase one of two of renovating the emergency department, including the waiting area as well as adding a vertical care and fast track area, designed to treat less acute patients more efficiently.

West Palm Beach VA Expands Residential Treatment and Care Across Florida with Support of Its Domiciliary

The West Palm Beach VA Healthcare System (WPBVAHCS) is pleased to announce the expansion of residential care, serving Veterans across Florida with the full activation of its 60-bed facility.

The Domiciliary, located on the West Palm Beach VA Medical Center campus, is designed to provide state-of-the-art, high-quality rehabilitation and treatment services for Veterans with identified addiction or substance use disorders.

The programs take a whole health approach to address challenges Veterans may experience, including medical concerns and social needs such as employment and housing. The programs provide these services 24/7 in a structured, supportive, and comfortable residential environment.

"The expansion of the Domiciliary represents our commitment to ensure Veterans receive the care, services and support they need to achieve a full recovery and for their well-being," says Dr. Ronald Williams, WPBVAHCS Chief of Staff. "One of my proudest moments was opening the Domiciliary and now to expand the access of care is another exceptional proud moment for us at VA."



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Cover Story: Building the Hospital of Tomorrow: Rehabilitate, Renovate, or Replace?

Continued from page 1

The process involves a thorough assessment of the building's current condition, identifying structural and infrastructure deficiencies, and implementing necessary repairs. Key areas often addressed include:

- Structural upgrades which will ensure the building can withstand natural disasters, a critical consideration in hurricane-prone South Florida.
- Systems modernization that includes updating electrical, plumbing, and HVAC systems to enhance energy efficiency and meet current healthcare standards.
- Accessibility improvements that will ensure compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and improving overall patient accessibility.

Rehabilitation projects can extend the life of existing buildings, and often cost less than new construction. However, they may also encounter limitations such as spatial constraints and the need to work around existing structures.

Renovation involves reconfiguring and updating existing hospital spaces to better align with contemporary healthcare practices and patient needs. Unlike rehabilitation, which focuses on preserving the

original structure, renovation aims to transform the internal environment to support new functionalities and improve patient care. Renovations can address several critical needs:

- We can design adaptable environments which are reconfigured to accommodate different medical specialties or patient populations.
- Technological integration is imperative to incorporate the latest medical technologies, including telemedicine capabilities, advanced imaging equipment, and electronic health records systems.
- Patient-centered design is always our focus to enhance patient comfort and well-being through improved lighting, noise reduction, and access to nature, which have been shown to positively impact recovery times.

Renovation projects can be phased to minimize disruption to ongoing hospital operations, allowing facilities to remain partially functional during construction. However, renovations can be complex and costly, especially when dealing with aging infrastructure that may require extensive upgrades.

In some cases, the best option is to replace outdated hospital buildings with

new, state-of-the-art facilities designed from the ground up to meet current and future healthcare needs. Replacement projects offer the opportunity to implement the latest architectural and medical innovations without the constraints of existing structures.

Key benefits of building new hospitals include:

- Optimized layouts without existing building constraints so that we can design floor plans that improve patient flow, enhance staff efficiency, and reduce the risk of infections.
- Sustainability design opportunities to incorporate green building practices such as energy-efficient systems, sustainable materials, and renewable energy sources, which are particularly relevant in South Florida's environmentally conscious communities.
- Scalability planning for change by creating infrastructure that can easily expand or adapt to future technological advancements and changes in healthcare delivery models.

While the upfront costs of replacement are typically higher than rehabilitation or renovation, the long-term benefits can outweigh these initial expenses. New

buildings can be designed with longevity in mind, incorporating durable materials and systems that reduce maintenance costs over time. Moreover, new hospitals can better meet the evolving expectations of patients, staff, and regulatory bodies, ensuring compliance with the latest health and safety standards.

Building the hospital of tomorrow in South Florida requires a thoughtful balance of rehabilitating, renovating, and replacing existing infrastructure. Each approach offers unique advantages and challenges, and the optimal solution will depend on a comprehensive assessment of the hospital's current state, future needs, and available resources. As architects, our role is to guide these decisions, leveraging our expertise to create healthcare environments that are not only functional and efficient but also inspiring and healing. By doing so, we can ensure that South Florida's hospitals remain at the forefront of medical innovation and patient care for generations to come.

Charles Michelson is President of Saltz Michelson Architects. For more information, visit www.saltzmichelson.com.

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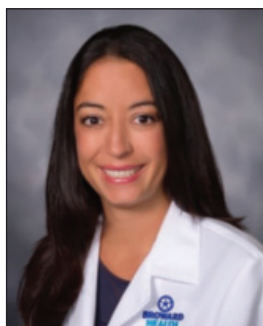
alzheimer's

Providing Robust Care and Support for Memory Disorders

An estimated 580,000 Floridians are living with Alzheimer's, a disease that affects nearly 11.2% of people aged 65 and older in Broward County. As the population gets older, the number of people living with Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia and the need for care is expected to rise.

As the first Joint Commission certified outpatient memory disorder center in the U.S., the Memory Disorder Center at Broward Health North is a leader in a wide range of customized care and support to meet the needs of patients and families living with dementia and has served the community for more than 38 years.

"Memory disorders such as Alzheimer's disease have a profound impact on both our patients and their families," said Hazel Wiley, D.O., medical director of the Memory Disorder Center at Broward Health North. "It is our goal to provide patients the best medical care available and to give caregivers much-needed education and support as they navigate the challenges and changes they face."



Dr. Hazel Wiley

Advanced Treatment

The Memory Disorder Center is committed to providing the latest treatments and optimizing medication management. Earlier this year, it introduced Lecanemab (Leqembi), an advanced, FDA approved treatment for qualified patients with early Alzheimer's disease. Infused on a biweekly basis, the medication targets the changes caused by Alzheimer's disease in patients with mild cognitive impairment.

Hopeful to advance Alzheimer's care, Broward Health also participates in an open clinical trial using MRI-guided focused ultrasound in which treatment directs low-frequency ultrasound beams to open the blood-brain barrier with the goal of washing out amyloid plaques and, therefore, clearing out disease. The system is also exploring the use of Donanemab (Kinsunla), an infused medicine that recently received FDA approval for early Alzheimer's.

Caregiver Support

Caregivers play a vital role in the lives of people suffering from memory loss. Supporting them as they address the many challenges of daily life, personality changes and unusual behaviors that individuals with memory loss can exhibit is a key element of the center's services.

The Memory Disorder Center offers Care Assistance Programs for spouses, siblings, relatives and friends caring for a loved one with dementia. Day and evening classes are scheduled, giving needed options for working caregivers.

Social Workers provide referrals for services like adult day care, and the center's nurses and doctors can advise on strategies that may help prevent and slow the progression of memory loss.

For more information or to register for one of Broward Health North's Care Assistance Programs, visit BrowardHealth.org/MemoryLoss or call (954) 786-7392.

The Memory Disorder Center is a Joint Commission-certified Alzheimer's disease program. The Joint Commission Gold Seal of approval validates that stringent national standards for care of Alzheimer's patients are consistently met.

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- Unintentional weight loss: 10% in 6 months or 5% in one month
- Dependent in 2-3 of 6 activities of daily living (ADLs)
- Decreased tolerance of physical activity
- Shortness of breath or fatigue at rest/minimal exertion
- Recurrent falls with injury
- Multiple ED visits or hospitalizations

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¹ Shega, J., et al. (2008). Patients Dying with Dementia: Experience at the End of Life and Impact of Hospice Care. *Journal of Pain and Symptom Management*, 35(5), 499-507.



World Alzheimer's Day, September 21





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Cover Story: Louis and Anne Green Memory and Wellness Center to Expand Services, Research Opportunities in South Florida

Continued from page 1

nitive health by conducting cutting-edge research on how to treat the illness as well as how to reduce risk factors.

"The saying, 'It takes a village' is true," explains Dr. Ortega of the range of projects that will include Florida Atlantic nursing, medical, social work and health administration students. "Each discipline has different areas of expertise, which results in a more comprehensive, person-centered approach.

"There is a place for every student to gain knowledge and to learn from one another while contributing to best practices and evidence-based dementia care," she added, noting that this interaction will also remind students that they are not alone in the healthcare setting.

The Memory and Wellness Center has been working with the ACTS Center for Applied Research at St. Andrews Estates on a Long COVID study to examine the prevalence and impact of Long COVID symptoms on people living independently in retirement communities. The study provides residents with comprehensive memory testing and evaluation which Dr. Ortega says is crucial for early detection and the management of memory-related issues.

"This study is geared toward identifying and addressing memory concerns linked to the pandemic so that residents can receive tailored care to achieve overall wellbeing," said Dr. Ortega. "We also want to see if there is anything we can do to prevent further decline, which could include medical treatment, nonpharmacological approaches and behavioral changes in different areas."

The Memory and Wellness Center also provides residents with a comprehensive driving evaluation that includes tests of vision, physical functioning and cognitive skills required for safe driving.

In fiscal year 2024-25, the Memory and Wellness Center plans to open a satellite wellness center on Florida Atlantic's Davie Campus that will provide support services to persons living alone with Alzheimer's and related dementias, as well as improve the



**The 18th annual Keep Memories
Alive walk to benefit The Louis and Anne
Green Memory and Wellness Center
will be held on Sunday, Nov. 3, 2024
at the Town Center at Boca Raton.
For more information, visit
<https://fauf.fau.edu/events/memories>.**

quality and effectiveness of care to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities who are at higher risk of developing dementia, such as those with Down syndrome.

"We are very excited about this project and appreciate the space provided by Florida Atlantic's top leadership and the College of Nursing," said Dr. Ortega, adding that the center has been a goal of hers since she first taught on the Davie campus in 2011.

The satellite facility will offer memory and wellness evaluations provided by gerontological nurse practitioners and neuropsychological testing when appropriate, as well as evaluations by social workers to identify the needs of family caregivers. In-person family caregiver support groups will also be provided as will virtual support groups.

Florida Atlantic will be working with Broward Health North Memory and Wellness Center, which is one of 17 state memory disorder clinics under the Florida State Department of Elder Affairs,

to collaborate on research, clinical services and training.

"Our goal is to enhance each other's services and not replicate services by providing community-based dementia programs focused on interdisciplinary diagnoses, counseling and education," said Dr. Ortega, adding that this collaboration will become a source of referrals for both entities as well as enhance dementia-specific supports to the Spanish and Creole-speaking communities.

"Working together in all of these different ways will help students not only go to where the patient is, but provide an understanding of individual health, population health and community health," said Dr. Ortega. "It will help prepare students for this different aspect of care that isn't within the walls of hospitals or clinics."

MorseLife Implements the Happiness Programme to Enhance Memory Care

MorseLife Health System has partnered with Social-Ability to roll out the Happiness Programme, a first-of-its-kind service that sparks laughter and happiness through interactive light displays, for everyone living with cognitive challenges.

The first senior community in the United States to adopt the technology, the transformational new technology is now available to residents at MorseLife Memory Care in West Palm Beach.

The Happiness Programme uses a 360-degree projector to create engaging and interactive light displays on surfaces including sheets, ceilings, tables and screens. This technology is designed to support a resident's physical mobility, cognitive function, and provide therapeutic interventions. Activities include popping bubbles, playing bingo and scrabble, painting on a blank canvas, enjoying virtual scenic views and sunsets, playing the piano, coloring and sweeping leaves, as well as activities such as singing karaoke.

"Our memory care residents have already shown tremendous engagement with the Happiness Programme," said Savannah Blevins, Memory Care Director at MorseLife. "It's wonderful to see them actively participating and moving in new, purposeful ways."

The technology has been shown to reduce falls among those with Alzheimer's and dementia through the engagement in activities that keep them occupied. Continuous walking is a common symptom of memory related conditions that can often lead to falls, but involving residents in the Happiness Program's interactive games significantly decreases the time they spend moving around unsupervised and without purpose.

A recent survey of Happiness Program users indicated that 98% saw improvements



in social and physical wellbeing, 89% in cognitive wellbeing and 73% experienced reduced stress.

"MorseLife Memory Care is leading the way with innovative programs and services that make a significant difference in the lives of the seniors we serve with memory disorders," said MorseLife Health System President and CEO Keith Myers. "Through daily engagement and stimulation, we can help individuals and their families live happier and more meaningful lives. We strive to bring more life to all our residents regardless of their health or circumstances."



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Navigating the Digital Age: Advances in Senior Care Technology

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With the rapid development of home and wearable technology, our society has become more efficient, faster and better.

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Independent living, assisted living and memory care facilities are utilizing more home and wearable technology to improve the quality of life and health outcomes for their residents.

"There are thousands of data points collected through records, assessments, screenings and profiles and much of that just sits," said David Burke, CEO of NxtGen Care. "We activate that data, time-stamp, geolocate and attach it to a person, measuring over 20 key data points and creating a profile not only for residents but also for team members."

NxtGen Care is a healthcare and business intelligence technology company



BY JAIME JOSHI ELDER

seeking to revolutionize the senior care industry and they are unrolling a pilot program at Wellington Bay/Lisbet Health Center, a luxury senior rental community and the only independent living/assisted living/memory care facility in Florida to utilize NxtGen Care's healthcare and business intelligence technology.

"Currently, all staff and almost all residents wear the NxtGen Care Resident M

Factor Tech," said Selina Huong Tran, R.N., Administrator of Lisbet Health Center at Wellington Bay. "We can locate all residents and staff in the building at all times and this system improves response times to resident calls as well as it documents how long we take to respond to any given call."

This current technology is designed based on the shared, foundational belief that better relationships create better care and foster better outcomes.

"By using tech to manage workflow, we free up time for staff to engage with residents," said Burke. "If staff are spending more time with residents, they're more likely to capture more information about care needs."

"We capture exactly how many minutes care staff is with each resident every day and also document how physically close we were to each resident during the day, how much time the resident spends in activities and many other key factors," said Tran. "It is an amazing program."

Both Wellington Bay/Lisbet Health Center and NxtGen Care are committed to the concept of dignity in aging.

"It takes a community to care for us as we age," said Burke. "So, we have to be deliberate in how we engage our technology. It has to foster better human interaction and better care. We are creating a culture of dignity."

The new pilot program NxtGen Care is launching at Wellington Bay/Lisbet centers the concept of aging with dignity while also focusing on increasing staff resiliency.

Approximately 28 staff members - mostly in managerial roles such as executive directors and directors of nursing are participating in this eight-week pilot program which pushes resiliency and skill-building.

"Staff turnover rates in the senior care space are tied with the retail industry and the burnout rates are higher than most other industries," Burke said. "Part of our solution puts care intelligence on an app."

Being able to see workflow and efficiency

is a huge advantage not only to staff but to the overall operations of the organization.

"People are always saying I had to wait 30 minutes for anyone to respond," said Tran. "This has always been the biggest complaint in assisted living - it takes forever for anyone to respond. But we don't have that issue."

Burke hopes that data analysis will not only increase organizational efficiency but also delve deeper into learning more about staff and residents as people.

"Have you seen the movie Moneyball?" he asks with a chuckle. "By looking at data, we can discover talent that isn't recognizable to the naked eye. For staff, we use that data to provide coaching and remuneration based on performance."

Which is all part of the larger picture for both Wellington Bay/Lisbet Health Center and NexGen Care - improving the quality of both health and life for seniors and ensuring the fundamentals of strong mental health and dignity of work for staff, thereby improving outcomes for all.

For more information about Wellington Bay/Lisbet Health Care, visit www.wellingtonbayfl.com.

For more information about NexGen Care, visit www.nxtgencare.com.



FRANK V. SACCO (1947-2024)

Frank V. Sacco, FACHE, a visionary healthcare leader and the former president and CEO of Memorial Healthcare System (MHS), has died. He was 77 years old.

Mr. Sacco led Memorial for 29 years and oversaw the Hollywood-based organization's growth from a single hospital

to one of the largest public healthcare systems in South Florida. His relentless focus on safety, quality, and the highest quality patient-centered care was the foundation on which the modern-day Memorial was built. Those values and the internal culture he cultivated and instilled remain in place to this day, nearly a decade after his retirement.

"Frank Sacco's influence and accomplishments can't be overstated, and I'm proud to carry his legacy forward in the role where he had his greatest impact," said Memorial Healthcare System president and CEO K. Scott Wester. "His loss is felt by all those in our Memorial family and throughout the healthcare industry."

Mr. Sacco's career at MHS spanned 41 years, which included several management and administrative roles prior to being named CEO in 1987. During his time at the helm, five hospitals were added, including Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital, to the original Memorial Hospital (now Memorial Regional Hospital), and a nursing home, and primary and urgent care centers were established. At the time of his retirement in 2016, Memorial employed more than 11,000 and had grown its annual net revenue from \$115 million to nearly \$2 billion. "I leave with the joy of knowing that I have used every fiber in my DNA to make Memorial Healthcare System successful now and well into the future," Mr. Sacco said at the time.

Mr. Sacco passed at home in Ormond Beach with family by his side, after a battle with cancer.

"Frank was not just a leader, but an extraordinary mentor, friend, and a champion for all those that entrust us with their care," said Leah A. Carpenter, Memorial's executive vice president & chief operating officer. "He was a man of great integrity, courage, humility, and vision. If we can continue to be steadfast in the values and foundation he laid, while continuing to put the patient at the forefront of everything we do as providers, then his legacy will be fulfilled."

Memorial was the first healthcare system in Florida to take over the delivery of

primary care for the uninsured. Other accomplishments during Mr. Sacco's tenure included:

- The growth of clinical service lines, including cardiology, cancer, and organ transplant for adults and children, which ensured South Floridians had access to complex care close to home

- The creation of the Memorial Health Network (MHN), a physician-led, professionally managed organization that today operates a clinically integrated network uniting more than 3,000 providers and improving care delivery for nearly 300,000 patients

- Earning consistently superior rankings from Standard and Poor's and Moody's that solidified Memorial's status as one of the nation's most financially viable, safety net healthcare systems.

Dr. Stanley Marks, former chief medical officer at Memorial and a longtime colleague and friend, described Mr. Sacco as a master strategist. "It's hard to imagine Memorial without Frank. His commitment to patients, clinical quality and safety transformed healthcare at Memorial and throughout South Florida. Some hospitals tried to emulate his vision, others tried to compete, but most realized that Memorial set a new standard for healthcare. Frank is responsible for that."

Prior to his career at Memorial, Mr. Sacco served as a commissioned officer in the Army Medical Service Corps, after which he earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Miami and a master's degree in healthcare management from Florida International University. He was a fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives and a volunteer leader of numerous industry and community organizations.

In 2011, the South Broward Hospital District Board of Commissioners honored Mr. Sacco's leadership and vision by naming the Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital campus for him. The previous year, Hollywood (FL) city commissioners proclaimed June 16th "Frank Sacco Day." The list of the many other awards and accolades he earned during an illustrious career is lengthy and significant.

In addition to a loving family, Mr. Sacco leaves behind a culture of care and compassion that remains the hallmark of the Memorial Healthcare System.



Around the Region... Around the Region... Around the Region...

St. Mary's Medical Center Names Romaine Layne Chief Financial Officer

St. Mary's Medical Center appoints Romaine Layne as its new Chief Financial Officer (CFO). Layne is returning to Tenet Healthcare, previously serving as the Controller at North Shore Medical Center and Coral Gables Hospital.

Layne is an experienced financial executive with more than 10 years in the for-profit and not-for-profit healthcare field. She earned her M.S. in accounting from Nova Southeastern University and her B.A. in accounting and business administration from Florida International University.



Romaine Layne

Nicklaus Children's Health System's CEO Appointed to the Graduate Medical Education Committee

Nicklaus Children's Health System's President and Chief Executive Officer, Matthew A. Love, was appointed to the Graduate Medical Education (GME) Committee by Florida Governor Ron DeSantis. Love, a Fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives (FACHE), brings more than 24 years of experience in financial and operational oversight in both adult and pediatric healthcare systems. Prior to joining NCHS, he served as senior vice president and chief financial officer of Regions for Mercy Health System in Ohio, where he led a team of seven regional chief financial officers.



Matthew A. Love

West Palm Beach VA Healthcare System Announces New Associate Director for Patient Care Services

The West Palm Beach VA Healthcare System (WPB-VAHCS) is pleased to announce the appointment of Sonya Arnold, MSN, MBA, BSN, as the new Associate Director for Patient Care Services.

Arnold transitioned from the Bay Pines VA Health Care System where she served as both Chief Nurse of Geriatrics and Extended Care, and later as the Chief Nurse for Operations where she played key roles in Incident Command during significant storm evacuations.

Her nursing career began in 1996 as a staff nurse at the Johnson City VA Medical Center in TN. She has served and managed in various areas, to include acute dialysis, hemodialysis and peritoneal dialysis, and acute care.



Sonya Arnold

Derek Collins Joins Palm Beach Health Network as Its Chief Strategy Officer

The Palm Beach Health Network promotes Derek Collins to Chief Strategy Officer (CSO).

Collins comes from Tenet Healthcare's corporate office in Dallas, TX, where he served as Senior Director of Business Planning. He has diverse work experience, spanning various industries with a strong emphasis on program development. Prior to joining Tenet, he worked at McKinsey & Company where he served as an Engagement Manager. Before joining McKinsey, Collins was employed at DaVita Kidney Care, where he held the positions of Manager, Home Modalities and Analyst, Corporate Strategy.

Collins earned his bachelor's degree in finance from Brigham Young University, and his Master of Business Administration from Northwestern University Kellogg School of Management.



Derek Collins

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These policies are available for sole practitioners, physician networks, and hospital and group-based surgeons. Discounts and guarantee issues are available on a case-by-case basis.

The effective rollout date was July 1, 2023.

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South Florida Hospital & Healthcare News.

For more information, email howard@lifeinsureassure.com



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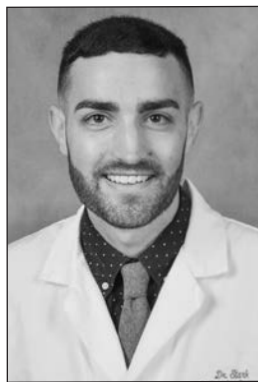
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Orthopedic Spine Surgeon Michael Stark, DO, Joins Palm Beach Health Network Physician Group

Orthopedic spine surgeon Michael Stark, D.O., has joined the Palm Beach Health Network Physician Group. He will be on staff at Delray and West Boca medical centers.

Dr. Stark recently served as the orthopedic surgery chief resident at Jefferson Health New Jersey in Stratford, NJ. He earned his Bachelor of Science degree in psychology, with a minor in biology, from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, NY, and his Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine degree from Nova Southeastern University in Fort Lauderdale, FL.

In addition to his residency in orthopedic surgery at Jefferson Health, Dr. Stark completed his fellowship in spine surgery at SUNY Upstate Medical University in Syracuse, NY. He is a member of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons and the American Osteopathic Academy of Orthopaedics.



Dr. Michael Stark

Holy Cross Medical Group Welcomes Husband and Wife Duo, Neurosurgeon Ryan Moncman, DO, and Orthopedic Surgeon Tara Gaston Moncman, DO

Orthopedic surgeon Tara Gaston Moncman, D.O., and neurosurgeon Ryan Moncman, D.O., have joined Holy Cross Medical Group.

Prior to joining Holy Cross Health, orthopedic surgeon Dr. Tara Gaston Moncman specialized in foot and ankle surgery and served as Chief of Research at The Rothman Orthopaedic Institute/AdventHealth Department of Orthopedic Foot & Ankle Surgery. She was also the Service Chief for Foot and Ankle for the AdventHealth Orthopedic Surgery Residency program.

Dr. Moncman completed a fellowship at Thomas Jefferson University/The Rothman Institute Orthopedic Foot & Ankle Surgery in Philadelphia. At Rowan University School of Osteopathic Medicine in Stratford, New Jersey, she completed her residency and internship in orthopedic surgery and earned her Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine. She received a Master of Science in Physiology and Biophysics from Georgetown University and Bachelor of Science in Biology from Gettysburg College in Pennsylvania.

Prior to joining Holy Cross Health, Neurosurgeon Dr. Ryan Moncman was with Orlando Neurosurgery. Following graduation from the New York Institute of Technology College of Osteopathic Medicine in Old Westbury, NY with a Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine degree, he completed a complex spine surgery fellowship at the University of Pennsylvania and a neurosurgical residency at the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine.



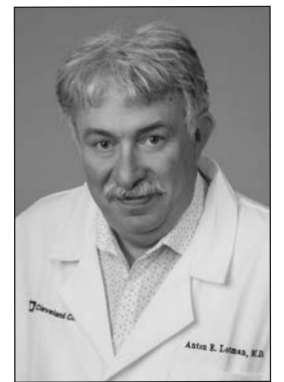
Dr. Tara Gaston Moncman



Dr. Ryan Moncman

Neurologist Joins Cleveland Clinic Indian River Hospital

Cleveland Clinic Indian River Hospital is proud to announce the addition of Anton Lotman, M.D., to their distinguished team of healthcare professionals. Dr. Lotman brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise in neurology, having achieved board certification from the American Board of Neurology. He earned his medical degree from the First Leningrad Medical Institute, and his extensive postgraduate training includes residencies in neurology and geriatrics at Albany Medical Center and Sarah Herzog Memorial Hospital, respectively. His ability to communicate with patients in English, Russian and Hebrew allows him to provide compassionate and comprehensive care to a diverse patient population.



Dr. Anton Lotman

Cleveland Clinic Weston Hospital Expands Cardiovascular Medicine Team

Cleveland Clinic Weston Hospital announces the addition of Dia A. Smiley, D.O., F.A.C.C., to its cardiovascular medicine team. Dr. Smiley brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise in cardiology, particularly in the areas of cardiac amyloidosis and sarcoidosis, general cardiology, and cardiac imaging. With board certifications in cardiovascular disease and internal medicine from the American Board of Internal Medicine, Dr. Smiley has completed rigorous postgraduate training at prestigious institutions including Columbia University Irving Medical Center and Yale University School of Medicine. Her educational journey began at Ohio University College of Osteopathic Medicine, leading to a distinguished career with a focus on cardiac disease in women and cardio-oncology. Dr. Smiley is multilingual, offering services in English, Arabic and French.



Dr. Dia A. Smiley

Mourad Abouelleil, MD, Joins Palm Beach Health Network Physician Group

Board-certified urologist Mourad Abouelleil, M.D., joins the Palm Beach Health Network urology team. He is a member of the medical staff at both Good Samaritan Medical Center in West Palm Beach and Palm Beach Gardens Medical Center. Dr. Abouelleil specializes in performing the following urological procedures: UroLift, transurethral resection of the prostate, robotic radical or partial nephrectomy, transurethral resection of bladder tumors, orchiectomy/scrotal surgery, prostate biopsy, high-intensity focused ultrasound (HIFU) prostate cancer ablation, robotic radical prostatectomy, lithotripsy, robotic, radical and partial nephrectomy, and percutaneous nephrolithotomy. Dr. Abouelleil, who has been practicing since 2010, earned his medical degree at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health in Madison, WI. He completed residencies in general surgery and urology at SUNY Upstate Medical University in Syracuse, NY.



Dr. Mourad Abouelleil

Cleveland Clinic Indian River Hospital Announces New Vice President and Chief Medical Officer

Cleveland Clinic Indian River Hospital has appointed Richard Rothman, M.D., as Vice President and Chief Medical Officer. Dr. Rothman transitions from his interim role to a permanent position, bringing a wealth of experience and dedication to the hospital and the community it serves. Dr. Rothman will also continue his pivotal role as the Chief Medical Operations Officer for the Florida Market, overseeing the innovative Hospital Care At HomeSM program. As a founder of this program, he has been instrumental in delivering acute-level hospital care to patients' homes, a model that successfully launched at Cleveland Clinic Indian River Hospital in 2023 and has since expanded to other Cleveland Clinic facilities. Throughout his tenure at Cleveland Clinic Florida, Dr. Rothman has held significant leadership positions, including Vice Chief of Integrated Hospital Care Institute and Institute Chair of Hospital Medicine. He joined Cleveland Clinic Indian River Hospital as a hospitalist 10 years ago.



Dr. Richard Rothman

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Florida Blue Foundation Awards \$2.4 Million in Grant Funding to Seven Organizations to Support Mental Well-Being Initiatives

Florida Blue Foundation, the philanthropic affiliate of the state's Blue Cross Blue Shield plan, is pleased to announce \$2.4 million in funding to seven non-profit organizations across the state to help increase access to mental well-being services and support.

The grants will assist nonprofits with programs aimed at:

- Addressing youth mental health challenges; and/or
- Increasing the pipeline of mental health professionals

The big picture: The alarming rise in mental health disorders in recent years underscores the need to expand access to mental health resources and support, which can have a transformative impact on overall health and well-being.

"At Florida Blue, we believe there is no health without mental health, and we're supporting solutions that help individuals and families thrive," said Pat Geraghty, President and CEO of Florida Blue. "These grants will help address critical gaps in mental health services, particularly for youth and communities that are under resourced. We're proud to partner with these outstanding organizations to make a meaningful difference."

Geraghty made the announcement in Central Florida at Special Hearts Farm, one of the seven nonprofits receiving a grant from the Florida Blue Foundation.

"We're thrilled to support these seven organizations that are dedicated to improving mental well-being in Florida," said Susan Towler, Executive Director of the Florida Blue Foundation. "By providing funding for proven programs and approaches, we ensure more individuals and families have the tools they need to prioritize their mental health."

The nonprofit organizations selected for 2024 grants serve primarily underserved, underinsured, and low-income individuals from rural communities.

The seven organizations receiving grants include:

Children's Bereavement Center (Miami) – This grant will enable the Children's Bereavement Center to train mental health professionals on providing support to grieving children and families. The Center aims to scale its successful program, having trained 600 professionals, to reach at least 1,000 more across the state.

Special Hearts Farm (Winter Garden) – The purpose of this grant is

to improve the mental health and quality of life of individuals with autism and intellectual disabilities. The Adult Day Training program utilizes agriculture-based learning to help participants develop personal goals related to mental health, social skills, and self-actualization.

Easterseals Northeast Central Florida (Daytona Beach) – This grant will support the expansion of the #MIP (Me, In Progress) wellness program, which was designed to enhance the well-being of teens from low-income families, grappling with behavioral disorders. Through programs, events, and mental health and behavioral services, students gain skills and confidence to confront challenges and realize their full potential during their high school years and beyond.

North Central Florida Health Planning Council (Gainesville) – Power Up is an innovative program that supports 260 students aged 12-18 in Lake City through recreational initiatives and Teen Mental Health First Aid training, teaching them to identify and respond to mental health and substance use challenges affecting their peers.

Florida State Alliance of YMCAs

Foundation Inc. (St. Petersburg) – This program is aimed at improving mental health among Spanish-speaking children in Florida and Puerto Rico through a culturally-sensitive curriculum, 'The Heroic Journey'. Partnering with Pop Culture Hero Coalition, the Florida State Alliance of YMCAs will translate and implement the program, benefiting 1,600 children in 20 YMCAs across Florida and Puerto Rico.

Gentlemen's Quest of Tampa, Inc. (Tampa Bay) – The purpose of this grant is to expand the Life Class program to include a Youth Wellness Program, offering counseling sessions for 77 students, and employing a full-time Success Coach to provide wrap-around services and lead parent meetings, empowering students and their families to thrive.

Lakeview Center Inc. (Pensacola) – This grant will create avenues for counseling, social work, and nursing students to intern in a behavioral health setting by employing an intern coordinator who will act as a liaison between students, colleges, and Lakeview Center. The program will lead to 110 more qualified and/or licensed professionals in the behavioral health setting.

Wellington Regional Medical Center Awarded Total Hip & Knee Accreditation from The Joint Commission

Wellington Regional Medical Center has earned The Joint Commission's Gold Seal of Approval® for Total Hip & Knee Accreditation by demonstrating continuous compliance with its performance standards. The Gold Seal is a symbol of quality that reflects a health care organization's commitment to providing safe and quality patient care.

Wellington Regional Medical Center underwent a rigorous, unannounced onsite review. During the visit, a team of Joint Commission reviewers evaluated compliance with Total Hip & Knee standards spanning several areas including emergency management, environment of care, infection prevention and control, leadership, medication management, and rights and responsibilities of the individual.

The Joint Commission's standards are developed in consultation with health care experts and providers, measurement experts and patients. They are informed by scientific literature and expert consensus to help health care organizations measure, assess and improve performance. The surveyors also conducted onsite observations and interviews.

"As a healthcare accreditor, The Joint Commission works with healthcare organizations across care settings to inspire safer and higher quality of care that is more equitable and compassionate," says Ken Grubbs, DNP, MBA, RN, executive vice president of Accreditation and Certification Operations and chief nursing officer, The Joint Commission. "Through collaborating on innovative solutions and evidence-based resources and tools, The Joint Commission helps drive improvement while maintaining accountability through our leading survey methods and standards. We commend Wellington Regional Medical Center for its commitment to advance safety, quality, equity and compassion for all patients."

"We are incredibly proud to receive the Total Hip and Knee Replacement Accreditation from The Joint Commission. This recognition is a testament to our unwavering commitment to providing the highest standard of care for our patients. At Wellington Regional Medical Center, we strive for excellence in every aspect of our orthopedic program, ensuring that our patients receive the best possible outcomes and experience. This accreditation reflects the dedication of our entire team to continually improving our services and achieving the best for our community," said Pam Tahan, CEO.

For more information, please visit [The Joint Commission website](https://www.jointcommission.org).



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Cover Story: Revolutionizing Healthcare Supply Chain Management

Continued from page 1

Health South Florida, sheds light on the pre-HealthChain scenario, "We had thousands of match exceptions, and no matter how hard the team worked to resolve them, we could never make a permanent dent in the total. We downloaded the pending match exceptions each week and assigned owners to each. Our team then researched each one to determine the root cause and, more importantly, the call to action to resolve. This process was time-consuming and unsustainable."

The sheer volume and complexity of healthcare supply chains, compounded by global disruptions such as pandemics and trade restrictions, necessitated a robust solution. Baptist Health sought a communication tool that could provide automation, transparency, and seamless integration with their existing ERP and reporting systems.

"We were looking for a communication tool, and we believed that the best-in-class solution for communication is Salesforce," Godfrey explains. "While the Salesforce platform has traditionally been used within sales workflows, we found it configurable enough to support procure-to-pay workflows equally well."

HealthChain, built on the Salesforce platform, introduced a game-changing level of automation to the process of handling invoice match exceptions. The application uses predefined criteria to classify each exception, eliminating the need for manual research.

"HealthChain automatically creates a 'case' for each exception," Godfrey elaborates. "Based on the exception type, an email template is employed from the case and automatically sent to the internal department or supplier with an actionable request. If the recipient does not respond within a pre-determined amount of time, HealthChain systematically escalates the case to the next level of leadership."

This streamlined approach has yielded significant results. In the first year of using HealthChain, Baptist Health resolved nearly 37,000 match exceptions and managed almost 98,000 emails within the application. The average resolution time dropped to 11 days, compared to an industry average of over 60 days. Moreover, Baptist Health identified and avoided \$2.9 million in overcharged invoices on clinical supplies alone.

The benefits of HealthChain extend beyond the internal team at Baptist Health. "Our suppliers are also reaping the benefits of HealthChain," says Godfrey.

The application's ability to promptly resolve pricing discrepancies prevents future exceptions, saving time and effort for the healthcare provider and the supplier. This efficiency leads to more timely payments and stronger supplier relationships.

Feedback from staff and stakeholders has been overwhelmingly positive. Team members now have a single source of truth for match exceptions, allowing them to manage and resolve issues efficiently. "They know their leaders will become involved to assist if exceptions are not cleared within the specified time," Godfrey notes. The application's clear reporting capabilities enable self-management and provide visibility into supplier performance, fostering a more collaborative environment.

HealthChain's impact goes beyond managing match exceptions. Baptist Health has expanded its use to include Sourcing Events, Contract Management, and Item Management. "Since the deployment of sourcing activities in HealthChain, we have utilized this tool to create over 5,000 contract cases and over 40,000 associated emails to initiate the contract renewal process," Godfrey explains. This expansion has reduced contracts pending renewal by 28%, significantly streamlining operations.

The best part of HealthChain, Godfrey says, is the impact it has on Baptist Health's most important asset – its team members. He explains that having workload management tools plays an important role in empowering teams to better understand what they need to do and, in turn, self-monitor how well they are performing. HealthChain takes individual workload management to a whole new level by providing detailed visibility into every task they need to accomplish - they can see what has been done, when it was done, and what is still pending. It also provides leaders with greater visibility to their team's overall workload, and if needed, balances the workload by re-assigning cases.

During a time when healthcare costs continue to increase, ensuring we are getting charged the right price, negotiating contracts for the best value for the organization, and being able to self-manage are all cost containment measures HealthChain simplifies, while providing self-motivation and direction to those performing the work.

Looking to the future, Baptist Health is committed to continually enhancing HealthChain. "We are only beginning to tap into the possibilities of utilizing Artificial Intelligence to streamline workflows and reduce redundant and mundane tasks," says Godfrey. The potential for AI to further optimize processes, such as identifying required actions and progressing work streams based on historical resolutions, represents the next frontier for HealthChain.

HealthChain is now ready for deployment across healthcare systems nationwide. Baptist Health, as the solution's subject matter expert, has partnered with Penrod, a consultant specializing in Salesforce for healthcare, to commercialize the application.

"HealthChain was designed for providers, by healthcare supply chain experts," Godfrey emphasizes. This collaboration ensures that HealthChain is built for streamlined adoption, empowering healthcare providers to swiftly address their match exception challenges.

In a world where efficiency and accuracy are paramount, Baptist Health's partnership with Salesforce to deploy HealthChain stands as a testament to the power of innovation in healthcare. Godfrey reflects, "We intend to keep exploring ways to leverage this technology to continue improving our organization's service levels and build transparent, mutually beneficial relationships with our supply partners."

For more information, visit baptisthealth.net.

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Cover Story: Monkeypox in Florida: Navigating the Emerging Health Crisis

Continued from page 1

How Monkeypox Spreads and What to Watch For

Monkeypox is a zoonotic disease, meaning it can be transmitted from animals to humans. The virus spreads through direct contact with the bodily fluids, lesions, or respiratory droplets of an infected person, as well as through contaminated materials like bedding and clothing. Additionally, the virus can be transmitted from animals to humans through direct contact with the blood, bodily fluids, or skin lesions of infected animals.

The disease often begins with non-specific symptoms such as fever, headache, muscle aches, and fatigue. A unique feature of monkeypox is lymphadenopathy, or swollen lymph nodes, which distinguishes it from other similar viral infections. These early signs are soon followed by a rash that progresses through several stages: flat macules, raised papules, fluid-filled vesicles, and pus-filled pustules before finally crusting over. This progression usually takes 2 to 4 weeks. Recognizing these symptoms and understanding how monkeypox spreads are crucial for preventing further outbreaks.

Why Early Detection Matters

A timely and accurate diagnosis is crucial for controlling monkeypox outbreaks and stopping the virus. The PCR (polymerase chain reaction) test is the gold standard, detecting viral DNA from skin lesion samples with pinpoint accuracy. This test is vital for confirming cases early on. Although serological tests detect antibodies to the virus and can be useful for tracking the spread of monkeypox, they're less effective for early diagnosis.

Vaccine Shortage: Creative Solutions for a Critical Issue

The shortage of the JYNNEOS mpox vaccine has put public health authorities in a tough spot. This non-replicating, live

attenuated smallpox vaccine is highly effective against both smallpox and monkeypox, but high demand and limited production have led to a significant shortage. To tackle this issue, innovative strategies are being explored. One promising approach is intradermal administration, which allows up to five doses to be derived from a single subcutaneous dose. This method helps stretch limited supplies and ensures broader coverage, especially for high-risk groups.

Public Health Response: A Multi-Pronged Strategy

In response to the monkeypox outbreak, public health authorities in South Florida and beyond are implementing a comprehensive strategy. This includes increasing awareness among healthcare providers and the public, swiftly isolating confirmed or suspected cases, and intensifying targeted vaccination efforts. These vaccination campaigns focus on high-risk groups, including healthcare workers, individuals with known exposure, people with HIV who are immunocompromised, and children under the age of 1 year.

Antiviral treatments like Tecovirimat (TPOXX) are also being considered for severe cases, particularly among immunocompromised individuals.

Community involvement is key to controlling the outbreak. Ongoing research, stronger surveillance, and equitable healthcare access are vital to prevent future crises. Together, we can build a more resilient future.

Dr. Jyotsna Chawla is Assistant Professor of Medical Microbiology, Dr. Kiran C. Patel College of Osteopathic Medicine, Nova Southeastern University.

Accolades Accolades Accolades Accolades

Palm Beach Health Network Announces 2023 Tenet Heroes and Hall of Fame Inductees

The Palm Beach Health Network (PBHN) is proud to announce five 2023 Tenet Hero winners, including two Tenet Hall of Fame inductees.

Good Samaritan Medical Center nurse AnnaMae Predtechenskis is one of PBHN's 2023 Hall of Fame inductees. As a teenager, Predtechenskis served as a children's counselor for a ministry camp in upstate New York. There she met Liel, and cared for a nonverbal, autistic 13-year-old girl who was born and raised in Israel. Predtechenskis was immediately drawn to Liel and how she interacted with others in the camp. Predtechenskis was inspired to witness how Liel saw the world and knew she was unique and special. The friendship ultimately extended to the girl's family in Israel and they remained in touch. When Israel was attacked in October 2023, Predtechenskis immediately thought of Liel and was concerned for her safety whose home was only 30 minutes away from the worst of the attacks. She and her sister contacted Liel's family and offered to open their home and hearts to Liel. Several days later, Liel arrived in South Florida and received safe shelter in Predtechenskis and her sister's home. They were granted temporary legal guardianship of Liel by her parents until she returned to Israel a few months ago.

Palm Beach Gardens Medical Center assistant nurse manager, Bri Freeman is a 2023 Hall of Fame Inductee. According to her nomination, Freeman travels to Tanzania, Africa every year for a Medical Mission. This mission prioritizes women's health and safe births. She became fluent in Swahili, to assist with being successful for the journey each year. She educates the medical staff how to identify postpartum complications; hemorrhage, estimate blood loss, and perform correct fundal massage. Each year, Freeman foregoes the comforts of home for this trip to extend her nursing knowledge and help others less fortunate.

Delray Medical Center's Carolyn Kern, BS, MPT, Ortho/Spine/Oncology Patient Navigator; St. Mary's Medical Center wound care nurse Gina Leitheuser; and West Boca Medical Center's Director of Revenue Analysis, Staci, are the 2023 Tenet Heroes.



AnnaMae Predtechenskis



Bri Freeman

Cleveland Clinic Martin South Recognized for Excellence in Emergency Nursing

Cleveland Clinic Martin South's Emergency Department has been recognized with the prestigious 2024 Lantern Award from the Emergency Nurses Association. This award celebrates excellence in leadership, practice, education, advocacy, and research within emergency care settings.

The Lantern Award showcases Emergency Departments' (ED) accomplishments in the areas of team communication and innovative approaches to delivering high-quality, compassionate care to patients. This award underscores commitment to prompt, efficient, and safe treatment that meets the highest standards of quality. Cleveland Clinic Martin South's ED implemented a "pull to full" strategy, optimizing staffing to promptly attend to patient needs upon arrival.

"We are honored to receive this prestigious award, which reflects our team's hard work and passion for excellence in emergency care," said Laura Hrubes, MSN, RN, ED Nurse Manager. "Our team's commitment to proactive communication and the immediate delivery of patient care ensures that every patient receives timely, safe, and compassionate care from the moment they arrive."

VITAS Healthcare Honored With Inaugural Founders Spirit Award by the National Black Nurses Association

VITAS Healthcare has been honored as the inaugural recipient of the prestigious Founders Spirit Award by the National Black Nurses Association (NBNA). The award recognizes VITAS for over two decades of dedicated support and innovative programming that align with the mission and vision of NBNA's founders. VITAS was the exclusive organization selected for this honor alongside five other individual recipients.

The Founders Spirit Award is a presidential honor. Its name is meant to evoke the enduring spirit of the original founders who created NBNA more than 50 years ago against the odds and amidst great adversity. Recipients show a documented history of dedicated support and extraordinary service to NBNA, going above and beyond and offering sustained financial philanthropy and advocacy of the mission and vision of the association.

These efforts have significantly enhanced operational efficiency, leading to improved safety and quality metrics but also significantly improving patient experience. By immediately engaging with patients upon their arrival, the ED team reduces wait times, expedites assessments, and initiates treatment promptly. This proactive approach minimizes anxiety and uncertainty for patients and their families, fostering a sense of reassurance and confidence in the care provided.

American Association of Critical-Care Nurses Recognizes the MICU at West Palm Beach VA Medical Center



MICU team

The American Association of Critical-Care Nurses (AACN) recently granted a silver-level Beacon Award for Excellence on the Medical Intensive Care Unit (MICU) at the West Palm Beach VA Medical Center.

The Beacon Award for Excellence recognizes caregivers in outstanding units whose consistent and systematic approach to evidence-based care optimizes patient outcomes and exceed expectations.

"The MICU at the VA Medical Center deserves this national recognition as role models to others with their passion to serve Veterans; instilling trust and confidence for loved ones knowing their Veteran is in the very best of hands," says West Palm Beach VA Healthcare System (WPBVAHCS) Chief of Staff Dr. Ronald Williams.

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WHAT'S NEW...WHAT'S NEW...WHAT'S NEW...

Cleveland Clinic Florida Launches Supplier Accelerator Program to Support Economic Growth of Local Small Businesses



Business owners selected to participate in the Cleveland Clinic Florida Supplier Accelerator Program: (l-r) Tiffany Saur, Soar Promo, LLC; Sheena Heppern, Reas Marketing, LLC; Keel Russell, BizLia, Inc.; Kim Haley, Medebra, LLC; Wendy Smith, The Soomitz Group, LLC.

Cleveland Clinic in Florida has launched a business development program to boost the economic health of companies and communities in South FL and the Treasure Coast. The Supplier Accelerator Program is an extension of an enterprise-wide initiative initially launched at the Cleveland Clinic in Cleveland, OH. The program is designed to expand the impact of local businesses owned by traditionally underrepresented entrepreneurs by helping them become competitive in the markets they operate.

Cleveland Clinic FL has selected five local companies as finalists to participate in the Supplier Accelerator Program. Over six months, experts will provide opportunities for business owners to expand their knowledge base to help them grow their businesses.

Through the Supplier Accelerator Program, Cleveland Clinic in FL will provide:

- Coaching in business development and in navigating the sourcing process of large corporations

- Direct one-on-one access to Cleveland Clinic leaders and subject matter experts
- Networking opportunities with Cleveland Clinic decision-makers, Tier I suppliers and key community organizations

- Multidisciplinary business review to provide actionable feedback for developing and growing their business

- \$10,000 cash prize per finalist upon completion of the program

The five companies selected for the inaugural cohort include:

Medebra, a woman-owned enterprise, founded by Kim Haley in Fort Lauderdale, FL in 2017.

BizLia is a minority-owned enterprise, founded by Keel Russell in Coconut Creek, FL in 2023.

Soar Promo, a woman and minority-owned enterprise, was founded by Tiffany Saur in Palm Beach Gardens, FL in 2022.

Reas Marketing is a woman-owned enterprise, founded by Sheena Heppern in Fort Pierce, FL in 2012.

The Soomitz Group is a woman and minority-owned enterprise, founded by Wendy Smith in Coral Springs, FL in 2022.

Lee Health Is the First Health System in Florida to Offer Specialized Treatment for Patients with Movement Disorders

Lee Health is thrilled to announce that it is the first in Florida to implant a small rechargeable battery with remote programming capabilities to treat patients with movement disorders. The implementation of the Liberta RC DBS System puts Lee Health at the forefront for the treatment of movement disorders and Parkinson's Disease. The battery is an Implantable Pulse Generator (IPG), which sends electrical stimulation to the brain to interrupt abnormal signals that are causing symptoms. Deep Brain Stimulation therapy helps patients achieve more control over their symptoms. The Rechargeable (RC) battery brings these components together in a way that hasn't been done before.

The Liberta RC DBS System offers the longest time between charges of any DBS technology, allowing patients to recharge the device as few as 10 times each year. It uses a wireless charger that is placed over the device and lasts for 37 days on nominal settings. "This is the most promising way to treat patients with movement disorders and we are excited to be able to offer this exciting new technology to the Southwest Florida community and beyond," said Lee Health neurosurgeon and leader of the Liberta RC DBS System initiative Dr. George Mandybur. "Florida has the second highest number of patients with Parkinson's Disease. This battery is going to make a world of difference for our patients with all types of movement disorders."

Marcus Neuroscience Institute Now Offers High-Intensity Focused Ultrasound for Patients with Essential Tremor



Marcus Neuroscience Institute, part of Baptist Health South Florida, at Boca Raton Regional Hospital, is now treating patients with high-intensity focused ultrasound (HIFU) for those suffering from essential tremor.

The technology uses concentrated ultrasound waves to heat the brain tissue and block signals causing the tremor. Under MRI guidance, sound waves are precisely focused on the small spot in the brain considered to be responsible for causing the tremors. There is no incision or general anesthesia used during the treatment.

Some of the benefits of HIFU include the following:

- Incisionless treatment
- Outpatient procedure
- No general anesthesia
- Immediate results on the treated hand
- Safe and effective with minimal side effects

The ability to offer the HIFU treatment at Marcus Neuroscience Institute was made possible through philanthropy.

Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital Holds Pup-tacular Facility Dog Olympics

Memorial Healthcare System and Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital held their first ever Facility Dog Olympics.

The event was held at Hollywood-based Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital, and brought together patients, families, and team members to support the facility dogs as they competed in a series of Olympic-inspired events. These included Fast and Fur-ious Race (Track & Field), Paw-some Home Handler Agility Challenge and Tug of War.

The judging panel, comprised of patients and Memorial team members, including

Dr. Aharon Sareli, Chief Medical Officer of Memorial Healthcare System, awarded the gold medal to Golden 'Goldie' Delicious, the newest member of the Memorial Animal Assisted Therapy Program.

The facility dogs play a crucial role in the hospitals they serve. Each of Memorial Healthcare System's six facility dogs underwent extensive training prior to assuming their responsibilities. Carmen Cowart, child life specialist and facility dog handler at Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital spoke about how the event showcased the specialized training of the facility dogs, saying, "These dogs went to training from birth until two, learning up to 80 commands to help patients in the hospital setting. We are going to be using those commands and applying it to the obstacle course, providing fun challenges for patients and families to watch them do."



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Students at the Medical Campus learn as they build their experience in state-of-the-art facilities. Students practice their skills on human patient simulators - manikins capable of mimicking more than 200 illnesses and conditions. The Campus offers a variety of disciplines in nursing and allied health. There are more than 20 options, including bachelor's degree programs and training certificates that can put you on the fast track to an exciting career in healthcare. For more information, contact 305-237-4141 or visit <http://www.mdc.edu/medical/academic-departments> for more information.

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

SOUTH UNIVERSITY

South University is a nonprofit institution offering educational opportunities for intellectual, social and professional development. With a 120-year story, our community is one where you can belong, believe and become. Providing excellent student services since 1981, the beautiful West Palm Beach Campus, with its landmark Clock Tower, is ideally located in the Palm Beaches of Florida. Regardless of pursuing an associate degree, baccalaureate, masters, or doctorate, our campus offers something for all. South University - West Palm Beach (561) 273-6500 • Toll-free 1-866-242-1840 www.southuniversity.edu/westpalmbeach

THE UNIVERSITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE FOR HEALTH SCIENCES

The University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences (USAHS) in Miami offers graduate degrees in physical and occupational therapy. The state of the art clinical simulation lab, on-site clinics, and a statewide network of fieldwork and clinical partners, provide valuable hands-on learning for students to succeed in today's healthcare workforce. Rolling admissions and a convenient trimester schedule offer flexibility. Founded in St. Augustine, Florida in 1979, USAHS has five campuses in California, Florida, and Texas. For more information visit usa.edu or call 1-800-241-1027

HEALTHCARE ACCOUNTING AND ADVISORY

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HEALTHCARE STAFFING SAFEGUARD HEALTHCARE

Safeguard Healthcare, a hospital and healthcare staffing company based in South Florida, provides contracted healthcare personnel resources, as well as contract-to-hire, and permanent placements. Areas of Support include: Information Technology, Medical Records, Business Office, Nursing, Clinical Departments, Central Supply and Food Services. Email gthompson@safeguard-healthcare.com, (954)412-2075, or visit www.safeguardhealthcare.com

HEMOCARE SERVICES MORSELIFE HOME HEALTH CARE

MorseLife, a recognized leader in exceptional healthcare, housing and support services for seniors in Palm Beach County, delivers home health care catered to individual needs enabling people to live as independently as possible. Assistance with personal care, homemaking, neighborhood errands and companionship is offered from one hour visits to 24/7 in-home, hospital, rehab centers, nursing homes and independent/assisted living settings. License #HHA21179096. Visit <https://morselife.org/home-health-care/> or call (561) 599-5770.

HOSPICE VITAS® HEALTHCARE PATIENTS AND FAMILIES COME FIRST

When someone you love is seriously ill, there are so many decisions to be made. VITAS helps you make care transitions that make sense: From hospital to home. From focusing on the disease to focusing on the patient. From coping on your own to being part of a team. We have served Dade-Monroe, Broward and Palm Beach counties since 1978. For information or referral, call 800.723.3233 or go to VITAS.com.

INSURANCE SPECIALISTS

RISK STRATEGIES

Danna-Gracey, the largest independent medical malpractice insurance agency in Florida, dedicated to providing insurance coverage placement for doctors and other health care providers over the past 20 years, is now a part of Risk Strategies. Risk Strategies is a leading national specialty insurance brokerage and risk management firm offering comprehensive risk management advice and insurance and reinsurance placement for property & casualty, and employee benefits risks. With more than 30 specialty practices, Risk Strategies serves commercial companies, nonprofits, public entities, and individuals, and has access to all major insurance markets. For more information, contact Matt Gracey at matt@dannagracey.com or (561) 276-3553.

MARITAL & FAMILY LAW ATTORNEY NEAVE FAMILY LAW, P.A.

Neave Family Law, P.A., provides legal services in the area of marital and family law. When family law matters must be decided by the legal system, the process can be complicated by heated emotions and financial turmoil. It is the goal of Neave Family Law, P.A., to guide you through the legal process and remove as much financial stress as possible. For a consultation, please call (954) 981-2200 or visit www.divorcelawyerfortlauderdale.com.

MARKETING & PUBLIC RELATIONS BOARDROOMPR

BoardroomPR is a full-service PR and integrated marketing agency, leveraging the skills of our staff of former journalists, PR and marketing pros and multimedia specialists to provide visibility across numerous platforms to our healthcare clients. We combine PR with digital and branding campaigns to build brand and business. For more information, contact Don Silver at donsil@boardroompr.com.

MEDICAL ASSOCIATION DADE COUNTY MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

Dade County Medical Association (DCMA) – "The voice of Physicians in Miami Dade County." Supporting its members in all aspects of the practice of medicine; to serve physicians and their patients by establishing and promoting ethical, educational and clinical standards for the medical profession, and to advocate the highest principle of all, the integrity of the patient/physician relationship. For more information: visit the website www.miamimed.com or please call Angel Bosch at (305) 324-8717 or email Angel at abosch@miamimed.com

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Cano Health is a high-touch, technology-powered healthcare company delivering personalized, value-based primary care to approximately 310,000 members. Founded in 2009, with its headquarters in Miami, Florida, Cano Health is transforming healthcare by delivering primary care that measurably improves the health, wellness, and quality of life of its patients and the communities it serves through its primary care medical centers and supporting affiliated providers. For more information, contact: (786) 206-3322 ext. 7559 or mediarelations@canohealth.com

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