

Bulletin

Physicians Caring for Our Community



11th Annual

Medical Service Awards



Strengthening the PWP!
AMSA & Golf Tournament
...More photos inside



BULLETIN

Lee County Medical Society is a Virtual Operation
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Lee County Medical Society Mission Statement

The mission of Lee County Medical Society is to advocate for physicians and their relationships with patients; promote public health and uphold the professionalism of the practice of medicine.

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Cover is a collage of the 2023 Medical Service Award winners. Members are encouraged to submit photos to be considered for the Bulletin cover. Must be large format/300dpi. Email photos to marketing@lcmsfl.org

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

THU, DEC 14th
6:30pm - 9:30pm

LCMS Annual Holiday Party
The Burroughs Home & Gardens, Fort Myers
Sponsor: FineMark National Bank & Trust
Enjoy a festive holiday celebration at this historic downtown Fort Myers property. Includes valet parking, cocktails, holiday photobooth, dinner and basket raffles.

FRI, JAN 12th
5:30pm - 7:30pm

LCMS Cocktail Hour
Top Golf, off Colonial and I-75
Sponsor this event! Email marketing@lcmsfl.org

SAT, JAN 13th
7:30am - 2:00pm

LCMS CME Day
Crown Plaza at Bell Tower
Earn required CME, AOA credits and substance abuse CE.
Sponsor this event! Email marketing@lcmsfl.org

FRI, JAN 19th
6:30pm - 8:00pm

LCMS Installation Dinner
Crown Plaza at Bell Tower
Join us for dinner as we install the 2024 Board of Directors.
Sponsor this event! Email marketing@lcmsfl.org

FRI, FEB 9th
5:30pm - 7:30pm

LCMS Cocktail Hour
Sponsor or host this event! Email marketing@lcmsfl.org

FRI, MAR 8th
5:30pm - 7:30pm

LCMS Cocktail Hour
Sponsor or host this event! Email marketing@lcmsfl.org

THU, MAR 14th
6:00pm - 8:30pm

LCMS Member Meeting
Sponsor or host this event! Email marketing@lcmsfl.org

RVSP to LCMS events at www.lcmsfl.org

MEMBER NEWS

NEW MEMBERS AS OF NOVEMBER 16, 2023



Aamer Abbass, MD
Gastroenterology
Lee Physician Group
9800 S Health Park Dr.
Fort Myers, FL 33908
239-343-6202
www.leehealth.org



Kelly M. Elleson, MD
Breast Surgery
GenesisCare
8931 Colonial Center Dr.
Fort Myers, FL 33905
239-277-0479
www.genescare.com



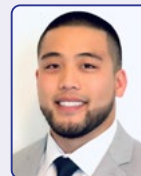
Alam Khalid, MD
Gastroenterology
Lee Physician Group
9800 S Health Park Dr.
Fort Myers, FL 33908
239-343-6202
www.leehealth.org



Ariel M. Almquist, MD
Anesthesiology
US Anesthesia Partners
13550 Metro Pkwy., Ste 301
Fort Myers, FL 33966
239-322-3844
www.usap.com



Omar L. Esponda, MD
Internal Medicine
1500 Royal Palm Square Blvd.
#105
Fort Myers, FL 33919



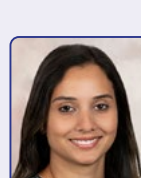
Alan M. Nguyen, DO
Interventional Spine & Sports Med
Gardner Orthopedics
3033 Winkler Ave
Suite 100
Fort Myers, FL 33916
239-277-7070
www.gardnerorthopedics.com



Carlos Bustamante, MD
General Surgery
Lee Physician Group
8380 Riverwalk Park Blvd.
Suite 100
Fort Myers, FL 33919
239-343-9960
www.leehealth.org



Bianca Ferrari, MD
Medical Oncology
Florida Cancer Specialists
8260 Gladiolus Drive
Fort Myers, FL 33908
239-437-5755
www.flcancer.com



Gouri Sreepati, MD
Gastroenterology
Lee Physician Group
9800 S Health Park Dr.
Fort Myers, FL 33908
239-343-6202
www.leehealth.org



Bret Cardwell, MD
General Surgery
General Surgery Institute
15730 New Hampshire Ct.
Fort Myers, FL 33908
239-481-0033



Erin A. Heitman, MD
Urology
GenesisCare Urology
4571 Colonial Blvd, Suite 110
Fort Myers, FL 33966
239-264-7180
www.genescare.com



Salvatore Tumbarello, MD
Anesthesiology
US Anesthesia Partners
13550 Metro Pkwy., Suite 301
Fort Myers, FL 33966
239-322-3844
www.usap.com

NEW RETIREES

We wish the following physicians all the luck in retirement:

Dr. Michael G. Raymond
Dr. John Ritrosky, Jr.

OFFICE SPACE AVAILABLE

Newly renovated medical office space (11' x 10') is available for lease off Gladiolus. Space is in a 3,085 sq. ft. office building. For more information, email Dr. Oliver Favalli at wsb5150@yahoo.com.

Examination room (11' x 10') for rent on Corkscrew Road in Estero. Ample countertop and cabinet storage, single sink. Happy to make any changes for aesthetics, storage or data/medication safety. Days of the week are variable per your schedule. Rent negotiable. Call Michelle or Grace at 239.495.1166 or email chirocareandrehab@gmail.com.

PLACE A CLASSIFIED AD

Got stuff to sell? Looking to hire?

Email your Classified submissions to marketing@lcmsfl.org.
FREE for members (limit 50 words). \$25/nonmembers.

NEW OFFICE LOCATIONS

Update your records to reflect these members' new business, practice addresses and contact details:

Nadia Kazim, MD, FACS has relocated her practice
Naples Aesthetic Institute
Boutique Plastic Surgery & Med Spa
3025 Airport Road N • Naples, FL 34105

David Gutstein, MD has opened a new practice
GI Providers, LLC
239-410-5604

MOVED OUT OF AREA

The following physicians have relocated out of the area:

Dr. Howard Eisenberg
Dr. May Kay Peterson

The U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) has issued a new temporary rule extending telehealth controlled substance prescribing flexibilities. DEA-registered clinicians will be able to prescribe schedule II-V controlled substances via telehealth through Dec. 31, 2024.

REFLECTING ON MY PRESIDENCY

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: Ryan Lundquist, MD

As my term as the President of the Lee County Medical Society comes to a close, I want to take a moment to express my deepest gratitude for the incredible privilege it has been to serve in this role over the past year.

The trust you placed in me to lead the society has been a tremendous honor, and I am humbled by the support and camaraderie of our dedicated members.

Throughout the past year, we have had many successful events that have connected our physicians, including the first golf tournament. Our happy hours remain popular, and I am happy to see new faces attending each week. The physician wellness program continues to run strong, and we have been able to increase the visits available to physicians. All of this is possible because our physicians remain engaged to help support our community.

Looking to the future, I am enthusiastic for the Lee County Medical Society. I am confident that our society is poised to continue to grow.

Our future will be built on collaboration, education, and advocacy. We will work hand in hand to provide the best possible care to our patients and to support one another in our

professional journeys. We will continue to evolve and meet the ever-changing needs of our patients and the healthcare industry.

As I step down from the presidency, I leave with a heart full of gratitude for the experiences and relationships formed during this year. I am confident that your incoming president, Dr. Scott Caesar, will continue to guide our society toward a bright and promising future. The Lee County Medical Society is in excellent hands, and together, we will continue to make a positive impact on the healthcare landscape in our community.

In closing, I want to express my heartfelt thanks to all of you, the members of the Lee County Medical Society, for your dedication, support, and unwavering commitment to our shared mission. The privilege of being your President has been the highlight of my career, and I am excited to see what the future holds for our society.



THE BUSINESS SIDE OF MEDICINE 2023 ONLINE SEMINAR SERIES

Information provided by Ben Mirza and Mirza Healthcare Law Partners. Virtual seminars are held on the third Thursday at 6:30pm

[REGISTER](#)

November 21st

How to Handle Collection Challenges of Working With Health Plans

[REGISTER](#)

December 12th

Medical Marijuana Law for Physician Practices

[REGISTER](#)

Access the links to register for these seminars in the digital version of this newsletter at lcmsfl.org/publications

BECOME A DOCTOR OF THE DAY

The **Doctor of the Day** program was founded in the 1960s by a former Florida House member, Representative Walter Sackett, M.D., from Miami. Representative Sackett encouraged the Florida Medical Association to bring a physician to Tallahassee each day of the Regular Session. This program, administered by the Legislative Clinic, delivers a vital professional service to the members of the Florida Legislature and all legislative employees. The physicians of Florida have provided this important voluntary public service each year since the program's inception.

The 2024 Regular Session is January 9, 2024 - March 8, 2024.

[Full details and an application form](#) to volunteer for this important civic duty can be found in the electronic version of this newsletter at www.lcmsfl.org/publications.



Don't miss the January 1st deadline. Renew online or request a copy of your statement from admin@lcmsfl.org



Plan your 2024 social calendar using the event dates listed in the 2024 LCMS Partner Opportunities brochure. Find it at www.lcmsfl.org/partnerships

LOOKING BACK AND PLANNING AHEAD

THE RAMIREZ REPORT: Julie Ramirez, CAE, LCMS Executive Director



This December, we will distribute a member satisfaction survey to capture your thoughts on the Society's work, and its impact on your career and business, which will help us plan ahead. In preparation for this survey, I reviewed the last survey we did in June 2021.

First of all—2021—was two years ago! Wow! How time has passed. Many of the answers then were about recovering from COVID and coming back to live events.

I am happy to see that we are back to our familiar live events and seeing doctors connecting with doctors again. We have even achieved having our practice administrators and marketing managers meet twice a year.

Our first Continuing Medical Education (CME) day, which took place in early January, was well received and we intend to repeat the event on Saturday, January 13, 2024. The half-day event will offer the required CMEs and AOA credits for our DOs. We will also have a few extra CMEs on substance abuse to cover the DEA rule that was imposed this past year.

For member events, we will continue to offer a variety of member events to appeal to all our members including retiree luncheons, cocktail hours, educational meetings, and our

residents reception. We try to host a range of events so you can find one where you feel welcome.

Our first-ever golf tournament was a huge success! In addition to the 5k run, it helps us raise money for the Physician Wellness Program. Thankfully, because of our participants and generous sponsors, both events combined raised about \$20,000 this year to support mental wellness for our physicians. We plan to do both again next year.

Speaking of the Physician Wellness Program, so far this year we have had 27 physicians use the program to receive six free psychology visits. You can use this program to talk about anything from work stress, family issues, grief, depression, and everything in between. Life hits hard sometimes, and, as a physician, you have to tell a patient life-altering news. Having the PWP helps you stay on a healthy path and refocus you when it all feels too much.

PHYSICIAN WELLNESS PROGRAM

The **Physician Wellness Program (PWP)** provides a safe harbor for active LCMS physicians to address normal life difficulties in a confidential and professional environment. Our program works with two independent, local psychology groups that provide member-physicians with up to six visits for calendar year 2023 & 2024!

This is a confidential and free member benefit.

No insurance will be billed and LCMS will not be given any personal information about those who use the program. LCMS pays a monthly bill based on the number of sessions provided. Full details on how to enroll or donate to this program can be found at www.lcmsfl.org/our-programs or use the QR code below.



LCMS FOUNDATION RECOGNIZES HEALTHCARE LEADERS

The Lee County Medical Society (LCMS) Foundation held its 11th Annual Medical Service Awards to recognize local physicians and medical professionals for their outstanding contributions to healthcare in Lee County on September 29, 2023, at Forest Country Club. The event included dinner, a tribute video, and awards ceremony. Special thanks to Dr. Rebekah Bernard for being our Master of Ceremony.

Cover Photo Collage (clockwise starting at the top):

Dr. Scott Larson was awarded the Rising Star Award for exemplifying leadership, being a role model for others who have under 10 years of professional medical experience and bringing new technologies and talents to the area.

Meagan Walton, APRN, was awarded the Non-Physician Award of Appreciation for her exemplary and lasting impact to medicine above and beyond the call of duty.

Dr. Ahsan Shah was awarded the Citizenship & Community Service Award for providing public service leadership above and beyond the call of duty as a practicing physician.

SAVE THE DATE

12th Annual Medical Service Awards

OCTOBER 11, 2024

Dr. Stephanie Stovall was awarded the Leadership & Professionalism Award for reflecting the ideal professional characteristics of a practicing physician and being a leader in medicine within the community.

Associates in Dermatology was presented with the WeCare Award, which honors volunteer providers who support and deliver remarkable service and commitment to WeCare clients in Lee County.

Julie Ramirez, CAE, was honored with the Distinguished Layperson's Service Award for her keen leadership, initiative and hard work that contributed to improved access to medical and human services following Hurricane Ian.

Advocate Radiation Oncology was awarded the Health Education Award in recognition of its professional and public health education activities.

Dr. Arie Dosoretz was awarded the Scientific Achievement Award for his outstanding work in scientific medical research.

(center) **Dr. Craig Sweet** received the Lifetime Achievement Award for his substantial contributions to our medical community and for being a lifelong role model in the field of medicine.



Dr. Taj Mann, Dr. Bianca Ferrari, Dr. Liliana Bustamante, Dr. Susanna Gaikazian, Dr. Magali Van den Bergh, Dr. Ahsan Shah, and Dr. Gamini Soori



2023 Awardees: Julie Ramirez, CAE, Dr. Sheri Skinner, Dr. Ahsan Shah, Dr. Scott Larson, Meagan Walton, Dr. Arie Dosoretz, Dr. John Jackson, George Anderson, PA-C, Steina McKenna, PA-C, Dr. Craig Sweet, and Dr. Stephanie Stovall



Kerri Gantt, Michele Rivera, and Nicole Roland



Dr. Stuart Bobman and Tom Mouracade



Dr. Kristina Mirabeau-Beale and Dr. Tracy Vo

**Precisely
Focused on
PATIENTS**

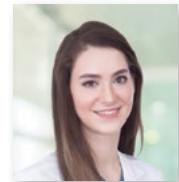
Our **Specialty Team** Is Growing!

Precision Healthcare Specialists is committed to meeting the community's healthcare needs, and our cohesive specialty team is growing quickly. We are precisely focused on connecting patients with the best medical specialists in Southwest Florida for their specific situation.

Meet Our New Medical Specialists



MARK LEO, MD
Board Certified Urologist
13731 Metropolis Ave
Fort Myers, FL 33912
239-423-7155



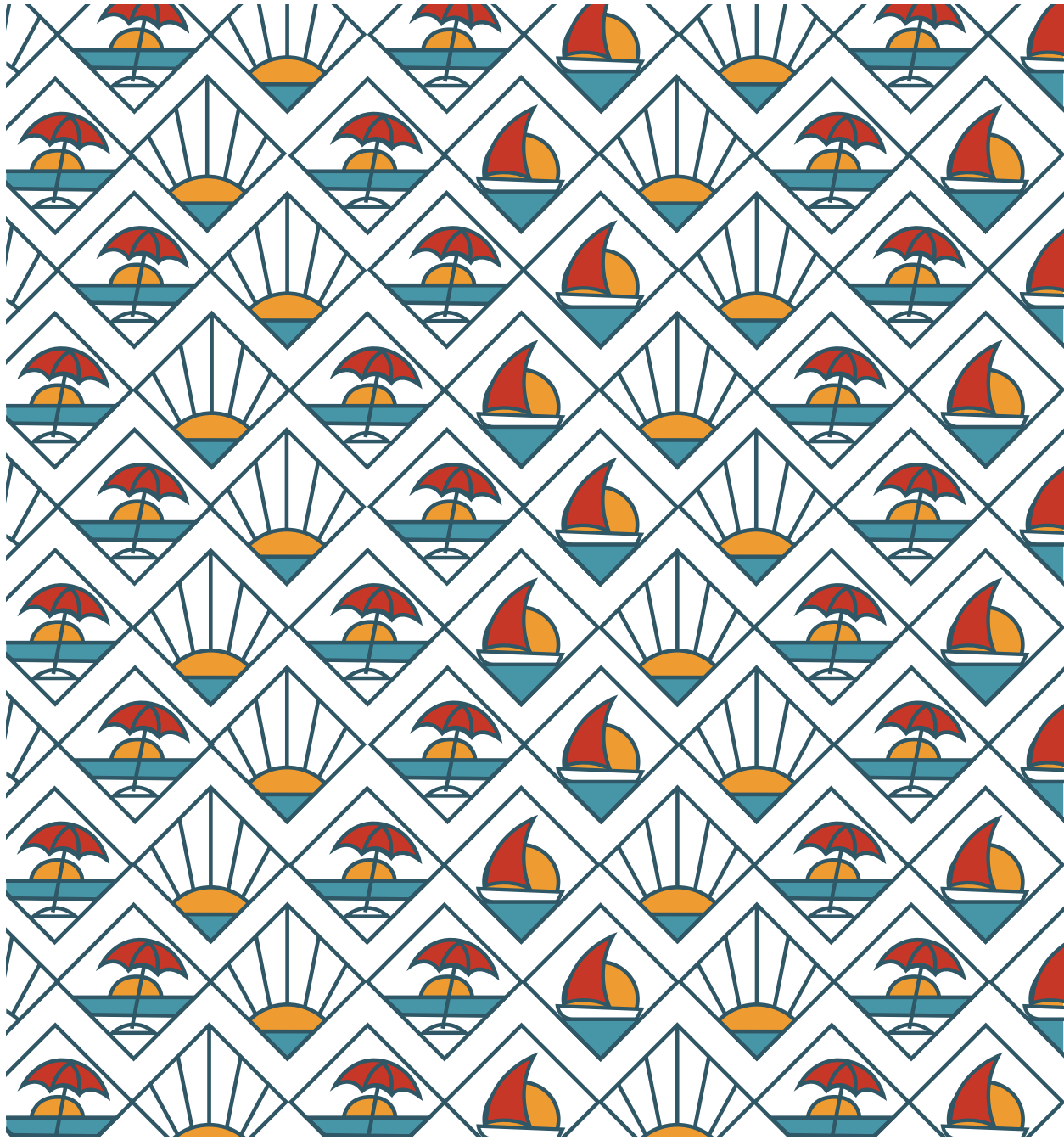
ASHLEY PEZZI, MD, FAAD
Board Certified Dermatologist
13691 Metro Parkway, Ste. 200
Fort Myers, FL 33912
239-291-3604

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GOLF TOURNAMENT RAISES OVER \$16K FOR PHYSICIAN WELLNESS

More than 64 local physicians and friends of medicine played 18 holes of golf at Forest Country Club on Saturday, September 30, 2023, and raised \$16,500 during the Lee County Medical Society (LCMS) Foundation's first-ever charity golf tournament to benefit the Society's Physician Wellness Program. In addition to replenishing funds for its increasingly used physician mental health wellness program, the event provided physician camaraderie, golf swag for each player, and prizes for lowest team score and closest to the pin.

Thanks to our major golf sponsors GenesisCare, Thompson Orthopedics, Henderson Franklin Attorneys at Law, Orthopedic Specialists of SW Florida, FineMark National Bank & Trust, and Markham Norton Mosteller Wright & Co.

SAVE THE DATE

2nd Annual Golf Tournament
SATURDAY • OCTOBER 12, 2024



The foursome with the lowest shotgun score was Ross Metzger, Dylan Hissan, Blake Bartholomew and Dr. John Thompson. This team finished 14 under par!



The player who was closest to the pin – at under 6 feet – was Bill Stafford



Dr. Scott Caesar and Dr. Kristina Mirabeau-Beale, a radiation oncologist with Tiger Sponsor GenesisCare



Ric Nalyd, Dr. Ken Jandik, Josh Isley, and Dennis Glover



Dr. Antonio Fores, Dr. Jeremy Schwartz, Dr. Zack Stone, and Justin Blohm



Dr. David Bailey and Rodrigo Ruiz-Gamboa were on a team that finished 9 under par!



Kim Vo, Dr. Tracy Vo and Tom Lytton



Shout out to our amazing golf tournament volunteers who were onsite before the sun rose!

NONCOMPLIANT PATIENTS INCREASE LIABILITY RISKS FOR PRACTITIONERS

by: Richard Cahill, JD, Vice President and Associate General Counsel, The Doctors Company

Practitioners face potential liability when patients do not follow up as instructed or refuse at-home help. In the event a claim results, even a verdict decided in the practitioner's favor does not negate the time, expense, reputational damage, adverse social media publicity, potential administrative investigations, or emotional toll created by a lawsuit.

Case Example

An older adult with a history of obesity, hypertension, hypercholesterolemia, atrial fibrillation, and cardiovascular disease saw the same physician for 20 years. During one hospitalization, the patient was put on the anticoagulant Coumadin. The physician and the discharge nurse both educated the patient and the patient's spouse about the risks of Coumadin use and the importance of having blood work done every month. The conversations were appropriately documented in the patient record.

The patient did not, however, keep the first monthly appointment to check the international normalized ratio (INR). The physician's staff called to schedule a follow-up visit, but the patient did not return the call. Two days after the call, the patient fell at home and was taken to the emergency department. The patient's spouse told the staff that, although they had missed the appointment for blood work, the patient had taken the Coumadin as prescribed. The patient's INR was 8.8—an extremely elevated reading (the therapeutic range for individuals on Coumadin is generally 2 to 3).

The patient was diagnosed with a bilateral subdural hematoma and underwent a bilateral craniotomy. After being discharged home, secondary to problems with coordination and confusion, the patient presented to the emergency department several more times over the next few months.

The patient sued for medical malpractice, claiming that the physician failed to properly manage the medication regimen and monitor blood levels, resulting in the fall, subsequent injury, and poor recovery. The patient also claimed that the physician was negligent in providing warnings about the risk of bleeding when taking Coumadin.

The case went to trial after extensive discovery was conducted. Because of the thorough documentation, the jury agreed that the physician had properly educated the patient and made the appropriate resources available to monitor the effects of the Coumadin. The jury also found that the patient's failure to schedule necessary lab appointments and then follow up with an in-office visit as instructed was the cause of the injury. Accordingly, a defense verdict was rendered in favor of the physician.

Discussion

The patient in this case example neglected to follow physician instructions. Patient reluctance to follow a treatment plan or accept help is often caused by a lack of understanding. Patients may say that they are managing well and do not need help, or they worry about the cost. If home care is recommended, some individuals assert they do not want strangers in their home due to fear of harm or infectious diseases, such as COVID-19.

Patients who decline help may not get the necessary follow-up and support that the practitioner outlined in the treatment plan. When a patient declines follow-up as instructed—for any reason—the practitioner can be at increased risk for professional liability exposure.

Clear and timely documentation in the patient record—along with notations indicating the patient's responses to instructions—enhance optimum outcomes, improve patient satisfaction, and help to mitigate the potential of being sued for professional negligence.

Patient Safety Strategies

Consider the following strategies to help reduce potential patient safety and malpractice risks when treating patients who refuse help or do not follow up:

- Conduct a risk analysis to determine how likely the patient is to comply with at-home instructions. Consider the patient's age, mental capacity, ability to drive, independent living status, whether the patient provides self-care or requires a caretaker, the existence of a family support network, and any prior history of failing to comply with appointments, medication instructions, or orders for specialty referrals, diagnostic studies, therapeutic interventions, or other treatment regimens.
- Schedule the follow-up appointment before the patient leaves the office, and provide written documentation to the patient to reinforce all verbal instructions. File in the patient's record a copy of all written instructions given to the patient.
- Use the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality's "Teach-Back" method to confirm the patient's understanding of home care and follow-up instructions.
- Provide telehealth services, if possible, if patients are unable to keep scheduled appointments or refuse home health visits. (See our article "Top Seven Tips for Telehealth.")
- Provide the patient and family with contact information for community home health resources, and document the information that was given to the patient. Educate the patient about why community resources are provided, and draw a distinction between what is and is not offered.

- Document the following actions:
 - The patient received and understood verbal and written instructions.
 - The patient and any family members present were given the opportunity to ask questions.
 - Your response to any concerns raised by the patient and family members.
 - The resources made available to help the patient overcome compliance challenges.
 - The practice's efforts to follow up and intervene if the patient was not in compliance.
- If the patient ultimately refuses to accept help or comply with follow-up, document the refusal in the patient's record, ideally with a signed informed refusal form. (See our article and form on "Informed Refusal.")

Taking the time to document patient discussions gives all caregivers valuable information to ensure that patients are following the plan. In the event of a lawsuit, it also demonstrates the high quality of care that was provided. Statistically, a well-documented patient record significantly decreases the likelihood of an adverse event and subsequent litigation.

For more information, see our article, "Nonadherent and Noncompliant Patients: Overcoming Barriers." For guidance and assistance in addressing any patient safety or risk management concerns, contact your patient safety risk manager at (800) 421-2368 or by email.

The guidelines suggested here are not rules, do not constitute legal advice, and do not ensure a successful outcome. The ultimate decision regarding the appropriateness of any treatment must be made by each healthcare provider considering the circumstances of the individual situation and in accordance with the laws of the jurisdiction in which the care is rendered.



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 Fort Myers, FL 33908

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 YOUTH WALK 2K

proceeds support LCMS Foundation and the Physician Wellness Program

GET YOUR WALK TEAMS TOGETHER & JOIN US AT THIS EVENT!

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