

PHYSICIAN NEWSBRIEFS

Provider News & Information
from UPMC Susquehanna
and UPMC Cole

November/December 2019

Please Welcome New Providers



Said Al Zein, MD, nephrologist, joined the team in Coudersport. Dr. Al Zein earned his medical degree from the University of Damascus Faculty of Medicine, Syrian Arab Republic and completed his residency in internal medicine at American University of Beirut, Lebanon. He completed a fellowship in nephrology at Penn State Health, Milton S. Hershey Medical Center, Hershey, PA. Dr. Al Zein will see patients at 1001 E 2nd St, Coudersport. To refer a patient, call 814-260-5576.

James M. Clark, MD, FACOG, OB/GYN joined the team in Coudersport. Dr. Clark earned his medical degree from the Medical University of the Americas, Charlestown, Nevis, West Indies. He completed his residency in obstetrics and gynecology at the Northeast Ohio Universities College of Medicine, Aultman Health Foundation, Canton, OH. Dr. Clark is board certified by the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology, and is a fellow in the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology (FACOG). Dr. Clark sees patients at 1001 E 2nd St., Coudersport. To refer a patient, call 814-274-7101.

Gary Fornera, MD, OB/GYN, joined the team in Wellsboro. Dr. Fornera earned his medical degree from East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, TN, and completed his residency in obstetrics and gynecology at the Northwest Florida OB & GYN Foundation, Pensacola, FL. Dr. Fornera completed an obstetrics and gynecology externship at Shands Hospital, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL, and is board certified by the American Board of Obstetrics, Gynecology and Infertility. Dr. Fornera sees patients at 15 Meade St., Suite L-1 Wellsboro. To refer a patient, call 570-723-0637.



Darshan Lal, MD, neurologist, joined the neuroscience team in Williamsport. Dr. Lal earned his medical degree from Chandka Medical College, Larkana, Pakistan. He completed his residency in internal medicine at Interfaith Medical Center, Brooklyn, NY, and his residency in neurology as well as his fellowship in clinical neurophysiology at Hahnemann University Hospital, Philadelphia. Dr. Lal is board certified by the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology. Dr. Lal will see patients at 740 High St., Suite 3002, Williamsport. To refer a patient, call 570-321-2820.



Suzet Wasfy Francis Moawad, MD, pediatrician, joined the team in Coudersport. Dr. Moawad earned her medical degree from Ain Shams University, faculty of medicine, Cairo, Egypt, and served her residency in pediatrics at Lincoln Medical and Mental Health Center, Bronx, NY. Dr. Moawad will see patients at 45 Pine St., Port Allegany, PA 16743. To refer a patient, call 814-642-7205.



Michael Nowicki MD, general surgeon, joined the team in Coudersport. Dr. Nowicki earned his medical degree from Poznan University of Medical Sciences, in Poznan, Poland. He served his residency in general surgery at Waterbury Hospital, Waterbury, CT. Dr. Nowicki will see patients at 1001 E Second St., Coudersport. To refer a patient, call 814-274-7474.

Steven R. Smith, MD, FACOG, OB/GYN, joined the team in Wellsboro. Dr. Smith earned his medical degree from the University of Kentucky College of Medicine, Lexington, KY. Dr. Smith completed his residency in obstetrics and gynecology at Carillion Health System, Roanoke, VS. He is board certified by the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology, and he is a fellow in the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology (FACOG). Dr. Smith sees patients at 15 Meade St., Suite L-1 Wellsboro. To refer a patient, call 570-723-0637.

Partnership Supports 24/7 Services for Substance Use Disorders

UPMC in Williamsport partnered with West Branch Drug and Alcohol Abuse Commission to offer support services to patients presenting to the Emergency Department with a substance use disorder, by creating the Warm Handoff Program. Providing 24/7 services to patients, during the warm handoff, patients receive an assessment, appropriate intervention, and gain quick access to a variety of substance use disorder services in the community. The process has resulted in over 1,200 handoffs since its creation, with 545 handoffs being performed in 2018, and 720 performed to date in 2019. Of these 720 interventions, 100 have received referrals and placement to inpatient treatment facilities.

The Warm Handoff hotline is available 24/7. To speak with a Certified Recovery Specialist, call 570-220-2764.

In the Professions

Three physicians from UPMC Susquehanna were named as Top Physicians Under 40 by the Pennsylvania Medical Society. The Pennsylvania Medical Society (PAMED) has been selecting Pennsylvania's Top Physicians Under 40 since 2016. The 42 physicians who made the 2019 list represent 19 medical specialties from 19 cities. Winners were nominated by colleagues and patients and selected by a statewide committee of PAMED members.

Michael Desiderio, DO, Williamsport



Dr. Desiderio, cardiologist, UPMC Susquehanna, has been involved with improving the care of noninvasive patients in his practice and imaging department. Dr. Desiderio goes the extra mile for both patients and colleagues and spends time teaching the medical students, residents, and technologists in his practice. He seeks out research opportunities that have the potential to expand care for his cardiac patients.

Angela Huggler, MD, Williamsport



Dr. Huggler, OB/GYN, UPMC Susquehanna, serves in numerous leadership roles, and has led successful efforts to expand health services for women in the community. She played an instrumental part in helping the organization establish the use of minimally invasive gynecology and robotic surgery. Dr. Huggler is actively involved in the community and participates in health education seminars.

Andrea Heller, DO, Coudersport



Dr. Heller, family medicine and palliative care physician, UPMC Cole, is fellowship-trained in palliative care, and serves as UPMC Cole's medical director for home health, hospice, and palliative care. Dr. Heller is active in educating her community regarding end-of-life care and decision making. Her colleagues view her as a compassionate physician who works closely with patients to help them make health care decisions.

Answering Patient Questions About Flu Shots, Masking, and Flu Season

Why are some staff members wearing a mask?

- Our patient care staff members are required to get a flu shot every year.
- Staff members who have not yet received their flu shot this year will always wear a mask while caring for you.

Can I get sick from a staff member who is wearing a mask?

- Staff members wearing masks does not mean that they have an illness.
- Staff members wear masks and wash their hands often to protect you and to stop the spread of any illnesses.

Should I get a flu shot?

- The experts at UPMC recommend that everyone gets a flu shot to protect against the virus.
- It is very important for older adults, pregnant women, very young children, and people with weakened immune systems due to a medical condition get a flu shot.
- Check with your primary care doctor to make sure the flu shot is the best protection for you against the flu.

Where can I get a flu shot?

- You can get one at any UPMC primary care location.
- Some drugstores and retail pharmacies also offer the flu shot.

When should I get my flu shot?

- Flu season is usually from September through March. You should get your flu shot during this time.
- It takes up to two weeks to build immunity after a flu shot, so the sooner you get one, the better.

The Waiting Isn't the Hardest Part

Customers — and in a health care setting, patients — are willing to wait, especially when the product or service they're waiting for is valuable to them. However, a wait turns frustrating when it doesn't meet with their expectations.

What the Data Says

A study of wait times and patient experience ratings at 1,725 hospital emergency departments nationwide showed that, across the board, scores were far higher when patients said their wait was communicated well, regardless of how long they actually waited.

When patients reported "very good" wait communication, even when they waited four hours or more, on average they rated their overall satisfaction at 96.5 out of 100. When they reported "very poor" wait communication, even with a wait time of less than an hour, average overall satisfaction scores dropped below 40.

The takeaway from this study? Managing patient satisfaction is within our control, even when managing the length of their waits isn't.

Understanding the Problem

Certain common factors tend to increase wait-related anxiety and have the potential to negatively impact patient experience.

Let's look at what patients fear and how we can address those fears:

- The unknown: Open-ended waits provoke anxiety. It can be difficult to predict a health care wait precisely because of the many unanticipated issues that come up in a hospital or outpatient setting, but providing a clear

estimate of a patient's wait, if possible, is the best way to lessen anxiety. Under-promise and overdeliver: If you think you can accurately predict a 30-minute wait, tell the patient it will be 45 minutes.

- The unacknowledged: When a patient's wait is excessive and they're not acknowledged, they begin to worry they've been forgotten. Regular updates during a wait period reassure patients that they're a priority and the process is working.
- The unfair: Waiting can be more frustrating when it seems people who started waiting after you are seen or served before you. In a health care setting, patients are often prioritized by acuity, rather than being seen on a first-come, first-served basis. Explaining that from the start will help those patients who must wait longer to understand. When this communication occurs, patients generally don't mind that someone sicker is being seen first.
- The unexplained. When wait times increase, there's generally a reason. Perhaps there's been an unexpected influx of emergency patients, or a doctor had to leave unexpectedly to perform surgery. Anxiety increases when patients don't feel there's a good reason for their wait. Explaining the "why" behind the wait will go a long way.

Patients would love if waiting were a thing of the past, but some waits can't be avoided. By addressing these sources of frustration, you can manage patient expectations and turn a wait into a win.

Infection Prevention Is in Your Hands

The best way to prevent any kind of infection is to practice hand hygiene. Performing hand hygiene stops the transfer of germs from your hands to the patient. Make sure to practice hand hygiene during these moments:

- Before examining or caring for your patient
- After touching surfaces in the environment, like a keyboard or your phone
- After possible contact with blood, urine, stool, wounds, or secretions
- Before a clean or aseptic procedure, such as changing a catheter dressing

Improved EP Access

The addition of **S. Sree Kesan, MD**, electrophysiologist, to the heart and vascular team has improved patient access to electrophysiology (EP) studies. Dr. Kesan sees patients at 740 High St., Suite 2001, Williamsport. To refer a patient, call 570-321-2800. Electrophysiology appointments are available within two weeks of calling.

Specialty Access

Our providers are continually proactive to improve access to care. Call today for the earliest available appointments for your patients.

Orthopaedics/Sports Medicine/Foot & Ankle
570-321-2020

Pain Management

Williamsport: Bloomsburg 570-326-8457
Lock Haven 570-893-5437

General Surgery

Williamsport: 570-321-3760
Lock Haven: 570-769-1300
Muncy: 570-546-4185
Wellsboro: 570-723-0716
Sunbury: 570-286-3584

Behavioral Health

Lock Haven: 570-320-7525

Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery

Williamsport - 570-326-8005

Cancer Care

UPMC Hillman Cancer Center
Williamsport: 570-326-8470
Wellsboro: 570-723-2855

Cardiology/Electrophysiology

Williamsport: 570-321-2800

Urology

Williamsport: 570-326-8090
Lock Haven: 570-769-1300

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