Accolades Abound for Quality Care

Cedars-Sinai Medical Group has been honored to receive significant recognition of achievement over the past few months, earning two prestigious statewide distinctions for excellence and one local award for business leadership and innovation. “The awards are not our goal, but it’s nice to have our efforts recognized,” comments Tom Gordon, chief executive officer of the Cedars-Sinai Medical Network. “It’s rewarding to know our patients are pleased with the clinical care and service we provide, and that, based on objective criteria, we are exceeding the standards of care in the state and contributing to the health and well-being of our community.”

See page 2 for additional information

The House Call Gets an Electronic Update

With a new twist to a tried and true process, Cedars-Sinai Medical Group has brought back the house call to provide an in-person and virtual care team visit to the homes of patients with complex, high-risk health issues. Patients like Walter Blue, who, in his own words, has “had a tough time of it” since his first surgery last March, although he certainly has maintained a good attitude and sense of humor.

Blue’s hospitalist, physicians, inpatient case managers and social workers identified him as a good candidate for house calls prior to his discharge from the hospital. In addition to his bypass surgery and kidney problems, he has high blood pressure, was very weak, had no appetite and lost 50 pounds. Until Nurse Practitioner Florita Valenzuela came into the picture, that is. “When I met Florita, I said ‘I’ve died and gone to heaven.’ All of the post-Florita era has been uphill,” he smiles.

continued on page 5
A Message from the CEO

Thomas D. Gordon
Chief Executive Officer

Expanding Our Network to Meet Our Patients’ Needs

H
ealth care is changing for everyone—in a good way. At Cedars-Sinai Medical Group, we’re working toward the triple aim that health care reform has established for us all: better care, better health and lower cost of care. We believe the best way to do this is to ensure that our patients always have access to Cedars-Sinai quality care.

The hub of our care network lies with the primary care doctor, but we’ve expanded that experience to include a patient-focused care team that offers unique expertise to partner for your good health. As you’ll read in Dr. Deutsch’s article on page 3, we’ve made great strides in that area and our patients are pleased with it.

We have also advanced our care experience by expanding our network of specialists and your access to them. When it’s necessary to bring in a specialist, it is a seamless process, integrated easily between physicians because they all work together on the same team, have access to your medical record and are committed to the same high quality standards.

In fact, our national reputation for quality has attracted some highly renowned physician groups who deal with very specialized and life-threatening health issues. We have expanded our network to provide our patients access to the best in their fields, with options for the most advanced care.

The bottom line is that as a patient of Cedars-Sinai Medical Group, the right care is here when you need it, and you don’t have to go outside of our medical network to receive it. Our network is your partner in making your good health care convenient and accessible.

With kindest regards,

One example of our highly renowned network physician groups is the California Heart Center. It incorporates the various specialties within cardiovascular medicine to offer patients a full range of services within a single setting, up to and including heart transplantation. Physicians include, from bottom to top: Antoine Hage, MD; Babak Azarbal, MD; Jon Kobashigawa, MD; Michele Hamilton, MD; Michelle Kittleson, MD; Jaime Moriguchi, MD; Jignesh Patel, MD, PhD; and David H. Chang, MD.

Share your thoughts with us
Please e-mail us at Well-Being@csmns.org or call our Patient Services Department at (800) 700-6424, Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Your input helps us improve.

Cedars-Sinai Medical Group
Honored for

Top Performing Physician Group:
Integrated Healthcare Association

The Integrated Healthcare Association (IHA) has once again named Cedars-Sinai Medical Group a “Top Performer” in California, the eighth consecutive year the team has earned this honor. The consistency of the recognition is a direct result of the Group’s culture of continuous self-assessment and self-improvement.

The Medical Group ranked among the top 25 percent of the 200 physician groups assessed on select health care quality measures, including meaningful use of health information technology, patient experience and clinical measures that include priority conditions such as cardiovascular, diabetes, musculoskeletal, respiratory and prevention. The awards were presented at the IHA annual meeting in Los Angeles on September 20, 2012.

Elite Status Performance:
California Association of Physician Groups

For the sixth year in a row, Cedars-Sinai Medical Group has been ranked by the California Association of Physician Groups (CAPG) as one of 30 “elite status” physician groups in California. The recognition is based on CAPG’s Standards of Excellence survey designed to reveal how well equipped physician groups are to provide high-value patient care.

The survey analyzed physician group capabilities in four areas, each considered central to providing high-quality care responsive to patient needs. The recognition, announced in May 2012, is based on our ability to surpass stringent scoring standards in care management, information technology, accountability/ transparency and patient care.

Did You Know…

Your online connection to the Medical Group continues to expand.

Adult patients of Cedars-Sinai Medical Group have online access to My CS-Link™, a secure website that allows you to manage your medical information anytime, anywhere you have an Internet connection. My CS-Link is currently in development to allow parents the ability to manage their children’s medical information as well as their own. As a parent, you will ultimately have access to online features that include requesting appointments and viewing certain aspects of your child’s medical information. That will be especially valuable for monitoring immunizations. Your pediatrician will notify you when the service is available.
Business Excellence Award, Innovative Practices: Beverly Hills Chamber of Commerce

This summer Cedars-Sinai Medical Group earned the prestigious Business Excellence award from the Beverly Hills Chamber of Commerce. A committee of the Chamber Board researched and evaluated nominated businesses in four categories of business excellence. The public voted on the final four nominees in each of the categories. The Medical Group’s selection as an exemplary business leader was based on its reputation as an innovative force in the business community and an organization dedicated to raising the level of excellence of medical services for the patients and communities it serves.

Patient Satisfaction: California Patient Assessment Survey

A major aspect of Cedars-Sinai Medical Group’s recognition for excellence in statewide assessments is patient satisfaction, which is measured by the California Patient Assessment Survey. Patients are asked to rate the office staff’s responsiveness and ability to assist; the physician’s bedside manner, thoroughness, willingness to listen and time spent with patients; referral, billing and appointment processes, and wait times.

The Medical Group was rated a top performer in this category as well, with a large number of physician offices scoring at and above the 90th percentile, an impressive number.

Two of the physician offices to receive top patient satisfaction ratings on the California Patient Assessment Survey are: (top) internal medicine specialist Cheryl Dunnett, MD, (center in lab coat) and her staff; and (bottom) general surgeons Neel Joshi, MD, and Gregory Tsushima, MD, (seated, left to right) and their staff. A number of other offices received equally impressive survey results.

We’re Redefining Health Care for the Better

Patient satisfaction is the key to assessing and improving the quality of the care and service we provide. Good survey scores always make us happy, but we were especially pleased to see the superior results our primary care physician offices received on our most recent California Patient Assessment Survey. Patients surveyed this year have all now experienced our team-based, patient-centered approach in their primary care physician offices and are responding positively.

Over the past few years, we’ve been realigning our care based on the premise that it takes a multidisciplinary care team, not just a primary care physician, to meet the diverse needs of our patients—everyone from office staff and nurses to clinical pharmacists, dietitians and ambulatory case managers. As you’ll read in this issue of Well-Being, we even have nurse practitioners who are making house calls for some of our more fragile patients and others who monitor our patients’ care in skilled nursing facilities.

The bottom line is that our patients always have our support.

Each member of our care team brings unique expertise and value for our patients, with the physician at the center calling the plays and coordinating the care, ensuring our patients are getting the right care at the right time, delivered by the right person.

We haven’t made these changes simply because it sounded like a good idea. There is significant evidence to show that this model promotes better care, better health and reduced costs. In the long term, the value is apparent in patients’ lives and overall costs.

In the months to come, we will expand our efforts to look more carefully at the tests and treatments that are commonly thought to define quality care. In their joint project called “High Value Care,” Consumer Reports and the American College of Physicians has found that often the risk and expense is not worth the reward for at least 37 tests and treatments they have researched. Our job will be to bring that research to our patients, educate them and discuss alternatives for care. We urge you to weigh the pros and cons based on individual circumstance so that together, we can make sound decisions that are best for you.
Medicare Open Enrollment: Make Your Changes for 2013

The open enrollment period is the time to reassess your Medicare health and/or prescription drug plan. In most cases, this may be the only chance you have to make changes for your 2013 coverage, unless you have a specific life event that qualifies for a Medicare Special Election Period change.

Make Your Decision

Evaluate your current plan and decide if it will meet your needs for 2013. Look at such things as costs and coverage, which plans can sometimes change from year to year, and then compare it to other available options. If you decide not to change plans, there’s nothing else you need to do.

Open Enrollment Period:
October 15–December 7, 2012

If you decide to change to a new health or prescription drug plan for 2013, make any changes during this time.

New Coverage Begins January 1, 2013

Your health and prescription drug plan selections take effect, as do any adjustments in costs and coverage.

Get Free Help From an Expert

Martha Burdekin, our senior plan consultant (pictured above, standing), offers free support to help you and your caregiver/interested family member to understand your Medicare options. Meet with her one-on-one in her office or a location of your choice, or attend one of her group meetings. Call Martha at (310) 733-7100 or email her at martha.burdekin@olympiame.com.

Save Your Sight With Early Detection and Treatment

Glaucome is the second leading cause of blindness in the world, according to the World Health Organization. It’s estimated that over 2.2 million Americans have the disease, but only about half of that number know it.

As yet, there is no cure for glaucoma, and once lost, the sight cannot be regained. “There may be no recognizable symptoms to warn you, so regular and complete eye exams are very important,” explains Cedars-Sinai Medical Group Ophthalmologist Michael Yang, MD. “With early detection, a lot can be done to protect your vision from the damage that can be caused by this disease.”

Glaucome testing should be performed at regular intervals appropriate to your age and risk factors, Dr. Yang explains. Everyone is at risk for glaucoma, regardless of age, but African Americans are at significantly higher risk than Caucasians. Other high-risk groups include those over age 60, those with a family history of glaucoma, diabetics and individuals who are severely nearsighted.

Regular glaucoma check-ups include routine tests to measure the pressure within your eyes and examine your optic nerve. “Testing for glaucoma is simple, pain-free and noninvasive, and it can be performed by your ophthalmologist or optometrist during your regular check-up.” Dr. Yang cautions, “There is simply no reason to put off this very important part of your preventive health care regimen.”

See What a Difference We Can Make!

20% Discount on any one Optical Retail Purchase
Choose from a wide variety of designer frames and the latest lenses.

BEVERLY HILLS VISION CENTER
An Affiliate of the Cedars-Sinai Medical Care Foundation
250 N. Robertson Blvd., Suite 102, Beverly Hills, CA 90211, (310) 385-3450

Discount offer is limited to one optical retail purchase. Offer excludes contact lenses and medical and cosmetic procedures. Valid prescriptions only. Cannot be combined with other offers, discounts, vision or insurance plans, previous purchases or prior orders. One discount per person. Must present original coupon at time of purchase. Discount only valid at Beverly Hills Vision Center located at 250 N. Robertson Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90211. No cash value. Valid through December 31, 2012.

Glaucoma Testing Guidelines
According to the Glaucoma Research Foundation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Testing Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before age 40</td>
<td>Every two to four years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 40 to 54</td>
<td>Every one to three years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 55 to 64</td>
<td>Every one to two years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 65+</td>
<td>Every six to 12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anyone with high risk factors</td>
<td>Every year or two after age 35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ophthalmologist Michael Yang, MD, encourages regular glaucoma screenings for early detection and effective treatment.
Valenzuela worked with Blue and his family, helping them understand his problems and what he needed to do to manage his health, explaining what his son and wife could do to support his postsurgical recovery. She helped with appointment scheduling as well.

She electronically reported her health assessments back to Blue’s primary care physician, James Caplan, MD, after each of her visits, so the information was accurate and timely for monitoring and treating his patient after surgery. In collaboration with Dr. Caplan, the ambulatory case manager and other members of the extended care team, she helped Blue get back his appetite and strength and incorporate exercise back into his life.

“Because I was taking so many medications, she arranged for me to talk with a pharmacist to make sure one medication wasn’t counteracting another,” Blue recalls. “There were duplications, so as a result, they reduced the number of high blood pressure pills I’m taking and I’m doing really well.”

Improved Quality of Life and a Happy Ending

Valenzuela gets close to her patients, but she knows when it’s time to say goodbye. “They’re letting me into their private world, their home. I appreciate that,” she explains. “Every time I came to check on the Blues, Walter was doing better, until one visit we realized he didn’t need me anymore. And that was a really good thing.”

Although it was a very difficult time for the Blue family, and Walter is still not back 100 percent, he describes himself as a very lucky man. “Dr. Caplan, my quarterback, kept getting me to the right specialists, and they were terrific,” he says. “I had great physicians, so much support from my wife and son, and Cedars-Sinai’s care was just marvelous.” It was a happy ending for everyone.
Meet Our New Physicians

Derek Cheng, MD
Gastroenterology
"Open communication is the cornerstone of my practice," explains Dr. Cheng, who specializes in gastroenterology, dealing with the diagnosis and treatment of disorders of the digestive system. "Good listening not only allows me to get to know each of my patients as individuals and develop a strong relationship with them, it also helps me provide care specific to their unique needs."

Location: 8536 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 202
Beverly Hills, CA 90211
(310) 248-6200
Medical Degree: Tufts University School of Medicine, Boston, Massachusetts

Larry Froch, MD
Nephrology
Dr. Froch’s enthusiasm and passion for medicine are apparent in the way he approaches each day and greets every patient. To him, his work is a calling and his reward at the end of each day is the difference he makes in the lives of his patients. "My patients have my undivided attention," Dr. Froch smiles. "I am their advocate, and it’s my job to listen and get them the care they need."

Location: 8635 W. Third Street, Suite 990W
Beverly Hills, CA 90211
(310) 385-3380
Medical Education: University of Illinois College of Medicine at Chicago

Raj Khondwalla, MD
Cardiology
Dr. Khondwalla’s primary goal is to save lives. "The field of cardiology has made great strides in treating heart disease, and we’re just getting started," he explains. "My first and primary focus is to prevent cardiovascular disease before it affects a patient’s quality of life. But if it’s been diagnosed already, we will take a team approach to make sure our patient has the best and longest life possible."

Location: 250 N. Robertson Blvd., Suite 403
Beverly Hills, CA 90211
(310) 385-3496
Medical Degree: Tufts University School of Medicine, Boston, Massachusetts

Melissa Wong, MD
Obstetrics/Gynecology
Dr. Wong was drawn to medicine by an unlikely passion: teaching. "I believe that if my patient leaves the room knowing as much about their illness as a medical student or junior resident, then I’ve fulfilled my purpose," she explains. Based on a prestigious award she received in medical school, education goes hand-in-hand with relationship-centered and compassionate care.

Location: 99 La Cienega Blvd., Suite 202
Beverly Hills, CA 90211
(310) 385-3380
Medical Degree: University of Texas, Southwestern Medical School, Dallas, Texas

Arthur Wu, MD
Otolaryngology — Head and Neck Surgery
Dr. Wu, whose practice is dedicated to the treatment of patients with nasal and sinus disorders, is a sinus sufferer himself. "Patients with chronic sinus problems have a severely diminished quality of life, which can be comparable to those with heart failure, emphysema and chronic back pain," he explains. "I understand how much my patients are impacted, and that has motivated me to help."

Location: 8631 W. Third Street, Suite 640E
Los Angeles, CA 90048
(310) 423-1220
Board Certification: Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery
Medical Degree: Duke University School of Medicine, Durham, North Carolina

In the Spotlight
Cedars-Sinai Health System President’s Award Winner

Sandra Rodriguez, LVN
With her soft-spoken, calming voice and caring demeanor, Sandra Rodriguez, a licensed vocational nurse (LVN), knows precisely how to ease the anxiety of patients undergoing hand and reconstructive surgery under the highly skilled care of plastic and reconstructive surgeon David Kulber, MD. Her consistent efforts to provide compassionate patient care earned her Cedars-Sinai’s highest employee recognition in March 2012, the President’s Award.

Rodriguez, who has been working as a surgical scheduler and coordinator in Dr. Kulber’s office for the past five years, helps care for all the patients in this very busy office. "I do everything from scheduling surgeries to changing patient wound dressings and helping to educate patients on a number of subjects," she explains. Although her day is fast-paced, she never rushes the time she spends with each patient.

"Surgery can be an emotional time and patients are often experiencing some anxiety," she continues. "I try to make sure that each patient feels as comfortable as possible and that they have all their questions answered. I want them to know we are listening and we are there for them."

Oftentimes Sandra is called upon to provide reassuring words to patients over the phone, which she gladly does. "Every patient is important, and I always keep their unique situation in mind when helping them."

Rodriguez, who earned her LVN from American Career College in Los Angeles, is currently working on her bachelor’s degree in nursing. "I really love what I do, and in the future I hope to do more of it, providing hands-on patient care, as well as expanding my role to provide administrative services."

Meet Our New Physician Assistant

Heidi Sarkozy, PA-C
Physician Assistant
In a plastic and reconstructive surgery specialty that is evolving rapidly, Heidi Sarkozy strives to stay well versed on new innovations. She passes on that knowledge and adds some much-needed “TLC” for her patients. “Our patients feel more comfortable and confident when they get their questions answered and know that we care about them and their outcomes,” she says.

Location: 8635 W. Third Street, Suite 990W
Los Angeles, CA 90048
(310) 423-5900
Credentials: Physician Assistant-Certified
Medical Education: Bachelor of Science, Physician Assistant Studies, Long Island University, Brooklyn, New York
Bachelor of Science, Anthropology and Zoology, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor
Same-Day Care for Your Urgent Needs

Cedars-Sinai Medical Network Urgent Care is designed to help you meet your unexpected medical needs when your primary care doctor or pediatrician is not available. The Center’s internal medicine and family practice physicians, pediatricians and urgent care-trained physician assistants are members of the Cedars-Sinai Medical Group and provide the same standard of excellence in patient care to diagnose and treat your flu, cold, fever or any illness that needs immediate attention.

Same-day and after-hours care are available at the Center, in Suite 150 at 8501 Wilshire Boulevard in Beverly Hills, Monday through Friday, 12 to 9 p.m. and Saturday through Sunday, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Of course, if you have a serious health problem, call 911 or go to the Cedars-Sinai Medical Center emergency department.

Voice of the Customer Program: WE CARE

Our goal is to provide you with high-quality medical care, excellent customer service and a strong mix of programs and services responsive to your needs. Our team of physicians, caregivers and support staff are all focused on serving you.

In order to achieve our quality care and service goals, we need to hear from you. Your concerns, suggestions and general feedback about the quality of care and services you receive will help to make us even better at what we do.

Should you have any issues at any time, our care team meets bi-weekly to investigate and resolve your concerns and to fine-tune our policies and procedures to better serve you.

Please call our Patient Services Department at (800) 700-6424 Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., with any issues you may wish to discuss.

Learn More about Us

At Cedars-Sinai Medical Group, your good health is our first priority. We view ourselves as your partner, there to support you in your wellness and preventive efforts, as well as to treat and care for you when illness or injury occurs.

To learn more about any of our Cedars-Sinai Medical Group physicians, specialty services, wellness classes, physician office locations and phone numbers, please visit our website at www.Cedars-SinaiMedicalGroup.org. Or, call our Patient Services Department at (800) 700-6424, Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
Well-Being
A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FROM YOUR PARTNERS IN GOOD HEALTH

What’s in Store…

In this issue of Well-Being, get the latest from your partners in good health.

Quality Quantified
State and local organizations bestow awards for quality care and patient satisfaction.
See page 1

Doctor at the Door
House calls make a comeback, in person and online.
See page 1

Glaucoma Guidelines
Be proactive to treat this major cause of blindness early.
See page 4

Serious Support
The Caregiver Support Group helps those with an ill loved one.
See page 5

Cedars-Sinai Medical Group Wants You to Know…

Calcium Source Matters
Calcium is great for the body, but taking too much supplemental calcium may be associated with elevated cardiovascular risk. It’s best to get this vital mineral from dietary sources, including low-fat dairy, leafy greens like spinach and foods like sardines if you can. Talk with your doctor to see what’s right for you.

For Kids—Fit Body, Fit Minds
Helping your kids stay active is great for their bodies, but it’s also great for their minds.

American Journal of Clinical Nutrition shows that when almonds were substituted for other non-healthy foods, dieters lost more weight than their non-almond eating counterparts and showed reduced cholesterol and triglyceride levels.

High Carbs May Increase Breast Cancer Risk
Researchers in a new study found that older women eating a high carbohydrate diet may be at increased risk for a less common, more deadly type of breast cancer. The study, which evaluated 335,000 women, shows that while the high-carb diet does not directly cause cancer, eating high glycemic foods does play a role.

Researchers suggest limiting foods that cause spikes in blood sugar, including white bread, flour and sugary foods.

Stress Less, Live Longer
Now there’s another reason to reduce stress and keep anxiety in-check. A new study in the British Medical Journal shows that physiological distress, even at low levels, is linked to an increased risk of death. The bottom line: find ways to help unwind. Meditation is one tool that has been shown to effectively reduce stress.

Yoga May Help Stroke Patients
For those who have suffered a stroke, adding yoga to the day may help restore balance. A new study shows that adding this regular practice, even years after the stroke, can have positive impact by helping the brain readjust. Before starting any new exercise program, be sure to seek the advice of your physician.

It’s Not Just for Vampires!
One donation of a pint of whole blood has the potential to save three lives and provide a multitude of benefits. If you are 17 years or older, weigh at least 110 pounds, are in good health, do not have any infections and have no history of hepatitis after age 11, you are likely eligible to donate. It’s a priceless gift.

Continuous Chest Compression CPR
Every day, more than 1,000 Americans die from sudden cardiac arrest.
You can lessen these numbers by learning the hands-only CPR method that doubles a person’s chance of surviving cardiac arrest. Search Chest Compression CPR on YouTube to learn how.

Calcium Source Matters
Calcium is great for the body, but taking too much supplemental calcium may be associated with elevated cardiovascular risk. It’s best to get this vital mineral from dietary sources, including low-fat dairy, leafy greens like spinach and foods like sardines if you can. Talk with your doctor to see what’s right for you.

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