

MEDICAL

JULY 2024

PROFESSIONALS

CHARLOTTE

SASHA DAVENPORT, MD, FACOG, IF

Atrium Health Women's
Care Sexual Health
Director of Female Sexual Medicine
Department of Obstetrics
and Gynecology
Atrium Health
Wake Forest University
School of Medicine



CONNECTING TODAY'S HEALTHCARE LEADERS

AWARENESS • SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT • SOCIAL MEDIA



Fast track to stroke care and recovery with Novant Health

10 certified stroke centers in North Carolina mean rapid response times for patients, close to home.

Novant Health meets top stroke care standards set by the American Heart Association and American Stroke Association. That means when patients with a suspected stroke arrive at one of our 10 Novant Health stroke centers, there's no wait time. Stroke rapid responders step in, utilizing the latest advanced technology, followed by our complete care team — dedicated neurohospitalists, neurointerventionalists, neuroradiologists, neurologists and neurosurgeons.

Within the first hour they administer clot-busting medication if needed. Patients who need advanced procedures are transferred to a Novant Health Comprehensive Stroke Center, where our team can perform mechanical thrombectomies, endovascular procedures and more.

At discharge, our care doesn't stop. Our team ensures critical follow-ups through our Novant Health Stroke Bridge Clinic. That's how patients get back to being themselves, fast.

Comprehensive Stroke Centers

Novant Health Presbyterian Medical Center
Novant Health Forsyth Medical Center
Novant Health New Hanover Regional Medical Center

Acute Stroke Ready Centers

Novant Health Mint Hill Medical Center
Novant Health Kernersville Medical Center
Novant Health Brunswick Medical Center

Primary Stroke Centers

Novant Health Rowan Medical Center
Novant Health Matthews Medical Center
Novant Health Huntersville Medical Center
Novant Health Thomasville Medical Center

Learn more
Visit [NovantHealth.org/Stroke](https://www.NovantHealth.org/Stroke)



Did You Know?

“Studies have shown that individuals who have even a mild hearing loss were at **three times greater risk of falling** and **twice as likely to develop dementia**. As that hearing loss worsens, the likelihood of the associated risks increases.”

John Hopkins Medicine. “The Hidden Risks of Hearing Loss.” <https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org>.

Shapiro, Zhanetta. “Hearing Loss and the Increased Risk of Falls.” The ASHA Leader Live, 2019. ASHAWARE, <https://leader.pubs.asha.org/doi/10.1044/hearing-loss-and-the-increased-risk-of-falls/full/>.

Hearing and Balance Healthcare

- ☒ Hearing Aids
- ☒ Ear Cleanings
- ☒ Tinnitus Management
- ☒ Balance and Dizziness Testing

**ANY HEARING
LOSS CAN BE
DETRIMENTAL
TO OVERALL
WELLNESS!**



In Network With

Medicare
BlueCross BlueShield
United Healthcare
(Self-pay and financing
options available)

(704) 540-3081
www.LevineHearing.com





CLINICALLY SHARP, INDEPENDENTLY STRONG.

Alo helps NC
physicians
manage the
business of
medicine.

AloSolutions.com



Carolina Asthma
& Allergy Center

Tired of Summer Allergies?

Our trained allergists offer personalized
solutions for pollen, skin, and insect allergies.
We also provide asthma management and
immunotherapy.

Enjoy your summer without the sneezes!

Visit our website to learn more and
schedule an appointment online.

Come see our board certified allergy and asthma specialists
at any of our 16 convenient locations!

breathe » live » thrive | carolinaasthma.com



CONTENTS



12



22



30

MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS

PUBLISHER

Denise Hurley
denise@n2co.com

PHOTOGRAPHY:

Juan Zambrano Photography
juanzphotography@gmail.com

CREATIVE TEAM

N2 Company Design Team

Featured

- 12** **FEATURED PHYSICIAN**
Sasha Davenport, MD, FACOG, IF
- 22** **SPECIALIST SPOTLIGHT**
Andrew H. Marky, MD, FAANS
- 28** **MEDICAL HONORS**
Tiffany Linville, MD
- 30** **NOTABLE NURSE**
Dalton Flynn, RN, BSN
- 34** **SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT**
Avance Care

Departments

- 6** FROM THE PUBLISHER
- 8** SPECIALIST
- 10** MEDICAL CHARITY
- 20** AWARENESS
- 36** MEDICAL CHARITY EVENTS
- 38** SOCIAL MEDIA
- 40** LEGAL HOT TOPICS

DISCLAIMER: Any articles included in this publication and/or opinions expressed therein do not necessarily reflect the views of The N2 Company d/b/a Medical Professionals but remain solely those of the author(s). The paid advertisements contained within the Medical Professionals magazine are not endorsed or recommended by The N2 Company or the publisher. Therefore, neither The N2 Company nor the publisher may be held liable or responsible for business practices of these companies.



PUBLISHER
Denise Hurley

denise@n2co.com
704-654-8042



PUBLISHING
MANAGER
Kathleen Kopay

kathleen.kopay
@n2co.com
864-275-2929



PHOTOGRAPHER
Juan Zambrano
Photography

juanzphotography@
gmail.com
704-912-7012



SOCIAL MEDIA
Kendall Covitz
Social Med
Consultants

kendall@
socialmed
consultants.com
978-885-0505

from the PUBLISHER

Happy 5th Anniversary

I hope you are enjoying summer and some time off with friends and family. We are excited to be celebrating five years in print! Thank you to our sponsors and all of you who have supported us along the way.

Along with being a physician, our cover feature, Sasha Davenport, MD, FACOG, IF, from Toronto, Ontario, Canada, trained with the Royal Conservatory of Music in Canada for many years in piano. Growing up, she witnessed huge healthcare disparities and wanted to dedicate her life to a career that would allow her to make an impact. Specializing in women's health, and now women's sexual health has allowed her to do this.

She started focusing on sexual health out of necessity. There is a paucity of sexual medicine specialists in the country and patients needed somewhere to go where they could receive evidence-based treatment. Her clinic is set up so that she has time to really understand her patient's concerns and she had the luxury of being selective when hiring her staff. Everyone who works there is passionate about sexual medicine and understands that this is a sensitive subject.

Andrew Marky, MD, FAANS, a neurological surgeon with Novant Health Brain & Spine Surgery was interested in medicine from a young age. He was fascinated with the anatomy and physiology of the human body as early as middle school which ultimately translated into an interest in the medical field. At the start of medical school, he had a strong interest in surgical specialties and after shadowing a neurosurgeon, he was hooked and spent a lot of time with the neurosurgery team in the OR during medical school.

After completing his neurosurgery training at Duke University Medical Center, he took a job in Houston, TX, with the Houston Methodist system. In 2019 he returned to North Carolina and joined the Novant Health Brain & Spine team. Since joining them, they have seen some incredible growth and have an amazing group of neurosurgeons to cover the breadth of neurosurgery.

This month's nurse has worked at Capizzi, MD for three and a half years. Dalton Flynn, RN, BSN, always liked the idea of pursuing a career that helped people and found the medical field interesting. She also had multiple family members in the medical field who encouraged her that nursing was a great profession.

Her first job was at Atrium Main in the Surgical Trauma ICU in their new grad nurse residency program straight out of college. She worked the night shift for three and a half years and found the job posting for Capizzi, MD on a whim while searching "cosmetic surgery nurse jobs near me." Having always been interested in aesthetics, she enjoys combining that with caring for surgical patients.

I hope you enjoy this issue. To learn more about who is being featured each month, follow us on Instagram @medicalprofessionals.charlotte.

As always, please reach out if you would like to nominate a healthcare professional to be featured, if you would like to provide content, or if you would like information on sponsorship opportunities.

Happy summer and happy reading!

Denise

704-654-8042
denise@n2co.com
mpcharlotte.com
@medicalprofessionals.charlotte



ALZHEIMER'S | **AMC**
MEMORY CENTER | **RESEARCH**
CREATING HOPE THROUGH RESEARCH
704-364-4000 | AMCNeurology.com
10801 Monroe Rd Suite 100 Matthews, NC 28105



Alzheimer's Memory Center is a comprehensive Dementia Clinic dedicated to the diagnosis of various types of dementias, including Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson disease related dementia, Lewy Body Disease, Frontotemporal dementia, vascular dementia and more rare brain diseases that affect cognitive function.

At AMC we have a private memory center providing excellent care to the community that includes initial evaluations, diagnosis and treatment of memory disorders and manage behavioral manifestations of the disease. At our center, we provide counseling, education and support to our patient and their families. We offer cutting edge research conducting various classes of experimental drugs that are designed to slow the progression of different stages of Alzheimer's disease.

"My commitment to my patients is to ease the burden and through innovative methods utilize the latest technology in the diagnosis and treatment of patients with Alzheimer's disease. My goal is to find more advanced treatments and ultimately find the cure." – Dr. Bolouri

If you have a patient with dementia care needs, please send us a referral at 704-364-4005.



INTEGRATIVE PAIN & SPINE INSTITUTE
AN AFFILIATE OF ECAA

**Double Board
Certified In
Anesthesiology And
Pain Management**

Ankur M. Manvar, MD



Pain Relief Without Surgery

We can help restore function and decrease pain for patients suffering from chronic and acute pain. We treat patients experiencing:

- Back and Neck Pain
- Nerve Pain
- Nonsurgical Joint Pain
- Sciatica
- Degenerative Disc Disease
- Arthritis/Bursitis
- Fibromyalgia
- Headaches/Migraines
- Work and Auto Accidents
- Sports Injuries
- Spinal Stenosis
- Diabetic Neuropathy
- Herniated Disc
- Myofascial Pain
- Post Laminectomy/Failed Back Syndrome
- CRPS

Referrals Can Be Faxed To 704-733-9040
All NP Scheduled Within 2 Weeks
Centrally Located In The Arboretum
3315 Springbank Lane, Suite 202, Charlotte, NC 28226
704-317-1440 | www.ThePainReliefDoctor.com
Accepting ALL Commercial, Medicare, VA/Tricare, Workers Comp Insurances

SPECIALIST

Local Medical Specialists



ALLERGY & ASTHMA

Allergy Partners

20808 N. Main Street
Cornelius, NC 28031
704-765-4430

[www.AllergyPartners.com/
Cornelius](http://www.AllergyPartners.com/Cornelius)

Carolina Asthma & Allergy Center

Richard S. Roberts, MD
Richard E. Collins, III, MD
J. Gray Norris, MD
Susan I. Hungness, MD
Richard P. Sifton, MD
Roopen R. Patel, MD
Richard C. Herring, MD
Emily W. Langley, MD
S. Nicole Chadha, MD
Christina J. Collura, DO
Meghan J. Lemke, MD
Sarbjee K. Sran, MD
Bailee H. Gilchrist, MD
Jennifer L. Caicedo, MD
Vandan K. Patel, MD
Michale A. Lapuente, DO
Lisa Biswas, MD
Kelly K. Boyd, MD
R. Christina Smith, MD
Kena Shah, DO

704-372-7900

**Visit website for
information on our
16 area locations.*

CarolinaAsthma.com

ALZHEIMER'S

**Alzheimer's Memory
Center/AMC Research**
Reza Bolouri, MD

10801 Monroe Road,
Suite 100
Matthews, NC 28105
704-364-4000

AMCNeurology.com

AUDIOLOGY

Audiology & Hearing Services of Charlotte, PLLC

Melissa Karp, Au.D.
Ivy Saul, Au.D.
Katy Crisp, Au.D.

11121 Carmel Commons Blvd,
Suite 150
Charlotte, NC 28226
704-412-7975

AudiologyCharlotte.com

Levine Hearing Hearing & Dizziness Services

Madison Levine, BC-HIS
Eileen Clark, Au.D., CCC-A
Josey Arroyo, Au.D.

3135 Springbank Lane, Ste 100
Charlotte, NC 28226
704-540-3081

LevineHearing.com

BACK PAIN MANAGEMENT

Novant Health Spine Specialists

7825 Ballantyne Commons Parkway,
Suite 150
Charlotte, NC 28277

2801 Randolph Rd, Suite 100
Charlotte, NC 28211

10305 Hampton Dr, Suite 200
Huntersville, NC 28078

Main Phone Number:
704-367-4800

NovantHealth.org/BackPainNow

GASTROENTEROLOGY

Carolina Digestive Health Associates

300 Billingsley Road, #200
Charlotte, NC 28211
704-372-7974

CarolinaDigestive.com

**Visit website for
specific locations.*

GENERAL & VASCULAR South Charlotte General & Vascular Surgery

James N. Antezana MD, RPVI
Bhumika N. Patel NP-C

13430 Hoover Creek Blvd
Suite 200 Charlotte, NC 28273
704-910-8380

www.scgvs.com

NEUROSURGERY & SPINE SURGERY MUSC Health Neurosurgery & Spine

Adam Back, MD

2021 Bridgemill
Drive, Suite 104
Indian Land, SC 29707
803-416-5453

1025 West Meeting
Street, Suite 101
Lancaster, SC 29720
803-416-5453

neurosurgreferrals@musc.edu
muschealth.org

Novant Health Brain & Spine Surgery

Ziad Hage, MD
Andrew Marky, MD
Mark Redding, MD
John Berry-Candelario,
MD
Gregory Imbarrato, DO
Erin Kiehna, MD
Ranjan Roy, MD
Charles Munyon, MD

330 Billingsley Road
Charlotte, NC 28211
704-316-3070

7825 Ballantyne Commons
Parkway, Suite 150
(Ballantyne)
Charlotte, NC 28277
704-544-6920

311 Coddle Market Drive
NW, Suite 200 (Concord)
Charlotte, NC 28027
704-367-4800

2711 Randolph Road, Suite
100 (Charlotte)
Charlotte, NC 28207
704-316-3070

Novant Health Piedmont
Neurosurgery and Spine
330 Jake Alexander Blvd W
Suite 104 (Salisbury)
Salisbury, NC 28147
704-645-0901

NovantHealth.org

ONCOLOGY/CANCER Carolina BioOncology Institute

John Powderly, MD
Neel Gandhi, MD
Sherene Banawan, PA

9801 Kincey Ave.
Suite 145
Huntersville, NC 28078
704-947-6599

[CarolinaBio
Oncology.org](http://CarolinaBioOncology.org)

Oncology Specialists of Charlotte

Justin Favaro, MD, PhD
Nasafat Shehadeh, MD
Jennifer Dallas, MD
Kaitlyn O'Keefe, DO
Hadley DeBerg, FNP-C
Brooke Davis, FNP-C, OCN
Amy Kemmerlin, FNP-C
Valentina Grinchak, FNP-C
Alfreda Tomb, AGACNP-
BC, OCN

2711 Randolph Road,
Suite 400
Charlotte, NC 28207

10635 Park Road, Suite F
Charlotte, NC 28210

Referrals: 704-342-9577
Office: 704-342-1900

CharlotteCANCer.com

PAIN MANAGEMENT Integrative Pain & Spine Institute

Ankur M. Manvar, MD

Belle Grove Office Park
3315 Springbank
Lane, Suite 202
Charlotte, NC 28226
704-317-1440

[ThePainRelief
Doctor.com](http://ThePainReliefDoctor.com)

PEDIATRIC SPECIALIZED THERAPIES & BEHAVIORAL HEALTH Child & Family Development

Eliza Brooks, OTR/L
Morgan Edmiston, DPT
Jerica McIntyre, LPA

4012 Park Road,
Suite 200
Charlotte, NC 28209
704-332-4834

Katie Goldsmith, LCMHCA
Rachel Fry, CCC-SLP
Danielle Peets, OTR/L

11940 Carolina Place
Pkwy., Suite 200
Pineville, NC 28134
704-541-9080

[Childandfamily
development.com](http://Childandfamilydevelopment.com)

PHARMACY Rx Clinic Pharmacy

Amina Abubakar,
PharmD, AAHIVP

7308 Independence Blvd,
Suite 1
Charlotte, NC 28277
704-537-0909

Rxclinicpharmacy.com

PSYCHIATRY

Avance Psychiatry Charlotte
Sashalee Stewart, MD
Ani Fitzgerald, PA-C

5821 Fairview Road
Suite 200
Charlotte, NC 28209
980-580-0639

AvancePsychiatry.com/

RADIOLOGY

Charlotte Radiology
700 East Morehead St.
Charlotte, NC 28202
704-442-4390

CharlotteRadiology.com

**Visit website for specific
locations for Breast
Services, Vein, Vascular &
Interventional Services,
& Diagnostic Imaging
(Carolinas Imaging Services)*

RHEUMATOLOGY South Charlotte Rheumatology

Firas Kassab, MD, FACR

8840 Blakeney Professional
Dr. #200
Charlotte, NC 28277
704-672-0449

[Southcharlotter
heumatology.com](http://Southcharlotterheumatology.com)

VALVE AND STRUCTURAL HEART DISEASE

**Sanger Heart &
Vascular Institute**
Michael Rinaldi, MD
Jonathan Schwartz, MD
Terence Hill, MD
John Frederick, MD
Eric Skipper, MD
Christopher Cicci, MD
Markus Scherer, MD
Noreen Kelly, MD
Andrew Kott, MD
Thomas Johnson, MD

**Sanger Heart & Vascular
Institute - Charlotte**
1001 Blythe Blvd., Suite 300
Charlotte, NC 28203

Sanger Heart & Vascular Institute - Concord

100 Medical Park
Drive, Suite 210
Concord, NC 28025

Referrals, 704-373-0212,
extension 8

AtriumHealth.org/Heart

VEIN CARE

Vascular Solutions

Peter Ford, MD, FACS, RPVI
Kristin Hartman, PA-C

7800 Providence Road,
Suite 209
Charlotte, NC 28226
704-544-7535

Vasc-solutions.com

WOMEN'S HEALTH

Novant Health

Urogynecology

Joseph Malek, MD
William Porter, MD

704-316-1120
Locations; Charlotte,
Huntersville, Langtree,
Mint Hill

NHUrogynecology.org

Novant Health Minimally Invasive GYN Surgery – SouthPark

Scott Schneider, MD
James Bohmer, MD

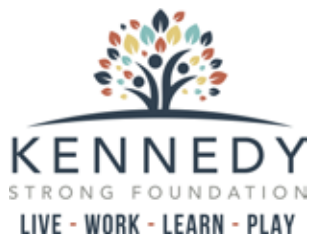
6324 Fairview Rd Ste 440,
Charlotte, NC 28210
704-384-1407

[NovantHealth.org/
MIGSSouthpark](http://NovantHealth.org/MIGSSouthpark)

TO ADD YOUR PRACTICE TO THE LIST, PLEASE REACH OUT TO DENISE@N2CO.COM

KENNEDYSTRONG FOUNDATION

Creating A Village For All



By: Betsy Boone

The room was dark except for the glaring light of the ultrasound machine. The tone of the doctor’s voice was solemn, firm, and concerning. “Baby ‘B’ has a larger nuchal fold, indicating an abnormal chromosomal condition.” This was my invitation to the world of intellectual and developmental disabilities.

I took to Google, websites, organizations, and support groups to “prepare” for the doctor’s diagnosis. I learned we would likely navigate challenges with medical issues, learning differences, and life after high school. It felt like we were headed toward a cliff, a chasm that would open wider as soon as she completed high school. The post-high school years seemed to be the big problem area, so we dove deeper into the research. The data didn’t defeat us; we let it lead us to hope and an idea soon formed.

The chromosomal condition has a name: Down syndrome. The larger nuchal fold belongs to Kennedy, my youngest and spunkiest kiddo and the inspiration behind KennedyStrong Foundation.

The first three years of life with Down syndrome were the most challenging because of complications with open heart surgery, feeding delays, and gross motor delays—such as in learning to walk. Sharing the complications and “life” with others organically created a village of supporters, people from all over the country now following Kennedy’s life... both the challenges and the victories.

Church members, neighbors, family members, and other parents whose kids had disabilities reached out because they knew the struggles. People we had never met cheered her on and supported her and our family night after night on the 8th floor of Levine’s Children’s Hospital in Charlotte.

We survived the initial medical concerns. Then we had to pay attention to

“everyday life.” As parents of multiple kids, one ten years older than Kennedy, we had to keep our heads up and our eyes open to what lay ahead. We didn’t have the luxury of taking it all in and complaining about the lack. By the time Kennedy was two, we were already aware of how quickly time would pass and how big that post-high school chasm loomed.

Armed with this dynamic village’s desire to help, we stepped into a calling to create a larger local village, Independence Village, to give hope to other families like ours and help answer the questions of purpose and independence for kids with intellectual and developmental disabilities after high school.

The path to Independence Village begins in a world where inclusion thrives. Together, we can create a brighter future, one where everyone—regardless of perceived ability—can be embraced as an integral part of our shared society, find joy and significance, and succeed.



INDEPENDENCE VILLAGE



- WELCOME CENTER AND KSF OFFICES
- CLASSROOMS
- CONVENTION CENTER
- GROUP HOME
- THERAPEUTIC OFFICES
- APARTMENTS/RETAIL AND RESTAURANTS
- COMMUNITY GARDEN
- EQUINE TRAINING CENTER
- MEDICAL AND DENTAL SERVICES
- WELLNESS CENTER AND AQUATICS
- BALLFIELDS
- COMMUNITY GREENHOUSE
- FACILITIES AND MAINTENANCE
- RETAIL AND RESTAURANTS
- WORSHIP CENTER

Rendering of the Independence Village concept.

The WORK Is Important.

The double-digit unemployment rate for young adults, like Kennedy soon will be, should be cause for alarm... and action. Research shows an astonishing 21 percent of working-age adults with intellectual or developmental disabilities (IDD) are unemployed, yet for this age group, advocate voices are usually silent. Families often struggle alone. Not anymore.

We all have more to LEARN.

KennedyStrong Foundation is unlocking potential and empowering lives. We are driven to create a more inclusive community and workplace by providing sustainable programs, services, and initiatives, starting with education:

Let’s Go To Work <in fundraising cycle>

- A 12-month course for individuals with disabilities to build endurance, confidence, and independence, culminating in an internship and full-time employment.

Let’s Make Connections <currently underway with openings in June and July>

- Opportunities for inclusive fun and engagement among people of all abilities aged 18+.

Let’s Get Inclusive <currently operating>

- Training for businesses/governments to provide a more inclusive workplace and community.

Let’s Build Community: Independence Village (roadmap)

- Plans for a mixed-use, inclusive community for people of all abilities to live, work, learn, and play.

Let’s Get Moving 5K and All-Adventure Course <September 21, 2024>

- (all bodies-in-motion events)
- Inclusive fundraising events for participants of all abilities: 5K, Buddy Run, activity adventure course.

What makes us different?

- The organization is IDD Agnostic; we embrace, support, and empower all diagnoses.
- Our programs focus on the superpowers of building connections and confidence, two foundational elements to thriving independently.
- Our programs are staffed by trained resources who are paid, ensuring safety, consistency, and stability for our participants and parents, therefore yielding greater returns.

You PLAY a vital role.

You can help bridge the chasm for individuals and their families. Our administrative costs are



growing to support the demand for our programs. We are empowering others to embrace differences, build stamina, and enjoy growing into independence for all. If you’d like to learn more, check out our website, www.KennedyStrong.org. Your donation creates pathways to inclusion, independence, and joy.

I encourage you to get to know us and get to know more about your village. Ask your family and friends who have a loved one with an Intellectual or Developmental Disability what life is like. Get to know them more and find out how you can help. We

are always looking for volunteers, grants, and participants. Come and get to know us or be a sponsor at the Let’s Get Moving event on September 21, 2024. Visit <https://runsignup.com/Race/NC/Concord/ALLBODIESINMOTIONEVENT5K1STANNUAL>



The Boone Family: Kennedy, Betsy, Jacob, David, Alexis, Brendon.

Sasha Davenport, MD, FACOG, IF

Atrium Health Women's
Care Sexual Health
Director of Female
Sexual Medicine
Department of Obstetrics
and Gynecology
Atrium Health
Wake Forest University
School of Medicine



FUN FACTS

- She is from Toronto, Ontario, Canada, and trained with the Royal Conservatory of Music in Canada for many years in the discipline of piano.
- She used to teach cardio dance classes.
- Dr. Davenport has been an attending physician for six years.
- Their family has a fish named Saen (pronounced "Sean"). Their toddler named him by spelling out the letters of his name.
- She is due on June 29th with her second boy!
- When asked for something that would surprise people to learn about her, she admitted she is a total physics and math nerd. If she didn't go into medicine she says she would have studied astrophysics.
- She and her husband LOVE to travel and were determined to continue to pass on the travel bug to their kids. Their three-and-a-half-year-old has been to 11 countries so far, and they are excited for the upcoming addition to join their little travel troop!

How did you get your start in medicine?

My family is from Bangladesh. Growing up I witnessed huge healthcare disparities, and I wanted to dedicate my life to a career that would allow me to make an impact somehow. Specializing in women's health, and now women's sexual health has allowed me to do this.

How did you find your way to Atrium Health?

One of my mentors in residency used to always say "If you always do right by your patient, it's hard to go wrong". This has stuck to me, and so when my husband and I were looking for

where we wanted to start our career it was immensely important to us to be somewhere that was patient-centered where we also felt we would be supported in our career goals.

What makes your practice unique in our community?

Women's sexual health is something that is very sadly still taboo within our society. For decades there has been a paucity of education within the medical community on how to manage patients with these concerns, and as a result, clinicians are often ill-equipped to help our patients.

I earned my international fellow designation with ISSWSH (The International Society for Study of Women's Sexual Health) after doing a certain amount of work in the field. My clinic is set up so that I get time to really understand my patient's concerns. When selecting our clinic staff I have had the luxury of being incredibly selective. Everyone who works here is passionate about sexual medicine and also understands that this is a sensitive subject.

How did you start focusing on sexual health?

It was really by necessity. There is a paucity of sexual medicine spe-

cialists in the country and patients needed somewhere to go where they could get evidence-based treatment.

What are your goals for your patients and your practice?

I want our patients to feel empowered and equipped to address the challenges they're facing with their sexual health.

How would you describe the culture in your practice?

Our staff is made up of only six people, and that's inclusive of everyone who works at our clinic. I had the privilege of being selective when I was choosing who would be a part of this clinic.



FEATURED PHYSICIAN

I wanted people who were equally passionate about empowering our patients and would understand the sensitive nature of what we specialize in.

How would you define quality care?
To me, quality care is patient-centered care.

Are there some practical actions you have initiated in your doctor-patient time to help your patients have a more productive experience?
Every patient fills out a comprehensive intake form that helps inform me as to everything that they may be dealing with and their relevant history. I then take a thorough history, followed by a physical that involves exams specific to their complaints. Part of this exam involves educating patients about their own anatomy, and active participation from the patient during our pain mapping component. Every patient goes home with a written checklist and plan so that they can review everything we discussed, and can actively participate in their treatment.

In your opinion, what are some of the biggest issues facing primary care providers today?
Time constraints. I am lucky to be able to take my time to focus on my patient's concerns.

What motivates you?
Knowing that I am providing real tangible outcomes for our patients who are desperate for help.

What concerns if any, keep you up at night?
"Is my toddler awake or is that just him talking in his sleep?"

What keeps you engaged when things get hard in your practice?
The knowledge that my patients have entrusted me with their care, and the gratitude I feel when my patients tell me I have improved their quality of life.

How do you try to maintain a balanced life outside of work?
I am serious about quality time with friends and family outside of work. This is a sacred time for me to be fully present.

Have you ever been close to quitting or changing careers?
No, I love what I do.

How have you seen the practice of medicine change over the years?
The culture of medicine is evolving in that it has shifted away from the traditional, paternalistic model, to a shared decision-making model with our patients. I think this increases buy-in and therefore creates better outcomes and alliances with our patients.

In what ways do you hope to see practicing medicine evolve in the future?
I hope that more providers start to recognize that truly sexual health is a quality-of-life measure. The WHO already states this. Unfortunately, there is such a large stigma surrounding women's sexual health that there is a paucity of education in the medical field surrounding this specialty. Knowledge is power, and until we make changes to our curriculum and help educate future generations, we cannot expect a serious shift in the paradigm.

What are some of the most rewarding aspects of your profession?
The gratification I get when a patient tells me how thrilled they are that they finally found something that helped, or that their pelvic pain is gone after many years.

What methods do you employ to keep improving your knowledge and experience?
I am lucky to work in a field that is quickly evolving. This keeps me on



my toes, and I am constantly keeping up to date through literature, but more importantly, my work with other experts in the field. Luckily, this area of medicine is very collegial and everyone is really excited to learn and help each other with challenging cases. There is this enthusiasm to push what we know forward and to help women out there with something that has been taboo for such a long time.

Do you have a career highlight?
Founding this clinic and becoming Director of Sexual Medicine at Atrium Health/Wake Forest University School of Medicine.

If you could offer any advice to younger physicians, what would it be?
Always keep your patient's wellbeing at the center of all of your medical decisions, this will always steer you in the right direction.

Do you have any physicians who have influenced you over the years?
Dr. Sameena Rahman, one of the giants in our field. When I first entered the space of sexual medicine I didn't have many men-



Indoors or outdoors person?
Outdoors, as long as it doesn't involve camping, and the temperature is under 80 degrees!

The last thing you researched on the internet.
The Rocky Mountaineer Train.

Your guilty pleasure.
A good Netflix series I can enjoy with my hubby at the end of a crazy day.

Favorite snack.
Definitely chocolate,

The last book you enjoyed.
Beautiful Creatures.

tors. We happened to meet at a meeting. What floored me was how immediately kind and welcoming she was towards me, and how she genuinely also wanted me to succeed. I am so lucky to call her my friend.

If you were not practicing medicine, what profession do you think you may have chosen?
I would have studied Astrophysics.

GETTING TO KNOW THE DOC...

When you were younger, what did you think you were going to be when you "grew up?"
A humanitarian lawyer or an astrophysicist.

Your first job.
Summer intern at a payroll company.

Tell us about your family.
I am incredibly lucky to have the family that I have. I met my husband in medical

school, and we were best friends for a long time before we dated. I have a three-year-old and watching him grow has been the best thing ever. We have another on the way, who should be born by the time this article is published! I am a first-generation immigrant and was really lucky to have two parents who taught me the value of hard work and education from a young age.

A movie you could watch on an endless loop.
I have a good number of movies I love, but I'm not sure about watching anything on a loop. If I had to choose an endless loop, it would need to be something funny and uplifting. Definitely with an uplifting soundtrack that I can dance to.

A fun adventure you have been on.
The best adventure I have had was when my husband finished fellowship before we moved to Charlotte and we essentially traveled for four weeks straight. We traveled to the Azores, Croatia, Italy, and London. It was and will continue to be one of my fondest memories.

The best advice you have ever received.
To be bold in following my dreams.



Something in life you are happy you did.
There are many things. Married my husband, had my children, and pursued my dream of becoming a physician.

Something you're excited about in the next 12 months.
Becoming a mom of 2 and continuing to grow our Sexual Health clinic!

Interests/hobbies outside of work.
Piano, travel, dance, and trying new foods.

Any hobbies you would like to try if you had more time?
Vocal lessons and photography.

A place on your bucket list.
Antarctica and the Galapagos Islands.

Favorite sports teams?
Argentinian soccer team.

If you could spend a day in someone else's shoes, who would it be and why?
I'm not sure about this. While I think it would be interesting to know what a day in the life is of many famous people, I'm not sure that it would truly capture all of their lived experiences that led up to what one day is like for them.

Anything your parents taught you that sticks with you today?
When I graduated medical school, my dad wrote me a letter and asked me to always remember that at the foundation of all that I do, I must reflect on what impact I would like to leave behind as my legacy and that is what should always drive me forward.

Personal accomplishment you are most proud of.
The founding of this clinic, being able to be a leader in the field where I can advocate for our patients and provide the care they need.

Charities you are involved with or support.
Doctors Without Borders.

Rachel Murray, NP

How did you choose to become a nurse practitioner?
I love the intricacies of the human body. Ultimately, it is where we live all the time and it is a gift. At the same time, it can be challenging to care for and nurture our bodies. Earlier in life, I had my own challenges with this which impacted other areas of my life, not only my health. As a result, I felt compelled to work toward a career that would allow me to care for women and help them live their best lives.

How long have you specialized in sexual medicine?
Sexual medicine is a very special field in which you must educate yourself through fellowship and continuing education opportunities after obtaining a degree. I graduated in 2016 and shortly after fell in love with the field of sexual medicine. I have been incorporating sexual medicine into my practice at ob-gyn offices for years. When I learned of a potential opportunity to work only in sexual medicine, I jumped! I have been at this practice for about a year.

Highlight some of the work you do at the practice.
I work individually with patients with various conditions like low libido, painful intimacy, decreased arousal, and vulvodynia. I am currently very focused on hormone replacement therapy for post-menopausal women and am working toward a certification in this through The Menopause Society.



Novant Health cancer experts are accepting patient referrals for Pluvicto, a new targeted prostate cancer treatment.



The nuclear medicine and theranostics program at Novant Health Cancer Institute offers an integrated approach to diagnosing and treating prostate cancer patients who are eligible for Pluvicto therapy.

Pluvicto, a radiopharmaceutical medicine approved by the Food and Drug Administration in 2022, targets and helps slow metastatic cancer. However, the only candidates for it are prostate-specific membrane antigen (PSMA)-positive metastatic castration-resistant prostate cancer (mCRPC) patients who have undergone chemotherapy.

"Pluvicto is not a cancer cure and is not for everyone," said Novant Health oncologist Tim Collins, MD.

Patients undergoing the intravenous therapy at Novant Health Cancer Institute are reporting immediate pain relief. Among them is Tony Williamson, who in 2020 was diagnosed with stage 4 prostate cancer. He underwent external beam

radiation therapy, hormone therapy and chemotherapy, but those proved ineffective and intensely painful, given Williamson's advanced cancer.

He was looking for another solution to ease the pain, and that opportunity came last year when Dr. Collins referred Williamson for treatment.

"After the first dose of Pluvicto, I couldn't believe it," Williamson said. "The next day I literally sat up in bed, got up and walked to the bathroom. I was still hurting some, but I was able to fight through it."

Dr. Collins identifies eligible patients and refers them to nuclear medicine physician Gbenga Shogbesan, MD, the program's medical director of molecular imaging and theranostics.



"Now, with targeted therapies such as Pluvicto, patients are living longer and more comfortably. It will be exciting to see what impact this may have as we learn more from ongoing clinical trials."

— Logan Rhea, DO
Oncologist at Novant Health

Since October 2023, Dr. Shogbesan has administered Pluvicto to Williamson, who is Novant Health Forsyth Medical Center's first patient to receive the therapy and one of the first patients to receive the therapy at Novant Health.

The therapy is administered in six doses, six weeks apart, and releases radiation to kill PSMA on cancer cells. From diagnosis to referral to treatment, the Cancer Institute's approach to integrated care puts patients at ease throughout the 30-week process.

Radiation oncologists, palliative care physicians and urologists all play a role in treating symptoms related to metastatic prostate cancer, said oncologist Logan Rhea, DO.

"Years ago, there were not many good treatment options in patients with prostate cancer who had worsening of their disease despite treatment with chemotherapy," Dr. Rhea said. "Now, with targeted therapies such as Pluvicto, patients are living longer and more comfortably. It will be exciting to see what impact this may have as we learn more from ongoing clinical trials."

Referring providers should be aware of specific patient eligibility.

Pluvicto is effective only in men who have received chemotherapy for PSMA-positive mCRPC. Patients who could benefit from Pluvicto treatment include:

- Those whose external beam radiation therapy was ineffective because the cancer had metastasized.

- Those whose hormone therapy was inadequate to starve cancer cells of testosterone.
- Those whose chemotherapy resulted in side effects, including constant, debilitating pain.

Risk versus reward

Treatment options are limited once cancer spreads beyond the prostate, but for eligible patients, Pluvicto is capable of slowing metastasis and offering a quality-of-life other options do not.

"For somebody who has been through all those treatments, this represents an entirely new category of treatment," Dr. Collins said. "Pluvicto is now an option when other standard therapies have failed."

Plus, there's no need to wait for the end of treatment to experience a better quality of life. Williamson's PSA levels dropped considerably following the first dose, Dr. Shogbesan said.

"When he came back after his first dose, he was a different man," Dr. Shogbesan added. "He was in high spirits, and that has been the reaction of most of our patients. I tell them that this medication is not going to cure the cancer, but it will reduce their pain and symptoms."

Pluvicto's side effects include tiredness, weight loss and a risk from radiation exposure. Research is underway to determine whether the drug can become the standard of care for eligible prostate cancer patients.

A developing nuclear medicine and theranostics program

Dr. Shogbesan joined the Cancer Institute medical staff in August 2023 from Emory University in Georgia, where he completed a residency in nuclear medicine and a fellowship in imaging and theranostics. Prior to that, he studied internal medicine and radiology in his native Nigeria.

"My passion was to get this to people in community health centers like Forsyth Medical Center, evaluate patients together with the oncologist and be closer to the patient," Dr. Shogbesan said.

As the nuclear medicine and theranostics program expands, referring clinicians should feel confident in the centralized services at Novant Health Cancer Institute.

What Pluvicto success looks like

Success does not mean a cure. After a single dose, patients report significant changes in their ability to manage pain.

Lower PSA levels with each dose indicate effectiveness in slowing the cancer.

"Pluvicto offers the possibility of one more effective therapy," Dr. Collins said. "At Novant Health Cancer Institute, we're excited because we're seeing very good results with patients who are tolerating it well and are responding to it."

Make a referral in the Charlotte area:

- Phone: 980-302-6100
- Fax: 980-302-6105



Early Intervention for Idiopathic Toe-Walking



Scott Harvey, MPT
Child & Family Development

Idiopathic Toe-Walking (ITW) is a term used to describe a gait pattern with consistent forefoot contact and absent heel strike that is without a known cause or pathology (Le Cras S, 2011). ITW is a “common pediatric condition with a prevalence of 5% to 24% in children” (Bauer, Sienko, & Davids, 2022). This condition is not a foot and ankle problem, but rather it is a disordered movement pattern and not part of normal development. Walking only on the forefeet is neither efficient nor a safe way to move around. A young child may subconsciously prefer to toe-walk because it serves a greater physiological need for their body systems than walking heel-to-toe. For example, a child with underlying vestibular dysfunction may prefer to toe-walk because it facilitates a more up-and-down vertical head motion. In this case “idiopathic” actually means no known cause *yet*. The underlying causes of toe-walking can certainly be identified with a physical therapy evaluation. Examples of common causal factors are one or more of the following: musculoskeletal, neuro-motor, and sensory dysfunction.

If you saw a typically developing 14-month-old just starting to walk independently, and they rise up on their toes, should you be concerned? The answer is most likely no. It is common to see beginner walkers rise up onto their toes – called toe stepping – as they do this to create stability in the ankles to support their balance. As children develop their balance, postural control, strength, and visual and vestibular systems, the flat foot pattern transitions to a heel strike pattern and becomes more consistent. In fact, heel strike is consistent at

approximately six months after independent walking (Lisa H. Shulman, 1997), which would be around 18 months old on average.

With this information in mind, imagine you see the same child at two years of age. Their toe-walking has persisted for ten months without any reduction in frequency. They have no medical diagnosis to explain the toe-walking, and they have full ankle range of motion to achieve a heel-to-toe gait. At this point, the child should be referred for a physical therapy evaluation, in order to determine why the toe walking has persisted longer than the six-month accepted timeframe. It is also important to note that some, but not all idiopathic toe-walking is related to sensory processing difficulties. If sensory processing is a contributing factor, then a referral to occupational therapy is indicated (Jack H. Donne, 2023).

Practice Makes Permanent

So why is early physical therapy intervention so important? *Practice makes permanent* refers to repetitive movements that become ingrained habits and form an established motor pattern in the brain. The sooner the underlying cause(s) are addressed with individualized treatment, the easier it is for a child to re-train their gait and practice a typical walking pattern. Early intervention leads to more efficient and cost-effective outcomes and will help prevent potential consequences on a child’s long-term development and mobility.

Secondary Issues

Common secondary issues caused by toe-walking include painful

muscle, ligament, and joint injuries, structural foot changes and incompatible footwear, decreased ankle mobility and instability, balance deficits, and decreased endurance due to higher energy expenditure (Cleveland Clinic, 2022).

One key consequence is the effect of toe-walking on the development of bone deformities in the feet. Between the ages of two and five, the bones of the feet are developing and will change shape in response to the forces applied while walking. Toe-walking places abnormally high forces on the forefoot, and zero force on the hindfoot thus causing the bones to grow and develop incorrectly. After age five the bone structure in the feet has almost fully formed, and once the bone deformities appear they become very difficult to reverse. Malformed foot bones can cause foot pain, altered biomechanics, and misalignment and can lead to pain in other areas of the body (knees, hips, & lower back).

Children may start physical therapy at a later age, even after the bone structure in the feet has formed. Parents of a seven-year-old may commonly report their child has always toe-walked, and is now starting to experience pain in their feet and legs, has difficulty squatting, and playing sports, and has developed shortened heelcords which makes it uncomfortable to walk heel-to-toe. For these older kids, it is not too late to intervene as they can still re-train their gait with physical therapy and likely custom orthotics. However, the older they are, the more challenging and prolonged it becomes to address the issues that have arisen from many years of toe-walking.



Another major sequela that we see is shortened heel cords and calf muscles due to the ankle positioned in a plantarflexed position while toe-walking for one or more years. In almost all cases, decreased ankle range of motion is a consequence of the toe-walking, rather than a cause of it. Muscles and connective tissue do have the ability to lengthen and adapt to loads. On the other hand, the skeletal system is very difficult to change once it has matured. This is why the “wait and see” approach is not recommended because we will miss the best opportunity to re-train a child’s gait pattern and prevent bone deformities in the feet which would otherwise be difficult to correct after age five.

Refer Early

The take-home message is that regardless of the cause of the idiopathic toe-walking, all children demonstrating ITW for longer than six months after independent walking should be referred for a physical therapy evaluation. Earlier referral allows clinicians to design interventions to prevent the establishment of habitual toe-walking. The longer a child continues to toe-walk, the more challenging it becomes to re-train their gait pattern and the greater the risk of secondary issues when they are older. As therapists our ability to help these children begins to decline after age four. Nevertheless, older children can still have very good outcomes and achieve a typical gait pattern with the appropriate interventions and home program carryover.

Resources

Bauer, J. P., Sienko, S. P., & Davids, J. R. (2022). Idiopathic Toe Walking: An Update on Natural History, Diagnosis, and Treatment. *Journal of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons*, e1419-e1430. doi:10.5435/JAAOS-D-22-00419

Cleveland Clinic. (2022, 10 26). *Toe Walking*. Retrieved from Cleveland Clinic: <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/21017-toe-walking>

Jack H. Donne, J. A. (2023). Some children with idiopathic toe walking display sensory processing difficulties but not all: A systematic review. *Acta Paediatrica*, 1620-1632. doi:10.1111/apa.16821

Le Cras S, B. J.-H. (2011). Evidence-based clinical care guidelines for Management of Idiopathic Toe Walking. *Cincinnati Children’s Center Hospital*, 1-17.

Lisa H. Shulman, M. D. (1997). Developmental implications of idiopathic toe walking. *The Journal of Pediatrics*, 541-546. doi:[https://doi.org/10.1016/S0022-3476\(97\)70236-1](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0022-3476(97)70236-1)



More time to focus on your patients.

Just what the doctor ordered.

Introducing Physicians First, customized financial solutions for physicians, dentists, veterinarians and their practices. Doctors have unique financial needs — and little time to deal with them. Physicians First was designed to help you achieve your goals, from paying off student loans and buying a home to building a practice and planning for retirement, all while appreciating your greatest asset — time.

Learn more at fnb-online.com/physicians.



First National Bank



Equal Housing Lender | NMLS# 766529 | Member FDIC



Charlotte's
BEST
2023 WINNER

VIA
Health Partners
FORMERLY
Hospice & Palliative Care
Charlotte Region

NAVIGATING A SERIOUS ILLNESS CAN BE DIFFICULT FOR YOUR PATIENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES. LET US HELP.

VIA Health Partners provides hospice and palliative care wherever your patients call home, in Mecklenburg and all surrounding counties.

Call us anytime: 704.375.0100

Hospice Care • Palliative Care • Grief Support • Pediatric Care • Inpatient & Residential Care

viahp.org



New Patient Appointment Line:
704-372-7974
CarolinaDigestive.com

The physicians at Carolina Digestive Health Associates are excited to announce that **Dr Thadeus Dapash** has joined our practice and will be seeing patients at our Charlotte, Matthews and Pineville offices.

About Dr. Dapash

Dr. Thadeus Dapash is a fellowship trained gastroenterologist. His specialties include adult gastroenterology and hepatology. His professional interests include, but are not limited to, management of inflammatory bowel disease (IBD), Pancreatic and Biliary Disease, performing endoscopic procedures, colorectal cancer prevention, and Hemorrhoid treatment.

Dr. Dapash earned his Doctorate of Osteopathy from the Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine (VCOM), where he served as class president and was awarded Student of the Year. He holds a Master of Science in Medical Education from Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine. He completed his internal medicine training at Millcreek Community Hospital in Erie, PA, where he served as chief resident for two years. As well as completed a prestigious gastroenterology fellowship with LECOM Health in Erie, PA, and served as chief fellow in his final year. Dr. Dapash is the co- author of several published research and review articles.

Dr. Dapash enjoys spending time with his family, cooking, traveling, and working out.



Thadeus Dapash, DO, MS

Specialization • Gastroenterology & Hepatology

Locations • Charlotte, Matthews & Pineville

Board Certification • Internal Medicine & Gastroenterology

Medical School • Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine

Fellowship • LECOM Health-Millcreek Community Hospital

Residency • LECOM Health-Millcreek Community Hospital

Please join us in welcoming Dr. Dapash to the CDHA family!



Ever After  WEALTH

FINANCIAL CLARITY DURING DIVORCE

"Going through a divorce or considering separation? Health professionals face unique challenges when going through a divorce, particularly when it comes to their finances. Complex income structure, often presented through multiple income streams, such as salaries, bonuses, and income from private practice or partnerships. Earning potential. Complex retirement account holdings. Ownership of a private practice or being part of a medical partnership.

These are just some of the various aspects that make it challenging to determine an accurate picture of a doctor's financial situation and their marital estate while going through a divorce increasing the complexity of the process.

My goal is to provide you with the expertise and guidance to help you achieve a fair and equitable resolution to your divorce while protecting your financial well-being."

Gabriella E. Martinelli | CDFA® NCMP® CDS®
Founder & Divorce Financial Planner



www.everafterwealth.com
Gabriella@everafterwealth.com
Direct Line: 704-750-5421

ANDREW H. MARKY, MD, FAANS

Neurological
Surgery / Novant Health Brain &
Spine Surgery – Ballantyne



How did you get your start in medicine?

I was interested in medicine from a young age. I found myself fascinated with the anatomy and physiology of the human body as early as middle school and that translated ultimately into an interest in the medical field.

How did you choose Neurosurgery?

Heading into medical school, I had a strong interest in surgical specialties, specifically cardiothoracic surgery. During my first year of medical school, I shadowed a neurosurgeon in the OR to watch a brain tumor resection. After seeing the human brain, the technical excellence, along with the intellectual demands required, I was hooked. From that point on, I spent a lot of time with the neurosurgery team in the OR throughout my time in medical school and became more interested along the way.

Were there any other specialties you considered?

My initial interest was cardiothoracic surgery. From a younger age, I always found myself very interested in the heart. Specifically, its function, and complexity. Heading into medical school that was my main interest. It was not until my time in medical school that my focus changed towards neurosurgery.

Tell me about Novant Health Brain & Spine Surgery and how you landed there.

I joined the Novant Health Brain and Spine team in 2019. After I completed my neurosurgery training at Duke University Medical Center I took a job in Houston Texas with the Houston Methodist system. After my first three years in Houston, I decided I wanted to return to North Carolina. That is when I made the move



to the Novant Health Brain and Spine team. It has been a great five years with the group, over which time we have seen some amazing growth within the group.

What makes your practice unique in our community?

I think our practice is unique in the sense that we have an excellent group of neurosurgeons to cover the breadth of neurosurgery. Despite an average size group, we have a provider that specializes in every aspect of a broad range of neurosurgical issues. From complex cranial surgeries to complex spine surgeries all the way to complex pain and functional neurosurgical issues such as treating Parkinson’s disease and essential tremor through the most cutting-edge treatments.

Tell me about one of your favorite successes as a physician.

I think one of my favorite successes as a physician and surgeon is when I am able to provide patients with a significant improvement in their quality of life. Many patients who come to see me are in severe pain or have seen an increased decline in their functional abilities. Many times after surgery we are able to dramatically help in these areas and provide patients significant pain relief



and improve their functional abilities. Recently, one of my patients shared with me a picture of his wife and him after they finished hiking almost 15 miles over a mountain in Spain. He is doing very well several years out from surgery. He’s doing things now he never could have done prior to surgery.

Being able to provide someone with a significant improvement in their quality of life is the most satisfying part of my job.

What do you find are your biggest challenges?

I think some of the biggest challenges I’m currently facing are changes in the healthcare landscape. There are ever-changing requirements placed on physicians to see more patients while continuing to maintain extremely high-quality standards, all while doing our best to make sure we provide the most individualized care for patients which is of paramount importance.

Describe a typical day for you.

A typical day for me varies a little bit depending on the day of the week. I start my week in the office seeing patients in our Ballantyne location. This is where I get to sit down with my patients, listen to their needs, and develop plans for how I'm going to help them. This is also a time when I'll follow up with my postop patients. During the middle of the week, I am at the Presbyterian Medical Center operating Tuesday through Thursday which is one of my favorite places to be. This is where I feel like I provide the most benefit, as I am able to apply the skills that I have learned over many years of training to help my patients.

How do you define quality care?

Quality care to me means that I am providing the highest level of care to my individual patients and securing the best possible outcomes for them. Whether that means surgery or sometimes explaining to a patient why surgery is not the best option. These are often very difficult conversations and I work very hard to make this process the best it can be.

What motivates you or excites you about what you do?

What motivates me the most is that we are constantly making improvements in the care available for patients. In the neurosciences specifically, we have improved the way we operate through technological advancements, along with new equipment available to us in the operating room. This helps to shorten the hospital length of stay and decrease the morbidity associated with surgery. We have made tremendous progress in these areas over the last decade. There are always new developments and improvements coming out that we are able to apply to the surgery that we perform which make a huge difference for patients.

How do you try to maintain a balanced life outside of work?

Given the complexity of a career in neurosurgery, it is easy to get caught up in the demands of the job. However, from the beginning of my career, I have tried to maintain a solid work-life balance. This has been a focus of mine for many years. I do my best to prioritize personal time and time away from work. I do this by spending time with my family and friends, traveling, and participating in sports I enjoy like tennis and golf.

How has practicing medicine in your specialty changed over the years?

The practice of neurosurgery has changed significantly over the years. We are now more



focused than ever on quality and efficiency. We track our outcomes very closely to ensure we are providing the highest quality of care possible. We utilize the most up-to-date technological advances for our patients, things that were simply not available previously. There are a lot more quality control aspects that have been put in place that were simply not there in previous generations. All of these changes have led to a significant improvement in the way we practice medicine and the safety of our patients.

Do you have any medical role models who have influenced you along the way?

I think my biggest role model within the medical field is a neurosurgeon who helped train me at Duke University Medical Center. Dr. Alan Friedman is a long-time leader in the field of neurosurgery and is still in practice today. One of the biggest lessons I learned from him is to always do the right thing for the patient. Dr. Friedman is remarkable in that sense. No matter the circumstances, Dr. Friedman always makes sure to put the patient first and provide the absolute highest quality of care possible. In doing so, he served as a tremendous role model and has been a big influence in my career.

If you were not practicing medicine, what profession do you think you would have chosen?

I have often asked myself what I would have done for a career if I had not chosen medicine. I think I would have ended up in the legal world in some capacity. Both my dad and one of my brothers are attorneys along with an uncle so I grew up with lawyers in my family. I think I would have been drawn to the legal world as an attorney if I had not chosen to go into medicine.

What would you like to communicate to primary care and referring physicians?

I think one of the most important messages I want to communicate to primary care and other referring physicians is that your patients will receive the highest level of care possible when they come to see me for their neurosurgical issues. I pride myself on spending as much time as possible with each patient so that I can sit down and discuss their issues, listen to their concerns, review their imaging, and then come up with a plan for their care. In the current landscape of medicine in the United States this has become more and more challenging over the years but something that I continue to pride myself on. I prioritize maintaining that face-to-face time with patients so that we can find the best possible solutions for their problems.

If you could offer any advice to younger physicians, what would it be?

I think some of the best advice that I have received when considering a career in medicine and then starting myself is to stay patient. Training to become a physician is a marathon, not a sprint. Building a successful practice also takes time. We dedicate many years of our lives to first learning the basics and obtaining the foundation for careers through medical school and then ultimately spending many more years in our residency programs learning real-world on-the-job skills for our chosen specialty. This can be very taxing and causes a lot of burnout among trainees and early career physicians. Understanding that there is a light at the end of the tunnel and that all of the hard work and perseverance will pay off is really important to remem-

SPECIALIST SPOTLIGHT

ber. Medicine is an ever-changing landscape and remaining patient and open-minded is incredibly important.

What are some of your hobbies or interests outside of work?

Outside of work, I enjoy spending time with my family and friends. My wife Melanie and I really enjoy traveling. Whether it's something local like a weekend trip to the mountains or the beach, or something farther away like Europe we love to travel. We also enjoy spending time up at Lake Norman relaxing on the water and swimming with our dogs. I also enjoy playing both golf and tennis as much as I can fit in these days.

Tell me about your family.

I grew up in Buffalo New York the youngest of three brothers. My dad is an attorney who retired last year and my mom was a sixth grade school teacher for 40 years. My oldest brother lives in Huntsville, Alabama with his wife and kids. My middle brother lives in Arlington, Virginia where he works as a mergers and acquisitions attorney for a large Washington DC-based law firm. In 2020 Melanie and I were married in a COVID ceremony here in Charlotte. Unfortunately, our wedding was scheduled for 4/11/2020 so it was canceled only about 3 weeks before the date due to COVID. We ended up having a small ceremony here in Charlotte as our full ceremony in New Orleans was canceled. We were ultimately able to have the full ceremony two years later in April 2022. It was great at that time to finally be able to get all of our friends and family together for what turned out to be an amazing celebration. Melanie and I have two dogs, Harley and Angus, who we love taking on trips and spending time with.

Do you have a guilty pleasure?

TBD.



FOR A PHASE 1 CLINICAL TRIAL FOR CANCER, AN EARLIER REFERRAL BENEFITS YOUR PATIENTS.



Neel Gandhi, MD | Sherene Banawan, PA-C | John Powderly, MD

Since 2005 Carolina BioOncology Institute has served the local region with rapid access to cutting edge clinical trials specializing in immunotherapy. We offer the most Phase 1 trials in the area. Before your patients travel a long distance, know all your options!

9801 Kinsey Ave. Suite 145
Huntersville, NC 28078
704-947-6599
www.carolinabiooncology.org



TIFFANY LINVILLE, MD

Elected President of the Crohn's & Colitis Foundation Carolinas Chapter Board of Directors

**Research and Multidisciplinary Care:
Advancements in Treating Pediatric Inflammatory Bowel Disease**

As a pediatric gastroenterologist, I treat young patients with Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD), including Ulcerative Colitis and Crohn's Disease. I have seen firsthand the impact IBD can have on

their lives. It affects their friendships, schoolwork, hobbies, and ability to enjoy childhood to the fullest.

I have been part of the Crohn's & Colitis Foundation's Carolinas Chapter since I moved to Charlotte six years ago to lead Atrium Health Levine Children's Inflammatory Bowel Disease Multidisciplinary Clinic. Recently, I was honored to be elected president of the board of directors.

One major reason I am so proud to be part of this organization is its commitment to supporting research and innovative therapies to treat patients of all ages. The Crohn's & Colitis Foundation is doing incredible work advancing clinical research and providing patient and family support. These are two of the most important aspects of getting patients well.

The role of board president is dynamic. Depending on the time of year and our chapter goals it ranges from fundraising, organizing educational events, bringing awareness of Inflammatory Bowel Disease to the community, and connecting patients and families with the foundation. I think my role as a provider makes my first goal to increase awareness of this invisible illness so that fundraising increases to support the Crohn's and Colitis Foundation's goal to cure Inflammatory Bowel Disease.

My goals for the next year include increasing our presence in smaller communities across the Carolinas. Right now, we have incredible support in the Charlotte and Triangle communities, but we know there are patients who need us outside of the metropolitan areas and we want them to be connected and supported as well.

Prospective members should know that 1 in 100 individuals are diagnosed with Inflammatory Bowel Disease, so chances are high that every person is somehow affected by this disease/knows someone suffering. Because the nature of the illness is somewhat personal, it's not as commonly discussed, advertised, or solicited for. We know the more aware our communities are, the better access to care our patients will receive!

Advancing Clinical Research for Pediatric IBD

The Crohn's & Colitis Foundation has been part of every IBD advancement — from medications to devices — since the Foundation started. By funding



A recent Crohn's and Colitis Foundation walk.



research, the Foundation helps advance and improve care. I have seen the power of this research firsthand in the quality-of-life improvements in my patients.

Inflammatory Bowel Disease research has paved the way for many exciting, effective, innovative treatments over the past decade. As a field, we have come a long way. In 1998, the first advanced IBD therapy was approved, followed by a second therapy in 2007 and a third in 2014. More than a decade later, we now have ten advanced therapies, and additional promising treatments are currently in clinical trials. These new medications have different mechanisms of action, resulting in fewer surgeries and a better chance of remission for patients.

Remission rates for Pediatric IBD patients have also drastically improved thanks to both the work of the Crohn's and Colitis Foundation and the Improve Care Now consortium. In 2006, the remission rate was approximately 40%. Today, it's nearly 85%.

Multidisciplinary Care to Improve Quality of Life for Pediatric IBD Patients

Another essential aspect of elevating pediatric IBD patient care is taking a multidisciplinary approach. This includes a team of gastroenterologists, nurse navigators, schedulers, dietitians, psychologists, and social workers, all dedicated to helping patients heal holistically.

As gastroenterologists oversee patient care, nurse navigators guide patients and their families through the treatment process, psychologists support mental

health, dietitians oversee dietary therapies and social workers connect them with additional resources. It truly takes a team approach to achieve the quality-of-life improvements we have seen over the past decade. Our team is also involved in many research opportunities including clinical trials for new drug therapies. We are part of an international consortium known as Improve Care Now whose quality and research collaboration has substantially changed outcomes in Pediatric IBD over the last 15 years.

Whole-person care cannot be overstated: Up to 50% of patients with chronic illnesses also suffer from anxiety or depression. Patients are more likely to achieve remission when a psychologist is involved in their care. Our

Psychologist can see every IBD patient referred to our clinic.

Support groups can also be beneficial. Through the Crohn's & Colitis Foundation, two of our patients and their parents at Levine Children's started a virtual and in-person teen support group for IBD patients across the country.

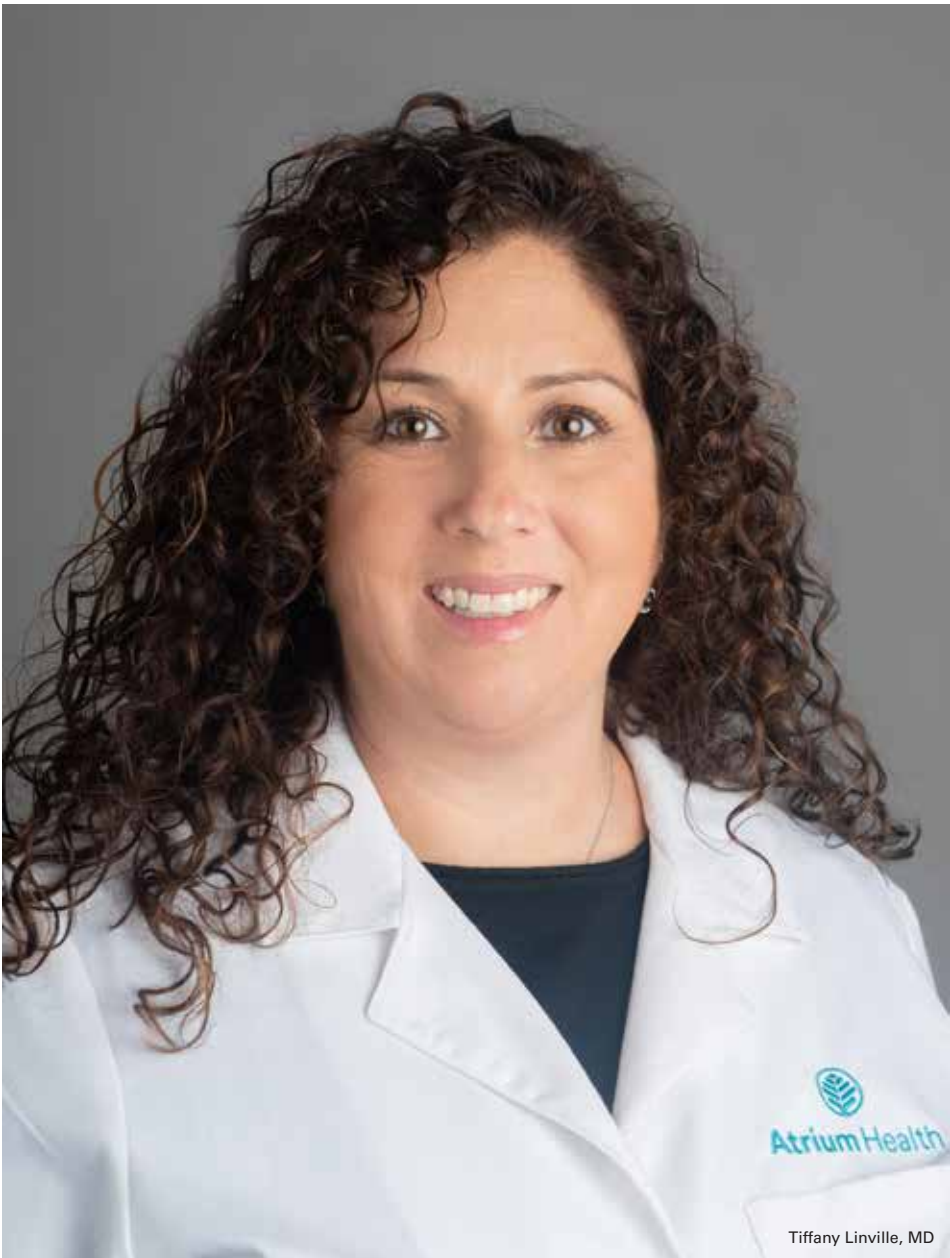
The Future of Pediatric IBD Care

Often, when I see patients, they have been sick for quite a while. Families are frustrated and worried. However, 85% of our patients are in endoscopic remission after treatment. It is so rewarding to see them get better clinically and go on to live completely normal lives, getting back to their friendships, schoolwork, and other activities.

The future is bright for pediatric inflammatory bowel disease patients: The goal of the Crohn's & Colitis Foundation is to find a cure, and I believe it will happen.

How To Get Involved Locally

When I first moved to Charlotte, I was impressed with the Crohn's and Colitis Foundation Carolinas Chapter. They support patients, caregivers, and healthcare teams across the region. I started my involvement by supporting the two major fundraising initiatives that occur each year: Take Steps in the spring and The Gala in the fall. Soon, I was asked to serve on the board and was able to substantially increase Levine Children's Take Steps team efforts. Both events are worthwhile for any patient, caregiver, or healthcare provider. 1 in 100 people are diagnosed with Inflammatory Bowel Disease so we all are likely somehow affected. Please join us at any of these upcoming events and show support to those affected by this invisible illness.



Tiffany Linville, MD

Dalton Flynn, RN, BSN

CAPIZZI, MD
COSMETIC SURGERY
& MED SPA

CAPIZZI, MD
COSMETIC SURGERY & MED SPA

What or who inspired you to go into nursing?

I always liked the idea of having a career that allowed me to help people and found the medical field to be very interesting and one that would constantly challenge me. I also have multiple family members in the field who encouraged and assured me that nursing is a great profession!

How long have you been a nurse?

I have been a nurse for seven years this month.

Tell me about your first nursing position.

My first job was at Atrium Main in the Surgical Trauma ICU. I was in their new grad nurse residency program after completing nursing school at Appalachian State University. I was a bedside nurse on the night shift for about three and a half years. This position provided me with invaluable experience and helped me develop into a competent and compassionate nurse.

How long have you been with Capizzi, MD and how did you find your way there?

I have been at Capizzi, MD for three and a half years. I found the job posting on a whim while I was searching for “cosmetic surgery nurse jobs near me...” And the rest is history! I have always been interested in aesthetics and being able to combine that with caring for our surgical patients is really fun!

Tell me about your past roles.

My job at Capizzi MD is the second nursing job I've had. I valued my job at the hospital very much because I learned so much; how to be a good nurse, how to think critically, and



how to stay calm in stressful situations. At Capizzi, MD, I have been able to learn an entirely new set of skills and expand my knowledge on a very popular and interesting side of medicine.

What are some of your primary responsibilities now?

I am the OR Coordinator, so I am in charge of all things in the operating room. I make sure everything is in order so surgery days run smoothly. This includes staffing, sterilizing instruments, organizing, breast implants, pulling supplies and instruments to use during the procedures, prepping the patient for surgery, and most importantly being the operating room DJ. I am either the circulating nurse or scrub nurse during surgery days. I also assist our surgeons in consults, pre-ops, and follow-ups with our patients.

What are some of the challenges of your job?

Keeping up with two surgeons. Haha!

What do you feel your greatest skill is as a nurse?

I like to think my bedside manner is. I pride myself on being comforting and encouraging to patients. We see patients at some of their most vulnerable moments, so I always lead with



NOTABLE NURSE

care and compassion, just as I would want to be treated!

What do you enjoy most about your job?

My favorite part of my job is helping people feel more confident and comfortable in their own skin. It is very rewarding to see patients so happy after their procedures.

What do you find most rewarding about your job?

The most rewarding aspect of my job is building relationships with patients and following them through their surgical journeys.

What have you learned being a nurse?

Nursing has taught me so much in these last seven years. Some of the most important things include communication, empathy, and teamwork. I have learned how to advocate for myself and my patients, as well as how to be adaptable in various situations.

If you had not chosen nursing, what profession do you think you may have chosen?

I think I would have been a teacher. I always played "school" when I was little and even had my own personal overhead projector!



What advice would you share with someone thinking of entering the nursing field?

I have found nursing to be a very rewarding career. There are so many different opportunities within the field to learn different skill sets and specialties. We also need more nurses!

How do you like to spend your free time?

I am a big bookworm! I love to read! I also enjoy spending time with my family and friends and trying new restaurants around Charlotte.

What is your guilty pleasure?

Definitely a glass of rosé and Bravo TV!

Your Allergy & Asthma Relief Partner

Allergy Partners of Rowan-Salisbury

As the largest and most trusted allergy and asthma practice in the country, we continue to set the standard of excellence in our specialty, we're committed to doing one thing: providing the absolute best allergy and asthma care to the communities we serve.

With precise testing options and the most advanced treatments, we will partner with you to provide your patients with the personalized care they deserve. We offer:

Testing

- Skin Testing
- Patch Testing
- Food Allergy Testing
- Pulmonary Function Testing

Treatments

- Allergy Shots
- Biologics
- Food Oral Immunotherapy
- Food Allergy Risk Reduction

Call (704) 431-4253 or visit
AllergyPartners.com/Salisbury-nc
to schedule your appointment.

Meet Our Provider



AERIK WILLIAMS, MD
Board Certified in
Allergy & Immunology



Allergy Partners of Rowan-Salisbury
420 Mocksville Ave.
Salisbury, NC 28144

BE INDEPENDENT
AND SUPPORTED

Avance Care is committed to helping primary care providers thrive with infrastructure and support for optimal patient care.

Interested in working for or owning an Avance Care practice? Call 919.208.6850 or email engage@avancecare.com

Jeffrey Hutchings, MD
Waxhaw, NC



AvanceMD.com

GROWING TO SERVE CHARLOTTE:

AVANCE CARE OPENS NEW PSYCHIATRY AND COMPREHENSIVE PRIMARY CARE OFFICES TO MEET UNPRECEDENTED DEMAND

To most Charlotte-area residents, this will likely not come as a big surprise: Over the past three years, the Charlotte metro region has grown by 5.1%, the sixth-highest growth rate in the country. With 2.8 million residents, this growth is evident everywhere—from ongoing construction projects and traffic delays to the unprecedented demand for healthcare services.

Finding a healthcare provider in the region can be challenging. One in four Mecklenburg County adults does not have a primary care provider. The average wait time to establish care with a new primary care provider has ballooned to more than 26 days. And if you want to see a new behavioral health therapist, plan on waiting at least six weeks.

Building a Network of Care
This surge in demand is why healthcare providers like Avance Care are expanding across the Charlotte region. From its inception, Avance Care’s goal has been to create a more comprehensive, patient-centered primary care experience that also reduces provider burden, enhances clinical outcomes, and lowers healthcare costs. The company opened its first primary care practice in Research Triangle Park in 2006 and has grown, attracting patients by offering personalized care with embedded nutrition and behavioral health services within their clinics, as well as convenient evening and weekend hours.



Avance Care team members L to R: Sashalee Stewart, MD; Michael Pittman; Ted Cole; Craig J. White, MD; Shannon Roche, DO; Ike Nwanonyiri, MD; Yolanda Stevens.

For physicians, Avance Care provides the opportunity to own their own practices and have clinical autonomy while receiving business operations support. Clinicians are drawn to the team-based, patient-centered environment. “At Avance Care, we believe that building strong relationships with our patients is key to providing excellent care,” says Dr. Jeffrey Hutchings, lead physician of the Avance Care Waxhaw location. “Our comprehensive model allows us to address not just a patient’s physical health but also their mental and emotional well-being, all under one roof. This holistic, team-based approach is what drew me to Avance Care, and it’s what makes us unique.”

The first Charlotte-area Avance Care opened in Matthews in January 2021. It was shortly followed by Midtown, SouthPark, Mallard Creek, and Rea Farms locations. In October 2023, Davidson Family Medicine became an Avance Care practice, and in December 2023 Avance Care Waxhaw opened. Most recently, to address demand, Avance Care opened its eighth Charlotte location—an office devoted to Psychiatry and Behavioral Health in SouthPark. Led by Medical Director Sashalee Stewart, MD, the practice has a psychiatrist, a psychiatric physician assistant, and four behavioral health therapists. With its team, and the support of the Avance Care Centers of Excellence in Psychiatry and

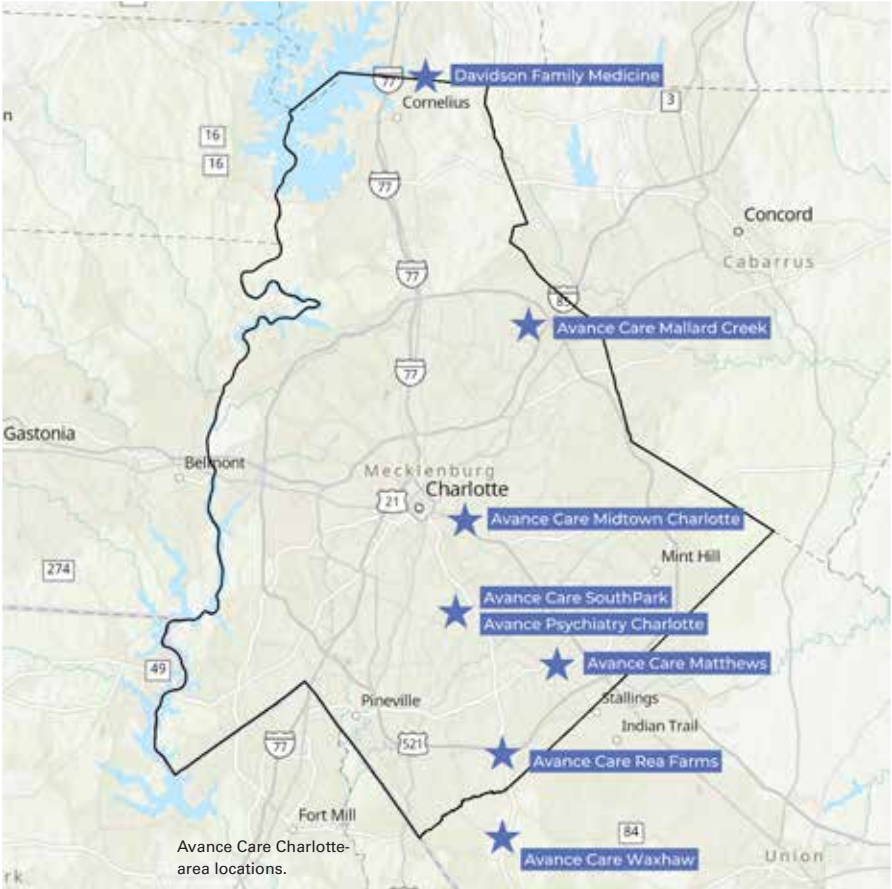
Behavioral Health, it can offer treatment within days, as opposed to the industry-standard wait times of four to six weeks. “We understand the challenges patients face in finding timely mental health services,” says Dr. Stewart, who is board-certified in psychiatry. “Our team is dedicated to providing efficient and effective care, and with our new location, we can offer treatment within days.”

This emphasis on short wait times extends beyond mental health services. Avance Care offers streamlined referrals to all of its specialists, including registered dietitians, behavioral health therapists, and psychiatrists. This ensures that patients can receive the comprehensive care they need when they need it most.

A Commitment to Community
Avance Care’s dedication extends beyond the walls of its clinics. Their behavioral health therapists have partnered with the



Jeffery Hutchins, MD and Avance Care Waxhaw team.



Triangle and Charlotte YMCAs to offer mental health classes for its members and training for its summer camp counselors. Additionally, its registered dietitians have teamed up with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina to lead free monthly nutrition classes at the insurer’s corporate centers in Raleigh and Charlotte. Finally, Avance Care is pleased to be a recurring sponsor of the Charlotte and Durham Pride Parades.

“Serving our community has been our mission for the past two decades,” says Dr. Craig J. White, founder and lead physician of Davidson Family Medicine. “Our team loves caring for folks new to the area – being able to offer them the highest quality primary care with a choice of the best specialists. Now, as a

part of Avance Care, we are better able to engage with physicians across the region. We recently hosted a free CME event on Adolescent Psychiatry at the Charlotte City Club. It’s so invigorating for all of us to come together, network, and share ideas. It reminds me of the collegiality and camaraderie we had when I first began practicing in Charlotte in 1990!

A Bright Future for Charlotte
The rapid growth of Charlotte presents challenges, but it also brims with opportunity. Healthcare providers like Avance Care are stepping up to meet the demand, offering efficient, accessible care and fostering a culture of community engagement. With a focus on innovation and collaboration, Avance Care is poised to thrive alongside the city itself. The best days for Queen City healthcare are yet to come.



Support Healthcare Missions... Your Path to Global Impact



You're invited to attend a dinner hosted by MedSend, a healthcare missions organization based in Charlotte. Join us on Friday, September 13 at 6:00pm at the Carmel Country Club and discover how you can help make a difference in underdeveloped countries through healthcare missions. MedSend can be your path to helping provide whole-person care to those in need and training for national doctors in their home countries. This is a free event with an option to financially support MedSend. Visit medsend.org/events for more information and scan the QR code to register.



SOUTH CHARLOTTE GENERAL & VASCULAR SURGERY



At South Charlotte General & Vascular Surgery we use the latest technology, including the CUTERA Excel V Plus, which delivers effective, noninvasive treatment for numerous vascular issues, and all aesthetic laser therapy including acne treatment with the new AviClear laser.

All Cosmetic Consultations are **FREE.**
20% Discount On All Facial Laser Treatments.



SOUTH CHARLOTTE
GENERAL &
VASCULAR SURGERY



We honor most major insurances, as well as Medicaid and Medicare.

13430 Hoover Creek Blvd, Charlotte, NC 28273
Phone (appointments): 704-459-3028
Phone (general inquiries): 704-910-8380
www.SCGVS.com

James Antezana, MD, RPVI, FSVS
General & Vascular Surgery
Founder & CEO

Social Media

THE EVOLVING
PORTFOLIO
FOR MEDICAL
PRACTITIONERS



Kendall Covitz,
CEO + Owner,
Social Med
Consultants

Social media has transcended its role as a mere communication tool, becoming an essential portfolio for medical professionals in the digital age. These platforms can enhance a business's reach, network, promotion, patient care and education, and health programs. Social media is inevitably transforming how medicine can be practiced and promoted, showcasing how medical professionals engage with patients and enhance their practice.

Showcasing Expertise
Platforms like LinkedIn, Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook offer a dynamic space for medical professionals to highlight their credentials, share case studies, and post updates on the latest medical advancements. This online presence serves as a living portfolio, providing potential patients with a comprehensive view of the practitioner's expertise and achievements. Research shows that over 70% of U.S. healthcare professionals and organizations are on social media.

Enhancing Patient Engagement
Through actively engaging on social media, medical professionals can educate their audience about health topics, share success stories, and provide insights into their practice. This not only builds a credible online presence but also fosters trust and loyalty among patients. Informative posts and interactive content help simplify complex medical information, making it more accessible and engaging for the public, as well as their target audience.

Bridging Online and In-Person Interactions
An established social media presence can significantly enhance in-person consultations. Patients who follow their doctors online often arrive more informed and confident, having seen the practitioner's posts and videos. This familiarity can lead to more meaningful, relaxed, and productive interactions. Additionally, sharing patient testimonials and visual case studies on social media serves as compelling documentation of the practitioner's skills and success, further strengthening in-person relationships.

The Impact on Practice Growth
Embracing social media is not just about accepting its growth, but also maintaining an online presence; it's about leveraging it as a powerful tool for practice growth. Medical professionals who effectively use social media to highlight their expertise, engage with patients, and share educational content can attract new patients and retain existing ones. The visibility and credibility gained through social media can drive referrals and enhance the overall reputation of their practice.

For medical professionals, social media is an invaluable tool that extends beyond online engagement into tangible practice benefits. By harnessing social media as an evolving portfolio, doctors can improve and promote their practice, foster deeper patient connections, and stay at the forefront of the healthcare industry. In an age where digital presence is at an all-time high, those not utilizing social media should take advantage of a critical opportunity to grow and enhance their practice.

References:
<https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/databriefs/db482.htm>



At Social Med Consultants, led by Kendall Covitz, a team of seasoned designers and video editors, adept copywriters, and savvy social media managers work together to create captivating feeds tailored to small businesses across the medical spectrum.

The best part? Our clients say goodbye to the confusing fog that can cover social media and welcome clear confidence instead.

What we do

- | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------|
| ORGANIC SOCIAL POSTS | BRANDING |
| PAID ADS | SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS |
| EDUCATION & TRAINING CONTENT | IN-PERSON TRAINING |
| WEB DESIGN | AND MORE |

"Thanks to Kendall, our brand has not only increased its online visibility but has also experienced tangible growth in awareness and engagement. If you're looking for a social media consultant who combines innovation, reliability, and a genuine passion for your brand's success, I couldn't recommend Kendall enough!"

@SOCIALMEDCONSULTANTS CALL.SOCIALMEDCONSULTANTS.COM



THE LEGAL LOWDOWN

HEALTHCARE LAW IN 2024



Heather Skelton
Partner
Gardner Skelton, PLLC



Kathryn Cox
Associate
Gardner Skelton, PLLC

Dear Heather: My practice is looking into updating its website to include online symptom tracker tools in an attempt to lessen the burden on our providers by directing patients to appropriate care. Are there any security considerations we need to consider?

-Dr. Confused Cookie

Dear Dr. Confused Cookie: Great (and timely) question!

What may seem like an innocuous addition of technology, intended to increase efficiencies, may have unintended consequences. With ever-evolving technology, it is more important than ever to be aware of ways in which HIPAA is implicated and how regulated entities must protect patients’ (and even non-patient website users’) protected health information (PHI), as required under HIPAA. Under certain circumstances, even an IP address of a user’s device can be considered PHI.¹

With that in mind, it is prudent to ensure you have identified and addressed pertinent issues before launching tools on your website.

Unfortunately, multiple healthcare entities in recent years perhaps weren’t so cautious and have had to report data breaches to the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), due to tracking technology employed on their websites – and some have settled related multi-million dollar class-action lawsuits.² Tracking technologies are on OCR’s radar, and on March 18th of this year, OCR updated previous guidance (first issued in a vague December 2022 Bulletin (the “2022 Bulletin”)) regarding online tracking technologies on Covered Entities’ websites and apps (the “2024 Guidance”).³

If your practice is a Covered Entity regulated by HIPAA, there are

special considerations to be aware of concerning information gathered on your public-facing website, especially if the new tools you’d like to implement involve tracking technology. Tracking technologies include, among other things, tracking pixels, web beacons, and cookies, which gather information about users’ actions as they interact with a website or mobile app. This information is often collected through tracking technologies and analyzed by the website and app owners as well as third-party technology vendors to create insights regarding a user’s online activity.

If you want to implement online tools that have tracking technology, you must be aware that, in accordance with the 2024 Guidance, any disclosure of PHI to the tracking technology vendor requires either: (1) each individual website user’s authorization; or (2) BOTH

of the following: (a) a signed business associate agreement (“BAA”) between your Covered Entity and the technology vendor/business associate; and (b) there is an applicable Privacy Rule permission related to the PHI disclosure (and only the minimum necessary PHI is disclosed to achieve the permitted purpose).

These matters are complex, so I’ll offer a word of caution. With regard to the authorization requirement referenced in the prior paragraph, the 2024 Guidance clarifies that a website banner that asks users to accept or reject a website’s use of tracking technologies, such as cookies, does *not* constitute a valid HIPAA authorization. And, if your technology vendor says, “Don’t worry; we de-identify data once it’s transferred to us,” please know that OCR has advised that is not sufficient to alleviate the risk or comply with HIPAA.⁴

In addition to the above requirements, it’s also important that the use of tracking technologies is being addressed in

your risk analysis and risk management processes required under HIPAA.⁵

From a practical perspective, what should you do next? Here are a few recommendations – not an exhaustive list.

1. Have your internal technology expert(s) sit down with your technology vendor to understand exactly what the proposed tracking technology does, how the data is collected, stored, and used, as well as where and how it is transferred (and to whom, including additional third parties), etc. We recommend asking the tech vendor for a visual data map/chart to show the data movement in a clear format.
2. Sit down with your team and clearly identify what purpose the proposed tracking technology will serve for your practice.
3. Determine if the purpose fits into an applicable Privacy Rule permission related to PHI disclosure. (You may need to consult an expert to guide this analysis.)

4. If the purpose is permitted by the Privacy Rule, you will need to negotiate a BAA with the Business Associate technology vendor that includes provisions appropriate to the arrangement.
5. Stay tuned. There is ongoing litigation regarding the 2022 Bulletin that may ultimately provide further guidance on this topic.

¹ Use of Online Tracking Technologies by HIPAA Covered Entities and Business Associates | HHS.gov.
² Novant Health Reaches \$6.6 Million Data Breach Settlement over Third-Party Pixel Tracking (americanbar.org); Advocate Aurora Reaches \$12.25M Settlement to Resolve Data Breach Lawsuit (healthitsecurity.com).
³ Use of Online Tracking Technologies by HIPAA Covered Entities and Business Associates | HHS.gov.
⁴ Use of Online Tracking Technologies by HIPAA Covered Entities and Business Associates | HHS.gov.
⁵ 45 CFR § 164.308.

The information provided in this column does not and is not intended to constitute legal advice. This area of law is still developing. This article addresses current regulations and guidance as of March 21, 2024.



Gardner Skelton is a Charlotte, NC-based law firm serving businesses of all sizes, including Fortune 500s, nonprofits, and independent medical practices. Our clients rely on us for smart legal strategies and support as an extension of their team. Since day one, we’ve been committed to providing exceptional service and incredible value. We’re passionate about delivering the highest level of legal counsel and cultivating deep, long-lasting relationships with our clients.

- Employment Law
- Healthcare Law
- Business Litigation
- Corporate Counsel
- Mediation
- Tax Law

contactus@gardnerskelton.com | gardnerskelton.com | 505 East Boulevard, Charlotte, NC 28203

CharlotteRadiology®

INTERVENTIONAL RADIOLOGY

-  Board-certified interventional radiologists subspecialized in vascular disease
-  Interventional radiology uses advanced image-guidance to diagnose and treat disease
-  Minimally invasive outpatient procedures giving patients a safe alternative to surgery
-  Practice in 15+ hospitals with dedicated IR clinics



Charlotte Radiology is one of the region's largest and most progressive radiology practices. We offer state-of-the-art technology, innovative procedures and 100+ subspecialized radiologists, reading over 1.7 million studies each year. We are committed to delivering exceptional patient care in partnership with our referring provider community.

CharlotteRadiology.com



Change Your Mindset About Hearing Loss:

HEARING LOSS

X MYTH: Old Age
✓ REALITY: Can occur at any age

X MYTH: Inevitable
✓ REALITY: Preventable

HEARING AIDS

X MYTH: Don't work well
✓ REALITY: Better hearing, better life

X MYTH: Too Expensive
✓ REALITY: Investment in better quality of life

TINNITUS

X MYTH: Learn to live with it
✓ REALITY: Treatment is available

 (704) 412-7975

 www.AudiologyCharlotte.com

 11121 Carmel Commons Blvd.
 Suite #150
 Charlotte, NC 28226

**Let
us
help!**



Get Back Out There.

Your New Choice for Neurosurgery and Spine in the Carolinas

MUSC Health Neurosurgery & Spine
 2021 Bridgemill Drive, Suite 104 | Indian Land, SC 29707
 1025 West Meeting Street, Suite 101 | Lancaster, SC 29720

Phone: 803-416-5453 | Fax: 803-416-5456
neurosurgreferrals@musc.edu | muschealth.org



Adam Back, M.D.
 Neurosurgery, Complex and
 Minimally Invasive Spine

NEED NEW PATIENTS?

MRI

Med Rank Interactive
Exclusive Healthcare Marketing

DIGITAL MARKETING & WEBSITE DESIGN
FOR MEDICAL PRACTICES



LAMAR HULL
FOUNDER

SEO

GOOGLE & FB ADS

WEBSITE DESIGN

SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

REPUTATION MANAGEMENT

EMAIL MARKETING

FREE CONSULTATION 980-217-1633

6025 BLAKENEY PARK DRIVE, #120-201, CHARLOTTE, NC 28277 / INFO@MEDRANKINTERACTIVE.COM / MEDRANKINTERACTIVE.COM

**THE SHARON
AT SOUTHPARK**

**MODERN SENIOR
LIVING IN CHARLOTTE**

- Independent living apartments
- Assisted living apartments

- Memory care
- Long term nursing care
- Skilled nursing and rehabilitation
- Physical, occupational and speech therapy

THE SHARON.ORG | 704-556-3231 | 5100 SHARON ROAD, CHARLOTTE, NC 28210

The Southeast's Premier Provider of Ambulatory Infusion Services

RESTORING HEALTH AND HOPE SINCE 1999



11 CONVENIENT LOCATIONS

THE PALMETTO EXPERIENCE

- 100% Focus on Infusion and Injection Therapies
- State-of-the-Art Clinics with a Comforting and Nurturing Environment
- Compassionate and Experienced Team of RNs, FNP's, MDs, and Pharmacists
- Convenient, Drive-up Parking
- Private Rooms and Saturday Hours Available
- Complimentary Benefits Verification, Financial Assistance Program Investigation, Treatment Education, and Licensed Social Worker Available to all Patients
- 24/7 Clinical Support
- Easy Online Bill Pay



**Palmetto
INFUSION**

Restoring Health. Restoring Hope.

palmettoinfusion.com
info@palmettoinfusion.com
800.809.1265



**INDEPENDENT LOCALLY OWNED
PHARMACY PROUDLY OFFERING:**

- Covid-19 Testing and Vaccines
- Covid-19 Antibody Treatment
- Home comfort, safety, and mobility
- Medication Packaging Solutions
- Prescription Compounding
- Pharmacogenetic Testing
- Hormone Replacement Therapy
- IV Hydration Therapies
- Weight Loss Program
- Sports Nutrition and Supplements
- Medication Synchronization
- Immunizations
- Accredited Specialty Pharmacy

**“ To enhance the quality of life
by bridging the gaps in patient care...”**



**Looking for solutions and want to embed one
of these in your practice?**

☐ Clinical Pharmacist ☐ In-House Pharmacy ☐ Both

**We can do that for you!
Contact Us!**

**COMPLEMENTARY MEDICATION DELIVERY & SUPERIOR SERVICE
FROM EVERY LOCATION:**

MONROE RD

9835 Monroe Rd
Charlotte, NC 28270
(704) 537-0909

HARRIS BLVD

6010 E W.T. Harris Blvd.
Charlotte, NC 28215
(704) 900-2832

PINEVILLE

10508 Park Road Suite 130
Charlotte, NC 28210
(704) 519-2800