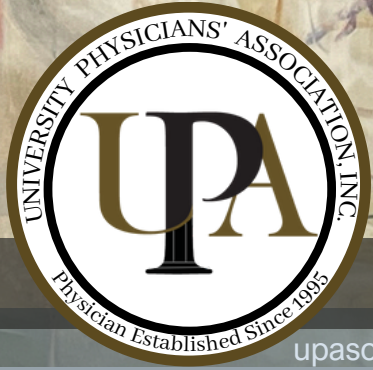


April 2024
Volume 3 . Issue 4



Darlene Willis, BS, CPC, CPB

UPA Front Lines

upasolutions.com . 2121 Medical Center Way . Suite 100 . 865.305.8872

Front Lines Team Member Feature

Kim Friar, CEO, UPA ● Amy Barger Stevens, MD, FAAFP
President, UPA

Darlene Willis, BS, CPC, CPB Manager, Quality and Education, UPA

Darlene Willis has been employed with UPA for 11 years and holds a Bachelor Degree in Business Management from Carson-Newman University. While working at UPA, she studied and received her CPC (Certified Professional Coder) in 2015 and became a (CPB) Certified Professional Biller in 2016. She began her healthcare career in Georgia by doing medical transcription. Once relocating to Tennessee, she began working A/R follow-up at UPA with successful advancement opportunities.

Darlene considers inspiration as her greatest achievement by influencing others to want to learn and grow both professionally and personally. She believes her biggest challenge is processing the constant flow of information and changes that occur daily in the healthcare industry. She recalls difficulties from the pandemic that created opportunities to see how healthcare was affected, not only from the clinical standpoint but administratively as well. CPT codes had to be created and defined for tests and vaccines. Payer rules were changing daily at that time with new processes to bill telehealth visits.

Her advice to others: Be eager to learn and grow! Don't give up! Constantly strive for the goals you have in mind for yourself and surround yourself with people that inspire you and see growth in you that you may not see in yourself. Growth may not always happen on your timeline but stay the course, it will happen. As her dad used to say,

"Persistence always prevails."

It was a Hit at the Stadium!

April was a special time for many of our UPA team members. Staff members and extended families were able to join together, with those that could attend at the Smokies Stadium for an evening of fun celebration.

We ARE because of our team!



865 305 8872

|

www.upasolutions.com

|

Knoxville, TN



Thank You to Our Team!

We appreciate all of our team but we like to take another moment to recognize these individuals for their years of service and dedication at UPA. We cannot be the successful organization that we are without our team members!

Celebrating Years of Service at UPA

35 Years Tammy Daniels

30 Years Carolyn Shoffner

27 Years Missy Noah

25 Years Deborah Pressley
Ruth Borden
Susan Caruso

20 Years Barbara Hudson
Karen O'Dell
Lori Maupin
Mary Ingram
Miranda Zolman
Nichole Lumpkins

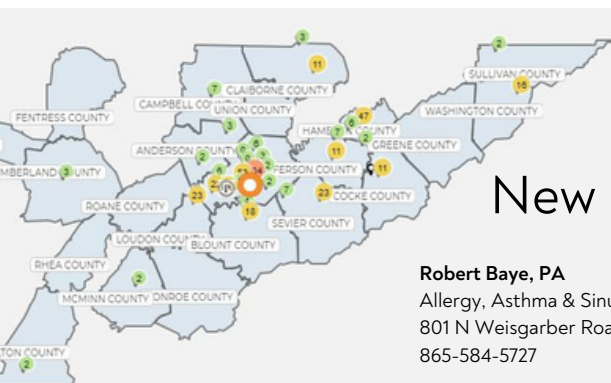
10 Years

Abigail Tackett	Leann Sexton
Becky Thiel	Mary Mierce
Betty Rush	Melanie Morgan
Carla Frey	Melissa Hubler
Dana Gullett	Nikki Willson
Gemma Motsinger	Regina Banks
Jessica Brown	Rhonda Riley
Julie Whitley	Rubi Carter
Kelley Churchwell	Sallie Gentry
Kelli Dukes	Samantha Ball
Kelly Chollman	Teresa Manis
Kym Rucker	

15 Years Debra Davis
Kati Sellars
Lauren Hinkle
Marsha Hyder
Rachel Taylor
Robin Miller
Teresa Courtney
Tiffany Isbill

5 Years

Alexandra Adams	Kim Preston
Amanda Foulks	Laura Barnes
Angelia Frierson	Laura Clabo
Ann Zimmerman	Mandy Polewka
Anne Gariety	Marjorie Ramsey
Ashley Wilhite	Mary Towle
Beth Mear	Michelle Preston
Blair Thammavongsa	Patrice Kizzee
Brandy Andrus	Penny Boyd
Brianna Poole	Rhonda Jones
Carla Saunders	Sabrina Pitts
Chris Camp	Samantha Ellis
Christina Warden	Sebrina Gunter
Courtney Martin	Skylar Miller
Courtney Webb	Stacy Loope
Cynthia Denton	Sue Boris
Donetta Sinard	Tammy Anit
Emily Sacco	Tammy Cummins
Julie Daugherty	Tiffany Pancotto
Kalei Graham	Tom Billings
Kathy Payne	Trish McDowell
Kayla Purdy	Tuesday Scalf
Kelsey Morton	Whitney Russell



New UPA Members

UPA Shareholders: 601
Non-Physician Practitioners: 580
Affiliates: 181
Associates: 1

TOTAL UPA Clinical Membership: 1,363

Robert Baye, PA
Allergy, Asthma & Sinus Center
801 N Weisgarber Road, Suite 200
865-584-5727

Kelly A. Probst, PA
UT Hospitalists
1924 Alcoa Highway, U51
865-305-8769

Rachel M. Terry, NP
University Trauma & Acute Care Surgeons
1932 Alcoa Highway, Suite 270
865-251-4658

Kerley N. Hanna, AuD
Bernadette E. Kos, M.A., CCC-A
Susan B. Webb, M.A., CCC-A
Rocky Top ENT & Allergy, PLLC
49 Cleveland Street, Suite 220
931-219-9990
-and-
700 S. Illinois Avenue, Suite A104
865-383-0737

Stephanie A. Hull, PA
Preferred Surgical Associates
1610 Tazewell Road, Suite 301
423-626-4288

Guillermo A. Quiceno, MD
University Rheumatology
1932 Alcoa Highway, Suite C-550
865-305-6543

Suzanne R. Weaver, NP
Pediatric Choice Clinic, LLC
5505 Creekwood Park Boulevard
865-986-1400

Amanda J. McElmeel, NP
Farragut ENT & Allergy
144 Concord Road
865-777-1727

Jerica K. Robertson, DO
UT Family Physicians Seymour
11606 Chapman Highway, Suites 2&3
865-609-6980

Samantha E. Williams, PA
University Wound Care
1940 Alcoa Highway, Suite E40
865-305-5515



Valued Communication with Vendor Relationships

By Katie Friar, VP of Credentialing & Physician Services at the University of Tennessee Medical Center

Published February 28, 2024



As a healthcare organization today,

Our relationship with technology can often feel like a whirlwind romance, a continuous cycle of excitement and exasperation. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the connectivity we forge with our tech vendors. It's a partnership that demands more than a transaction; it requires trust and collaboration as part of a long-term relationship.

As someone deeply embedded in the operational heart of a major medical center, I've learned invaluable lessons about the potential, and the pitfalls, of vendor relationships. I'm speaking to you as an "in-the-trenches" leader to reflect on how effective communication within our healthcare vendor relationships doesn't just make our lives easier; it allows us to thrive.

Fostering a true partnership

As a long-standing simplr customer, we decided to transition our provider credentialing software from a legacy solution (Visual Cactus) to the latest cloud-based solution. The key to this transition was communication. Although we encountered bumps along the way, as one does with any significant change, through diligent communication and a shared commitment to the greater goal, those hiccups transformed into opportunities for mutual learning and improvement. The transition wasn't just about upgrading technology; it was about upgrading our understanding of collaboration.

Our story with simplr is peppered with moments where we raised concerns and suggestions, and to our delight, the customer implementation team responded with real actions. It was this partnership and a genuine dedication to our success that made the project successful. We found an eager ear, and better yet, the results of our conversations implemented into our solutions.

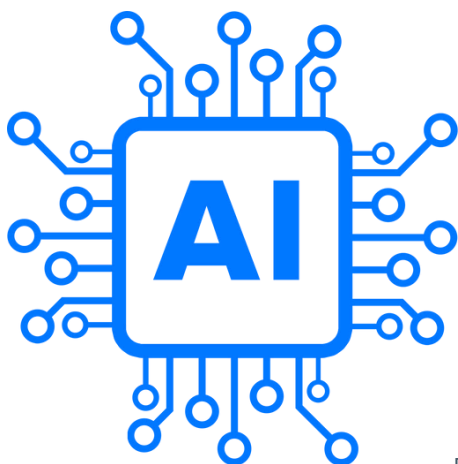
The importance of this open channel came into sharp focus during the COVID-19 pandemic. Our transition to digital from a paperless system not only enhanced efficiency; it became a lifeline that allowed us to operate remotely during the most challenging times. Because we needed to work from anywhere and access crucial data without the office confines, our work with simplr to co-craft solutions proved to be critical to ensuring providers be supported regardless of physical location.

Roadmap for change: clear objectives

Every healthcare professional knows the value of team-based care. The analogy is just as true for software. My most gratifying experiences during the migration from Visual Cactus to our current provider credentialing software came with the assurance that someone was on the other end, ready and willing to understand and solve our most pressing issues. This twofold approach of fostering an environment where customers feel heard and supported while the products continue to innovate solidifies the relationship between company and customer.

Change is daunting, especially in the highly regulated and critically demanding world of healthcare. But when you're initiating change with a partner who understands the urgency and risks of healthcare and has your best interests at heart, continuous improvement is not only doable but welcomed. We've come a long way, and looking back, it's clear that this journey, with its ups and downs, has been worth every step.

For those contemplating a digital transformation, remember that it's the human touch within your vendor relationship that often determines the trajectory of your technological evolution. Understand your goals, articulate your needs, and seek a partner willing to walk that path with you. When you find that relationship, nurture it. Schedule regular calls to stay updated, and always, always bring an agenda. Choose partners willing to communicate, willing to innovate, and willing to grow alongside you. The rest, as we've seen, tends to fall into place.



Business Technology Note of Caution

Artificial Intelligence (AI), such as ChatGPT, is everywhere on the Internet and in all our apps. While it is a fantastic tool for personal use, it learns from the data we feed it. Always be vigilant and never enter personal, professional (work), patient, or private information. These are open systems, and the data can be reviewed or possibly revealed by anyone.

Congratulations to our UPA

Physicians being recognized in

TOP DOCS

CITIVIEW
2024

Where doctors in our community choose doctors among themselves

Allergy & Immunology

Leslie L. Baker, MD
Jane R. Conley, MD
Richard J. DePersio, MD
Donald Ellenburg, MD
William D. Horton, II, MD
Tidence "Ty" Prince, MD
Jeffrey L. Schlactus, MD
Michael A. Springer, MD
Joseph M. Wisniewski, MD

Anesthesiology

Daniel R. Bustamante, MD
Jack J. Chavez, MD
Craig M. Combs, MD
Michael R. Flynn, MD
Benjamin A. Harper, MD
Patrick D. McFarland, MD
James K. Miller, MD
Joseph E. Simpson, MD
Cannon E. Turner, MD

Cardiology

Raj M. Baljepally, MD
Stuart J. Bresee, MD
James W. Cox, Jr. MD
Jerry J. Crook, II, MD
Jeffrey B. Hirsh, MD
David Huntsinger, MD
Jeffrey H. Johnson, MD
Joseph C. Liu, MD
Benjamin I. Sheppple, MD
Carmelo V. Venero, MD

Cardiology, Interventional

Raj M. Baljepally, MD
Stuart J. Bresee, MD
Tjuan Overly, MD
Ayaz Rahman, MD
Carmelo V. Venero, MD

Cardiology Disease

David R. Huntsinger, MD
Jeffrey H. Johnson, MD
Benjamin I. Sheppple, MD

Cardiology, Electrophysiology

Michael S. Bailey, MD
James W. Cox, Jr., MD
Jeffrey B. Hirsh, MD
William J. Mahlow, MD

Critical Care

Paul R. Branca, MD
John C. Callison, Jr., MD
Tina M. Dudley, MD
Jared N. Kravitz, MD
Elise E. Schriver, MD
James E. Shamiyeh, MD
Francisco J. Soto, MD
Arseniy V. Tsapenko, DO

Dermatology

Elizabeth B. Anderson, MD
Carley O. Fowler, MD
Kimberly K. Grande, MD
Meredith T. Overholt, MD
Quyn S. Rahman, MD

Family Practice

Amy Barger Stevens, MD
Daniel Cox, MD
Shelly Durbin, MD
Amy E. Forsee, MD
Julie W. Jeter, MD

Gastroenterology

Youhanna S. Al-Tawil, MD
Meade Edmonds, MD
Sangeeta Gulati, MD
Carlos Rollhauser, MD
Thomas L. Young, MD

Genetics

Ilse J. Anderson, MD

Geriatric Medicine

Monica K. Crane, MD

Gynecologic Oncology

Jonathan D. Boone, MD
Larry C. Kilgore, MD
Kristopher J. Kimball, MD

Gynecology

Allison M. Eaton, MD

Hospice/Palliative Care

Adam J. Tyson, MD

Hospitalist

Michael W. Carringer, MD
Deborah L. Franklin, DO
Benjamin R. Helms, DO
Jano Janoyan, DO
Jason E. Kennedy, MD
Ryan D. Kerr, MD
Claude A. LaCharite, MD
Nathan P. Smith, MD
Benjamin C. Verzi, MD

Hospitalist, Internal Medicine

Michael W. Carringer, MD
Kimberly L. Morris, MD
Janet L. Purkey, MD

Hyperbaric Medicine

Lee J. Carder, MD
Ryan A. Unger, MD

Infectious Disease

Russell J. Smith, MD

Internal Medicine

Rocio A. Huet, MD
Kimberly L. Morris, MD
Jennifer J. Piel, MD
Nathan R. Piel, MD
Janet L. Purkey, MD

Hematology/Oncology

David N. Aljadir, MD
Wahid T. Hanna, MD
James C. Mosley III, MD
Timothy J. Panella, MD

Maternal & Fetal Medicine

Kimberly B. Fortner, MD
Mark D. Hennessy, MD
Bobby C. Howard, MD
Cecil "Tripp" Nelson, III, MD
Callie F. Reeder, MD
Lynlee M. Wolfe, MD

Neonatology

Tara M. Burnette, MD
Mark S. Gaylord, MD
Keri A. Lattimore, MD
John Meadows, MD

Nephrology

Ritu Khanna, MD
Ross M. Nesbit, MD
Denise M. Rivers, DO
Urath Suresh, MD

Neurology

Alexander J. Hartmann, MD
Steven P. Rider, MD
Randall G. Trudell, MD
Brian F. Wiseman, MD

OB/GYN

Lisa C. Buckingham, MD
Stephanie B. Cross, MD
Kimberly B. Fortner, MD
Walter W. Schoutko, MD
Jaclyn B. Van Nes, MD
Shenika D. Welch-Charles, MD
Nikki B. Zite, MD

Ophthalmology

Paul D. Froula, MD
Herbert J. Glatt, MD
David J. Harris, MD
James M. Rouse, MD

Otolaryngology

Leslie L. Baker, MD
Elise C. Denny, MD
Richard J. DePersio, MD
William D. Horton, II, MD
Clyde C. Mathison, MD
Christopher Rathfoot, MD
Allan Rosenbaum, MD

Pain Medicine

Jason M. Buehler, MD
Matthew B. Vance, MD
Stephanie G. Vanterpool, MD

Pathology

Frank Beuerlein, MD
Lisa Duncan, MD
Alan D. Grindstaff, MD
Elizabeth W. Hubbard, MD
Stuart Van Meter, MD
Laurentia M. Nodit, MD

Pediatric Cardiology

Jeffery Jennings, MD

Pediatric Dermatology

Edward J. Primka, III, MD

Pediatric GI

Youhanna S. Al-Tawil
David E. DeVoid, MD
Chad A. Thornhill, MD

Pediatric Neuro Surg

Jennifer G. Savage, MD

Pediatric Ophthalmology

Christopher P. O'Brien, Jr., MD

Pediatric Otolaryngology

Allan M. Rosenbaum, MD

Phys Med & Rehab

Jeffrey S. Hecht, MD

Podiatry

Kelly S. Bumpus, DPM
Robert C. Hancock, DPM
David G. Sandberg, MD
Heather W. Sandberg, MD

Psychiatry

Paul W. Miller, MD

Pulmonary Medicine

Benjamin T. Bevil, MD
Isaac Biney, MD
Paul R. Branca, MD
John C. Callison, MD
Elise E. Schriver, MD
Francisco J. Soto, MD

Rad Oncology

Christopher L. Brett, MD
Steven V. Dill, MD
Nilesh Patel, MD

Radiology

Judson R. Gash, MD
Steven P. Knight, MD
Garnetta Morin-Ducote, MD
Jeffrey W. Peeke, MD

Radiology, Diagnostic

Judson R. Gash, MD
Jeffrey W. Peeke, MD

Radiology, Interventional

Bradley R. Pollard, MD
Peter Kvamme, MD
Christopher D. Stephens, MD

Rheumatology

Jeffrey Bieber, MD
Christy C. Park, MD
Gary L. Kipple, MD

Sleep Medicine

Tina M. Dudley, MD
Kevin M. Martinolich, MD
Dewey Y. McWhirter, III, MD

Surgery, Colon & Rectal

Mark A. Casillas, MD
James M. McLoughlin, MD
Andrew J. Russ, MD

Surgery, General

Brian J. Daley, MD
Keith D. Gray, MD
James M. Lewis, MD
Jillian M. Lloyd, MD
Gregory J. Mancini, MD
James M. McLoughlin, MD

Surgery Neurological

Todd B. Abel, MD
Richard P. Boyer, MD
James A. Killeffer, MD
William E. Snyder, MD
Jonathan D. York, MD

Surgery, Oral & Max

Eric R. Carlson, MD
Jack E. Gotcher, MD
John W. Hudson, DDS
J. Michael McCoy, MD

Surgery, Plastic

Stefanos Boukavalas, MD
Joseph T. Chun, MD
Daniel P. Fowler, MD
Tom T. Gallaher, MD
Kathleen S. Herbig, MD
Steven M. Smith
Stacy M. Stephenson, MD

Surgery, Thoracic

Raymond Dieter, III, MD
Thomas E. Gaines, MD

Surgery, General/Vasc

Joshua Arnold, MD
Michael Buckley, MD
Michael Freeman, MD
Oscar Grandas, MD
Kyle Kleppe, MD
Matthew Mancini, MD
Michael McNally, MD
Scott Stevens, MD

Surgery, Vascular

Joshua Arnold, MD
Michael Buckley, MD
Michael Freeman, MD
Michael McNally, MD
Scott Stevens, MD

Urogynecology

C. Bryce Bowling, MD
Michael Polin, MD

Urology

Jonathan Angelle, MD
James Biennu, MD
Paul Hatcher, MD
Edward Kim, MD
John Lacy, MD
Ryan Pickens, MD
Wesley White, MD