



UPA Front Lines

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Amy B. Stevens, MD
President, UPA

Why You Need a Primary Care Physician

A Note from UPA's President, Amy B. Stevens, MD

For most people, managing their healthcare by themselves can be a confusing task. Statements like “I don’t feel bad, so why do I need to see a doctor?” or “I don’t know what my blood pressure is, why does it matter?” are common questions we may ask ourselves. Being a family medicine physician, I certainly encourage people to have a primary care physician (family medicine, internal medicine, or pediatrics) for many reasons. Here are some of the benefits.

Many diseases and illnesses have no obvious signs or symptoms until they are quite advanced. Regular visits with a primary care physician allow for routine exams and preventative care (screenings, lab testing and immunizations) to be done, increasing the opportunities for early detection and treatment of significant health concerns.

It is important to have a primary care physician help you manage the best combination of prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and supplements to avoid undesirable interactions.

Having one primary care physician allows for the development of a doctor-patient relationship in which your physician knows you, in the context of your world (your job, home, family, stressors), making it more comfortable to address your concerns that might otherwise seem awkward or embarrassing.

Similarly, a primary care physician can best work with you to develop healthcare change, whether that be diet, exercise, sleep, or mental health outlook, because they see and recognize your life circumstances.

Primary care doctors manage many acute and chronic health conditions, but they also recognize when to include a specialist in your care. As your advocate, your primary care physician organizes and coordinates your care with specialists, simplifying a healthcare system that can often be confusing. Coordinated care led by a primary care doctor avoids excessive testing, unnecessary visits and missed or delayed diagnoses. In summary, your primary care physician manages all the pieces that create the picture of your health.

A Primary Care Physician is the key to a healthier you!



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UPA's Primary Care Provider Numbers

The health benefits of having a primary care physician cannot be disputed. In fact, in a scholarly article, "The Impact of Primary Care: A Focused Review" listed in NIH's National Library of Medicine's full text online data base, states "primary care serves as the cornerstone for building a strong healthcare system that ensures positive health outcomes and health equity."

UPA is pleased that 300 of our 1138 shareholders (26%) are primary care providers. This is the breakdown of UPA's primary care provider members.

- 236 Primary Care (Family Medicine, General, Internal Medicine, Pediatrics, Preventive Medicine: DO, MD NP, PA)
- 64 Hospitalists (DO, MD, NP).

UPA Cyber Team Message



Scammers are always willing to trick you into compromising your computer, information, or money. You need to be vigilant in watching out for potential scams coming from anyone. Often names, numbers, and addresses are deceiving.

Be skeptical of communications coming from the following sources:

- Email, E-cards, SMS/Text Message links
- Direct Messages on Social Media such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, etc.

The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency's (CISA) offers the following tips on how to protect yourself:

- Limit the amount of personal information you post.
- Remember that the internet is a public resource, only post information that you are comfortable with everyone seeing.
- Evaluate your settings and take advantage of a site's privacy settings.
- Be wary of strangers! The internet makes it easy for people to misrepresent their identities and motives.
- Be skeptical. Do not believe everything you read online.
- Use strong passwords and passphrases.
- Keep software, particularly your web browser and Windows or Mac, up to date.
- Use and maintain anti-virus software.



Eric Duncan
Director of IT, UPA

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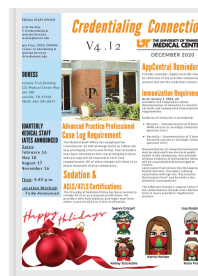
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-See contacts in each section for newsletter inquiries-



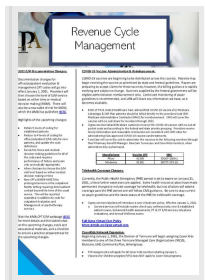
Medical Staff Monthly

Contact: Kerrie Harless, VP
Physician Services, UPA
kharless@utmck.edu



Credentialing Connection

Contact:
Katie Friar, Director
Physician Services
khfriar@utmck.edu



Revenue Cycle Management

Contact: Jennifer Bright, Billing,
Coding, and Appeals Manager, UPA
jbright@utmck.edu



Pathways to Managed Care

Contact:
Katherine Christian,
Director Managed Care
kachristian@utmck.edu



Fitness Tips to Help You Get Ready for Spring Activities



Katie Anderson
Health & Wellness
Coordinator, UPA

With the start of each season, many of us revamp our fitness goals and programs. The biggest factor in success with any wellness regimen, whether diet- or fitness-focused, is CONSISTENCY. Here are a couple of building blocks that will make consistency easier to maintain and set you up for success.

- Start with your strengths and your attitude! When we start something new, it is easy to drown in information and berate ourselves for not knowing what to do or not getting results in the first couple weeks. Start with something you know: if you enjoy cooking, try experimenting with different vegetables and fiber sources in your meals, focusing on what you're adding to your diet, rather than what you're taking out. If you enjoy walking, try to walk at least three days per week. Even if your walk is short, remember that a fifteen-minute walk is better than beating yourself up for missing a day!
- Take baby steps to avoid burning out. Burnout is your enemy! If you don't drink much water, add water between each other drink rather than cutting off coffee and sodas totally and you will begin to drink more water and less sodas naturally. If you don't currently exercise, start with three workouts per week and work your way up as you gain confidence and fitness, rather than jumping into an intense daily program that makes you miserable. If you make yourself happy, you'll feel encouraged to keep going! If you are interested in an online wellness program, I encourage you to take advantage of our subsidized Weight Watchers memberships. If you have any specific wellness questions or would like personalized direction with diet or fitness goals, feel free to email me anytime at manderson2@utmck.edu!