

HEALTHY YOU!

A Family of Providers Caring for a Family of Patients Quality department puts data to work for our patients

Targets include closing referral loops and tracking care gaps



Our Specialties

Arthritis Center, Audiology & Hearing Aids, Cardiology, Clinical Laboratory, Clinical Research, Critical Care, Diabetes & Nutrition Education Center, Ear, Nose & Throat/Allergy/Audiology, Endocrinology & Metabolism, Endoscopy, Facial Plastic & Aesthetic Services/Lumina, Family Practice, Gastroenterology, Gateway Surgery Center, Imaging Center, Nephrology, Neurology, Orthopedic Sports, Spine & Hand Center, Pathology, Podiatry, Psychology, Pulmonary/ Sleep Medicine, Rheumatology, Urology, Walk-In.

We're experts in our field.

We're experts in our field with over 90 providers in 17 specialties at 23 locations. All of our providers are board-certified or board-eligible.

Like most aspects of our lives, health care today is linked to large amounts of information generated by technology. At WWMG, mapping out how to best use that data,

to maintain high-quality services and improve health outcomes for patients, is the responsibility of Jody Heiser and her team.

As WWMG's Quality Initiative Manager, Heiser coordinates programs to support our care centers' communications with patients. This summer's most ambitious project is the launch of IBM(r) Phytel(r). This software system helps providers track care gaps that occur when a patient has not received a necessary treatment or preventive care screening.

"We will begin with our primary care providers, who are the care coordinators for many of our patients. We have been working with them to identify how they want to proceed with the system and what support we can provide as they implement it," Heiser explained.

Phytel(r) will pull data from electronic health records to create patient care flowsheets. "For example,

care centers will be able to monitor quickly and efficiently whether

"In 2016, WWMG was the only group in the region that met-and, in fact, exceeded--statewide criteria set by a major health insurer for annual wellness visits."

a patient with diabetes is due for an eye exam or a kidney function panel and use the system's

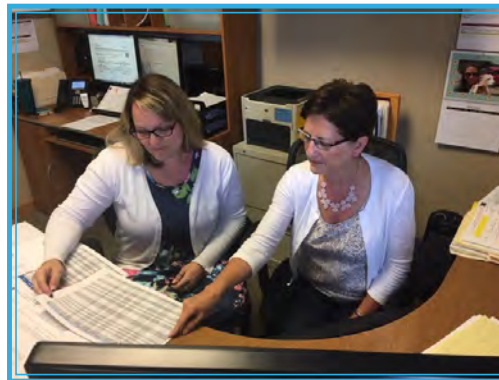
communication tools to follow up with that patient."

These advances will complement what is already a stellar record of patient engagement for WWMG's primary care providers. Heiser is also coordinating efforts to help providers close referral loops. When a provider gives a patient a referral

for care outside the scope of the practice, a closed loop means that those instructions are carried out, and the original provider receives all resulting information. Additional quality improve-

ment targets include expanding the use of patient satisfaction surveys through electronic patient portals and hiring a Clinical Coordinator to support patients more effectively after a hospital discharge.

"The primary goal of all these quality initiatives is to safeguard continuity of care for our patients by helping our care centers access and use care management data as efficiently as possible."



Sherice Thompson and Jody Heiser

Potential breakthrough in diabetic neuropathy treatment

Within a week of opening in June, a WWMG clinical research study attracted interest from almost half the total number of patients it sought to enroll over 10 months. The trial is for a drug called VM202, one of the first treatments for diabetic neuropathy that targets its underlying cause, rather than its characteristic foot and lower leg pain.

"It's an exciting, novel treatment that is very much needed," said Stephanie Abbott, Pharm D, of the WWMG Clinical Research Center. "Patients with diabetic neuropathy feel pain because high blood sugars have damaged nerves and vessels in their feet and lower legs. VM202 increases the body's natural production of a protein called hepatocyte growth factor (HGF), which can help to reverse damage in affected vessels and nerves. This can lower pain levels."



Trial screening criteria include moderate pain

in both lower legs, some control over blood sugar levels, documented treatment for diabetes and compliance with American Medical Association guidelines for baseline cancer screenings.

VM202 has shown safety and effectiveness in earlier trial phases. The current trial is phase 3, in which a new drug typically goes to market. Patients receive 16 intramuscular injections in each calf, 32 total, per visit. Four visits are scheduled over nine months.

WWMG Clinical Research has offices at Silver Lake Medical Center in Everett. Please call 425-225-2760 for more information on the diabetic neuropathy study and other trials.

Endocrinology welcomes new provider

Early interest in diabetes research grew into passion for a complex specialty

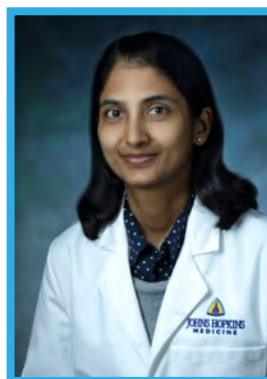
Dr. Sumangala Vasudevan can trace the beginnings of her interest in endocrinology to her early years in India. Several family members had diabetes, and the disease was prevalent in her community. That triggered a desire to do diabetes research someday.

"Endocrinologists need to have a solid understanding of the biological, molecular roots of diseases before we treat them, and that has always been interesting to me. Also, endocrinology is a specialty that requires a very strong patient-doctor relationship to achieve best possible outcomes and to prevent potential long-term complications. That is one

of the main reasons I chose it, for the opportunity to work closely with patients toward those aims," Dr. Vasudevan said.

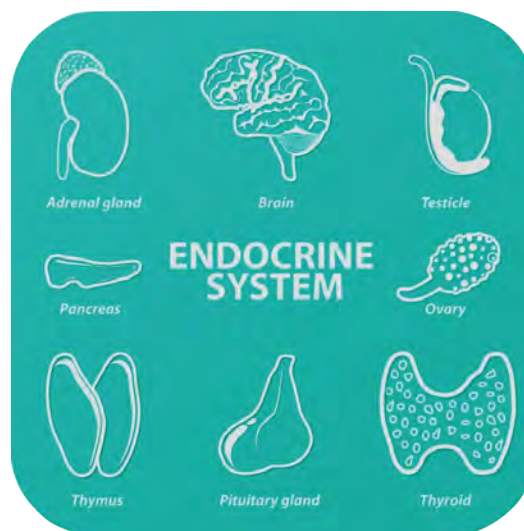
Like diabetes, other diseases of the endocrine system are complex and interconnected.

The pituitary, adrenal, thyroid and para-thyroid glands affect many functions of the body. Male and female hormonal abnormalities, osteoporosis and obesity can rarely be treated in isolation. For Dr. Vasudevan, her specialty offers great opportunities for regularly fine-tuning her knowledge base, as she applies treatments that evolve and develop medically at a rapid pace.



Dr. Vasudevan

Dr. Vasudevan, who joins WWMG this summer, has done research in diabetes at UW in Seattle. She completed her fellowship at Temple University Hospital in Philadelphia. Most recently, she worked at Johns Hopkins. After medical school in India, she pursued residency training at Cook County Hospital in Chicago where she received "excellent hands-on clinical training, working with great patients and colleagues."



Dr. Vasudevan will be seeing patients at Silver Lake Medical Center. Call 425-420-1650

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Pulmonary care is in the details

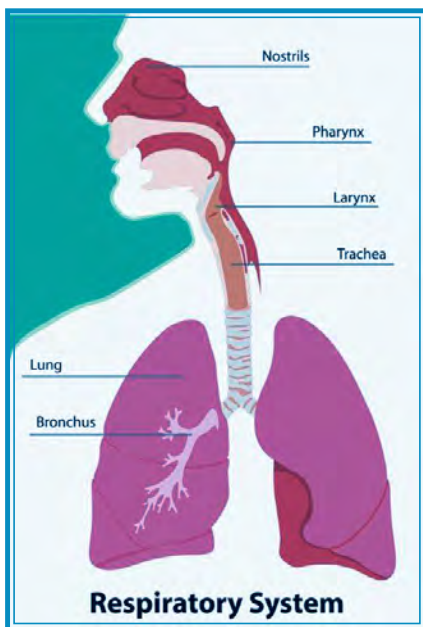
Outcomes improve with follow-through, well-informed patients



Dr. Parker

Attention to detail that makes care delivery as effective as possible: that is the aspect of pulmonary medicine about which Dr. Nathan Parker is most passionate. "Lung disease does not get as much attention as it should. It's a common problem, but care often gets delivered around it. We can be more thoughtful, for example, about good transition care after a hospital stay."

It's important that patients understand their medicines and how to take them. Likewise, "making sure that patients use their inhaler devices correctly is sometimes overlooked." Effective care may require other considerations, too. Does the patient need oxygen therapy or pulmonary rehabilitation?



Because lung function is central to everyday life, Dr. Parker finds his work meaningful in very direct ways. "When I can see that I've helped somebody breathe better or more easily, when I've managed to keep someone out of the hospital, when somebody can walk two blocks instead of one, or go up stairs when they were not able to before, it's rewarding to have made a difference."

Dr. Parker, who grew up in Spokane, developed his interest in pulmonary medicine through a college job with an emphysema researcher.

"I helped to design some experiments and began to think about lung disease from that perspective." He attended UC San Diego for medical school and UW in Seattle for residency. He completed his fellowship in Critical

Care and Pulmonary Medicine at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania.

To schedule appointments with Dr. Parker, please call 425-252-1116

Give Your Hands A Hand

Twenty-seven. That's how many bones are in each of our hands, plus muscles, tendons and nerves that control movement. Because we use them all almost constantly, even small changes in how well they function have a noticeable impact on our daily lives.

If you begin to experience pain, numbness or tingling, limitations in movement or weakness in your hands, or postural issues, do not hesitate. That is the time to see your primary care practitioner, chiropractor, osteopath or an orthopedic spe-

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New Providers At WWMG

UROLOGY:

Casey Somers, PA-C, was born and raised in Snohomish County. After completing graduate work at the University of Iowa, he was open to exploring different opportunities. "My priority, though, was being able to help patients with sensitive topics." He joined WWMG Urology because he felt that it was a good fit for his skills and interests.

SNOHOMISH FAMILY MEDICINE:

Breanne Van Voast, ARNP, is also a Washington native. She grew up on the Olympic Peninsula, and this summer she made her way back from Alabama for a position with WWMG Snohomish Family Medicine. Her earliest professional passion was pediatric nursing. "I love, love, love children."



PETER FREY, PA-C WINS SEATTLE MET TOP DOC AWARD

Every year, Seattle Met magazine asks medical and nursing professionals, "If you or a loved one needed care, whom would you choose?" They are asked to nominate up to five physicians, nurse practitioners, and physician assistants that they consider the best in their field of practice, including providers in King, Snohomish, Kitsap and Pierce Counties. This year, Peter Frey, PA-C of the Orthopedic, Sports, Spine and Hand department was picked as a winner of the award. Join us in congratulating him.



Give Your Hands A Hand

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cialist for a referral to the hand/upper extremity therapists at the WWMG Orthopedic, Sport, Spine and Hand Center in Everett.

The three occupational therapists on staff, Kari Ketner, Sharon Patterson and Victor Gajewski, are trained in specialized assessment and treatment of conditions such as carpal tunnel syndrome (nerve impingement at the wrist), lateral epicondylitis (elbow tendonitis), trigger finger (inflammation of finger tendons), arthritis and fractures.

Regardless of the injury or illness, the focus of rehabilitation treatment is to restore to the hands and/or upper extremities as much functional use as possible.

"Our ultimate goal is to help clients get back to doing their daily activities and occupations," says Ketner.

"After an initial evaluation, the therapist creates an individualized treatment plan, including a home program," adds Gajewski. "We issue aids for clients to use at home – put-



ty, exercise bands or tubing – as well as giving them tailored exercises," explains Patterson. "We also make custom orthoses – which resemble casts but are lightweight and removable – to support, immobilize or protect joints."

"We can identify risk factors in a workplace or home environment, provide guidance on appropriate modifications and develop programs tailored to each individual," Ketner notes.

Occupational therapy can also play an important role in the prevention of overuse injuries.

General tips for avoiding desk-job overuse injuries include: taking breaks to stretch arms and wrists, stretching chest and back muscles, engaging core muscles when sitting and practicing deep abdominal breathing to reduce tension in the shoulders and upper arms.

The Orthopedic, Sports, Spine and Hand Center is at 3726 Broadway, Suite 201. All therapists are accepting new patients. (425) 317-9119.

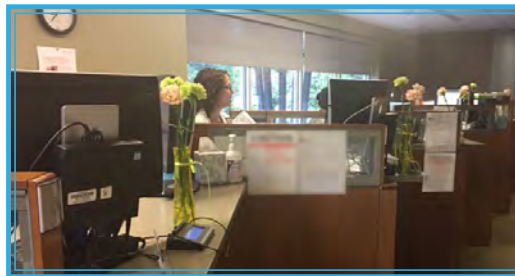
State-of-the-art program for Cardiology

This summer, WWMG Cardiology welcomes Dr. Ravilla Mahidhar and Lorena Barajas, ARNP.

Dr. Mahidhar, an interventional cardiologist, is beginning a Structural Heart program. "We can now use catheter-based procedures to fix defects in the valves and inner walls of the heart without open-heart surgery. For selected patients with atrial fibrillation (irregular heartbeat) who are at high risk of stroke and cannot tolerate blood-thinning medication, new procedures can eliminate long-term need for that medication."

"I really value and cherish the opportunity to forge lifelong relationships with my patients and to perform procedures with a profound, positive impact on their health and quality of life. Interventional cardiology combines the best of both worlds: the problem-solving skills of a physician and the dexterity of a surgeon." Dr. Mahidhar has a fellowship in Interventional Cardiology from Mount Sinai

Medical Center, New York, and a Structural Heart fellowship from Johns Hopkins, Baltimore.



For Lorena Barajas, cardiology offers continuous rewards. "It's constantly changing, with more effective medications and innovative care techniques. There is also an art to cardiology that requires focusing on the patient as an

individual. I feel privileged to develop meaningful partnerships with my patients to achieve positive changes in their health and lives. I also enjoy working as part of a collaborative, multidisciplinary team."

A research assistant job with a cardiologist in San Francisco initially drew her to the field, and she was inspired to become a nurse practitioner while working in an outpatient specialty clinic. She earned her degree from Seattle University.

Cardiology can be reached at (425) 225-2700. Offices are at 12728 19th Avenue SE, Suite 200, Everett, WA 98208