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Connecting you to Heritage Provider Network

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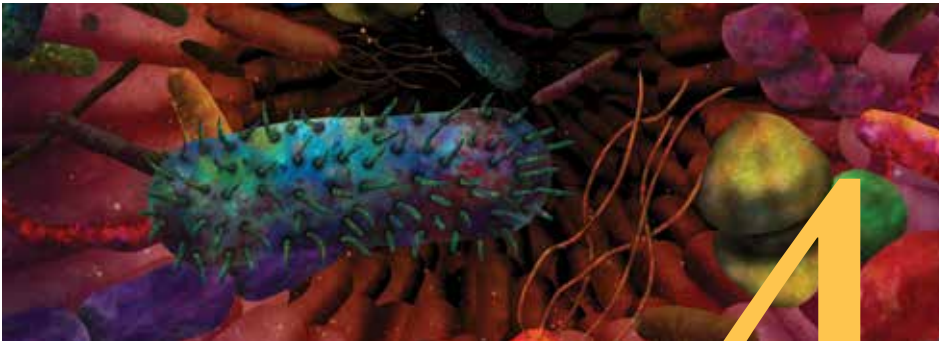
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Crossroads

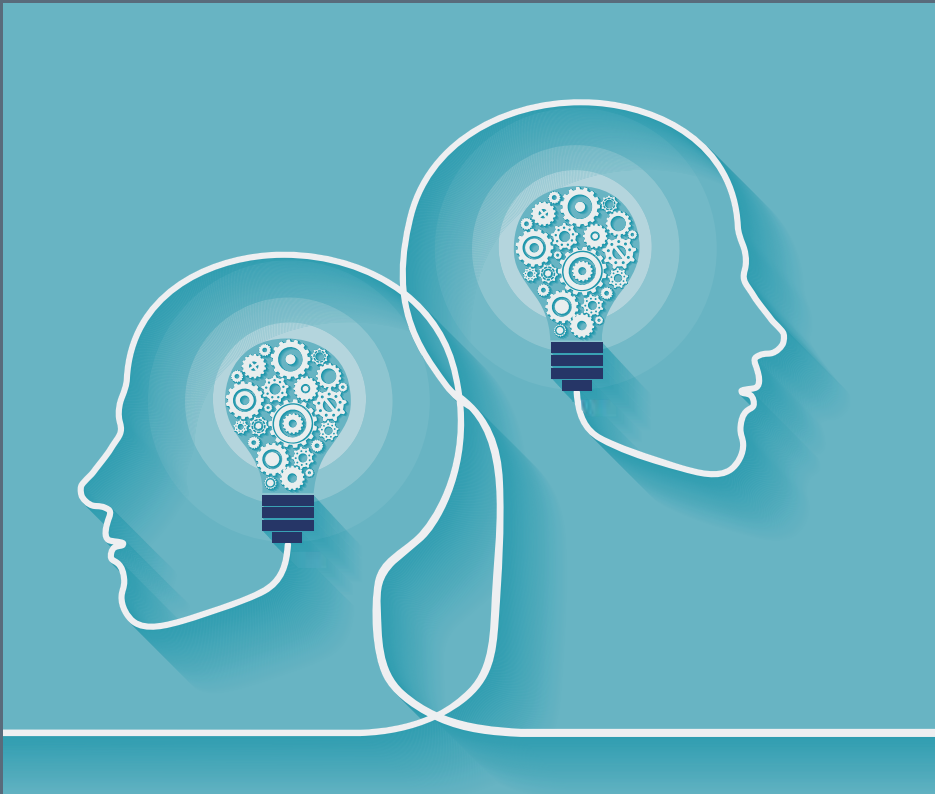
With Dr. Richard Merkin

The unique perspective of Richard Merkin, M.D., as Innovation, Technology, Legislation and Care Delivery come together to impact the future of population health



Scientific Research and Technology Play Vital Roles in Finding New Treatments and Cures

For those who have autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and for their families, it can be both overwhelming and challenging to know how to best care for themselves and/or their loved ones. Initial diagnosis of ASD can be difficult and there are no immediate medical tests, like a blood test, to detect the presence of autism. Doctors rely on examinations



and carefully monitor childhood behaviors to recognize the symptoms of autism.

In our feature article, Caltech professor and Heritage Medical Research Institute (HMRI) Investigator Sarkis Mazmanian is studying how gut bacteria from those who have ASD can prompt autism-like behavior in mice. While further research is ongoing, the possibility of

finding a viable treatment or cure through the groundbreaking work being done by Professor Mazmanian and his team at Caltech inspires hope for many impacted by autism spectrum disorder.

We are also proud to announce the launch of our new Heritage Provider Network company Geniq, whose q.Platform technology will help pave the

way to improve healthcare management efficiency and enhance value-based care. We welcome Jay Colfer and Tom Zaves as CEOs of Geniq who will expand and share q. technology within all areas of healthcare.

As a healthcare organization committed to progress and innovation, we remain focused on recognizing and supporting those talented individuals from institutions around the world so that they might discover treatments and cures for the worst diseases and illnesses of our generation.

Richard Merkin, M.D.

President and CEO of HPN

Richard Merkin, M.D.

Healthcare visionary Richard Merkin, M.D., has spent the last 40 years implementing a successful, workable business model to address the needs and challenges of affordable managed healthcare.

“As a healthcare organization committed to progress and innovation, we remain focused on recognizing and supporting those talented individuals from institutions around the world.”

HERITAGE MEDICAL RESEARCH
INSTITUTE AND CALTECH PARTNER

PUSHING INNOVATION FORWARD

FOR AUTISM PATIENTS

■ Feature Story





SARKIS MAZMANIAN STUDIES HOW

gut bacteria

Influences Autism- like Behaviors

In 2018, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health contributed to a report published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), stating that approximately 1 in 59 children is diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Based on a two-year study, this number is up 15% marking the highest increase since the CDC began tracking ASD back in 2000. ASD, a neurological and developmental disorder, affects a person's behavior, communication, ability to learn and interaction with others. It is called a "spectrum" because the severity of symptoms can vary in those with ASD.

■ Feature Story *(continued)*

"Dr. Merkin's vision and generosity to provide financial support for daring research, and to invest in talented people and their ideas, have led to breakthroughs in our ability to show for the first time that probiotics may be exciting new treatments for diseases of the brain."

~ Sarkis Mazmanian (pictured below),
Caltech, Professor and Heritage Medical
Research Institute Investigator



It has been documented that boys are four times more likely to be diagnosed with ASD than girls, and diagnosis can begin as early as 2 years old. ASD also includes what is commonly known as Asperger syndrome and pervasive developmental disorders.

Researchers around the world have suggested that both genetics and the environment play important roles in contributing to ASD, but there has not been research-based evidence to verify this beyond speculation. Currently, the causes of ASD remain largely unknown and there is no one standard treatment.

At Caltech, Professor and Heritage Medical Research Institute (HMRI) Investigator, Sarkis Mazmanian, is currently studying how gut bacteria affect autism-like behaviors in mice. First, Mazmanian and his team

collected gut microorganisms, or microbiota, from children with ASD and transferred them into mice via fecal transplantation. The results of this experiment have shown that mice with microbiota from these individuals exhibited autism-like behaviors. A separate study where microbiota from individuals without autism were used on other animals yielded different results whereby test subjects showed no symptoms of autism-like behavior.

According to Mazmanian, while numerous studies have shown differences in bacteria composition of the gut microbiome between individuals with ASD and neurotypical subjects, it is unknown whether the microbiome changes are a direct result of having ASD or if they contribute to the symptoms. This is the critical question his research addresses, because if the microbiome contributes to autism symptoms, then treating the gut may lead to improvements in behavior.

To gain further insight into this topic, we asked Professor Mazmanian some questions about his motivation behind pursuing this specific study on gut bacteria and its potential impact on the lives of those who have ASD.

What inspired your study into autism disorders?

Mazmanian: I have always wondered why so many children with autism have stomachaches, bloating, diarrhea or other gut issues. Could it be that intestinal problems may impact human behavior, since autism is a disease where children show reduced development of social and verbal skills,

and those with gut issues have very severe symptoms? I am a microbiologist by training, and for years have been studying how bacteria in our intestines, known as the gut microbiome, affect human health. I was encouraged to pursue research into how the microbiome may contribute to autism by my colleague at Caltech, Dr. Paul Patterson, who sadly passed away in 2014. Paul (a neuroscientist) and I were longtime collaborators, and together we first discovered that bacteria living in the intestines of mice were causing their autism-like symptoms. My laboratory later showed that specific bacteria from humans can cure symptoms of autism in mice by healing the gut, which suggests that the tummy problems may lead to the behavioral differences in children with autism. This further suggests that new therapies can be developed using the probiotics that we have discovered to treat autism, and that these treatments are likely natural and safe compared to traditional drugs.

A previous article released by Caltech mentions that additional studies need to be conducted to determine the impact of gut bacteria in humans, specifically to prove whether gut microbes cause autism. Can you elaborate on what additional studies or processes are required to produce results?

Mazmanian: Based on the research from our laboratory, we have initiated clinical trials in children with autism. While most FDA approved drugs were first tested in mice, many promising treatments that were successful in mice have historically not proven to work in people. Thus, research is a start to

“Dr. Merkin’s commitment to improving people’s lives through profound scientific discovery has inspired us at Caltech. The HMRI program is emblematic of the progress that can be made by investing in remarkable young researchers and freeing them to confront the hardest problems with the support that it takes to succeed.”

~ Thomas Rosenbaum,
President of Caltech

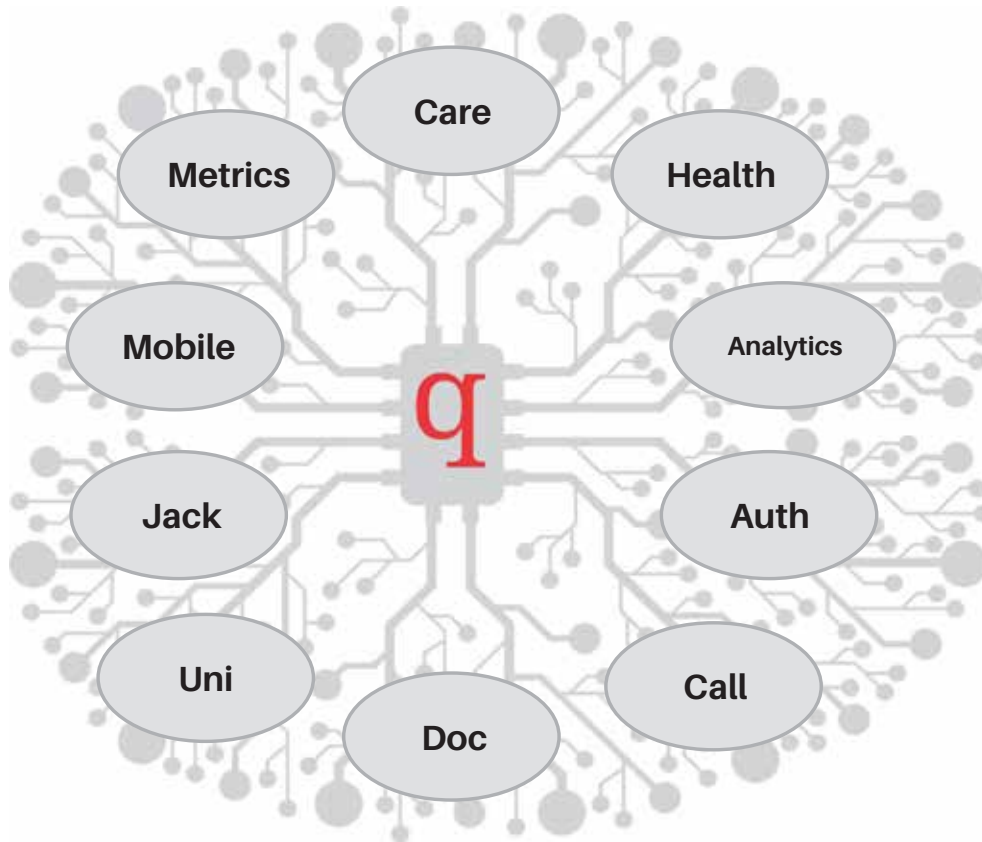
identifying new drugs, but they must be tested in patients before we know if they are truly effective. Our research has revealed that bacteria in the gut can impact autistic behaviors in mice; thus we are currently testing whether these same bacteria can improve symptoms in people. These clinical trials are ongoing, and we are hopeful that someday we will be able to help patients and their families to have better lives.

How has being an HMRI Investigator given you an advantage to pursue your field of study?

Mazmanian: Autism and Parkinson’s disease, which we study in our laboratory at Caltech, have been

traditionally investigated by neuroscientists and neurologists who focus on the brain. It is not easy to conduct research outside of these traditional fields since most of the studies for what may cause autism or Parkinson’s comes from brain research, so new theories don’t have the evidence required to fund them. These conservative ways of thinking create a “chicken and egg” scenario, where you need evidence to get research funding, but don’t have the funds to generate the initial evidence. This is where being an HMRI Investigator has helped tremendously. In addition to the personal and professional connections it has allowed me to build, Dr. Merkin’s vision and generosity to provide financial support for daring research, and to invest in talented people and their ideas, have led to breakthroughs in our ability to show for the first time that probiotics may be exciting new treatments for diseases of the brain.

The HMRI Investigator program has given me the opportunity to conduct bold and pioneering research that I truly believe will help improve the lives of millions of people someday.



Transforming Healthcare Delivery

Heritage Provider Network Introduces Geniq to Launch q.Platform to the Value-based Healthcare Market

For more than 18 years, Heritage Provider Network (HPN) has been developing a robust suite of technologies to manage their best in class processes for delivering patient-centered, value-based healthcare. This suite of technologies called the q.Platform, which includes

q.Care, q.Health, q.Analytics, q.Metrics and q.Auth, among others, is a fully integrated care workflow platform designed to organize and achieve operational efficiency in all phases of the value-based model, and at the same time, coordinate quality care for patients.

Other medical groups have approached HPN in recent years inquiring about their management service organization services, and about q.Platform's technology, functionality and its ability to make this unique set of tools commercially available. To fulfill the demand for this technology to be shared among other healthcare markets, Dr. Merkin has created a new company called Geniq. Launched in September 2019, Geniq will manage, grow and make the q.Platform suite of tools accessible to create an even larger impact on population health, thus helping to push q. technology forward.

The creation of Geniq would not have been possible without the dedication of an extraordinary team of people responsible for developing the core q. technology. Under the leadership of Jaya Kurian, CFO of HPN, senior team members oversee the various stages of the development cycle, from initial requirements,

planning, designing, developing code, testing and releasing updates.

Moving forward, Geniq's co-CEOs, Jay Colfer and Tom Zaves, both of whom bring more than 40 years of experience in commercializing and supporting healthcare software platforms, are responsible for taking Geniq to the next level. A plan is set in motion to create a commercial strategy, including planning site visits to gather anecdotes and evidence from current users that they can share with prospective clients about the value of the q. product line. As Geniq's q.Platform gains momentum, its presence in the healthcare marketplace will expand their ability to significantly improve and increase efficiency in population health management and overall patient care and delivery, making it a win-win situation for both physicians and patients.

For more information, contact Tom Zaves at (818) 290-7441.

Pictured below from left to right:

1st row: Anshul Rawat, Mia Wang, Scarlett Zhao, Liwei Chiang. *2nd row:* Arunima Prasad, Joy Orosky, Frank Asi, Richard Jester, Abhay Chauhan, Neha Yadav. *3rd row:* Rini Jose, Natjaya Chinda, Jaya Kurian, Mihir Shah, Kevin Ding, Carrie Dian, Jubil Sason. *4th row:* Rajat Malhotra, Mihir Sanghavi, Stanley Yan, Scott Bae, Mitun George, Ali Suzon, Lindra Frandinata. *5th row:* Maciej Makowiecki, Patrick Peng, Sachin Vighe, Gautam Machingal, Chenlei Zhao, Jeffry Rijadi, Shantaram Parab. *Team members not pictured:* Candice Chen, Cynthia Zhang, Greshe Abraham, Neil Zhang, Sandra D'Lopez, Than Aye, Octavio Campos, Rajeev Jacob

Geniq





Heritage Provider Network Sponsored Matternet's Drone Technology to Deliver Medical Supplies

On October 1, 2019, Matternet announced its drone delivery system would enable the first Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)-approved drone airline. Partnered with UPS, they will be able to scale and expand drone delivery of medical supplies across the U.S. Drone transportation would significantly enhance patient care and cost savings by providing on-demand and same-day delivery in addition to improving the overall patient experience and offering lifesaving benefits.

Early on in its development, Dr. Richard Merkin, president and CEO of Heritage Provider Network, became one of the first sponsors to recognize and support Matternet technology. Through the Singularity University program, Dr. Merkin helped to develop and identify promising Ph.D. and postdoc students who could collaborate effectively in a team environment and further inspire the creation of new and unique programs that would become revolutionary. One of these students was Andreas Raptopoulos, the founder and CEO of Matternet.

“It’s rewarding to know that we are able to provide the infrastructure used by Matternet and UPS through other organizations,” says Dr. Merkin. “It is through organizations and programs like Singularity University that we can make such exciting innovation possible.”

How does Matternet’s drone technology work exactly? The Matternet M2 drone and the Matternet Cloud Platform are what make up the Matternet M2 drone logistics system. The drone system was evaluated and validated by the FAA as meeting the safety

Alongside Matternet, another organization founded by Singularity University called Made In Space has developed a 3D printer that works in zero gravity. Its first prototype, the Zero-G Printer, was developed with NASA and sent into space in September 2014. For the past two years, the Zero G Printer has been used to print necessary spare parts on the international space station. The ability to print parts on demand has changed the way we view space travel by eliminating the need to store spare parts on-site.





requirements and standards to earn its air carrier certificate (Part 135 Standard certification), making it the first of its kind to be approved by the FAA. The Matternet M2 system is capable of transporting packages of up to 5 pounds over a distance of up to 12.5 miles, beyond the visual line of sight and above people.

Matternet is revolutionizing on-demand transportation through their drone delivery network in the U.S. and internationally. Earlier this year, Matternet and UPS launched their delivery service at WakeMed Health in North Carolina, resulting in more than 1,000 completed deliveries. According to UPS, “medical supplies are particularly well suited to drone delivery because products such as blood and medical specimens are light and tend to be of uniform size. Such items require faster turnaround times and offer higher margins than delivery segments such as e-commerce.”

UPS also plans to strike deals with medical groups across the country to expand their commercial delivery services. Today, hospitals will no longer have to rely on waiting for deliveries to arrive. UPS will be able to deliver medicine and other items at an

Matternet is revolutionizing on-demand transportation through their drone delivery network in the U.S. and internationally.

expedited level of speed and accuracy that will leave a positive impact on patient care and make it more cost efficient for hospitals and other healthcare organizations.

ABOUT MATTERNET

Matternet has developed world leading technology for on-demand, aerial delivery in urban environments. The company provides its technology platform as a service to healthcare, e-commerce and logistics organizations. In March 2017, Matternet became the first company in the world to be authorized for full operations of drone logistics networks over densely populated areas in Switzerland. In May 2018, Matternet was selected to carry out drone logistics operations for U.S. hospitals under the FAA's drone integration program. In March 2019, Matternet and UPS announced a partnership to provide drone delivery services to U.S. healthcare systems, starting from WakeMed Health in North Carolina and expanding nationally. For more information about Matternet, please visit: <https://mtr.net>.

Sources: ¹www.pressroom.ups.com
²www.pressroom.ups.com ³<https://techcrunch.com/2019/11/05/ups-and-cvs-deliver-prescription-medicine-via-drone-to-u-s-residential-customers-for-the-first-time>

Other organizations using Matternet drones via UPS delivery

UNIVERSITY OF UTAH HEALTH

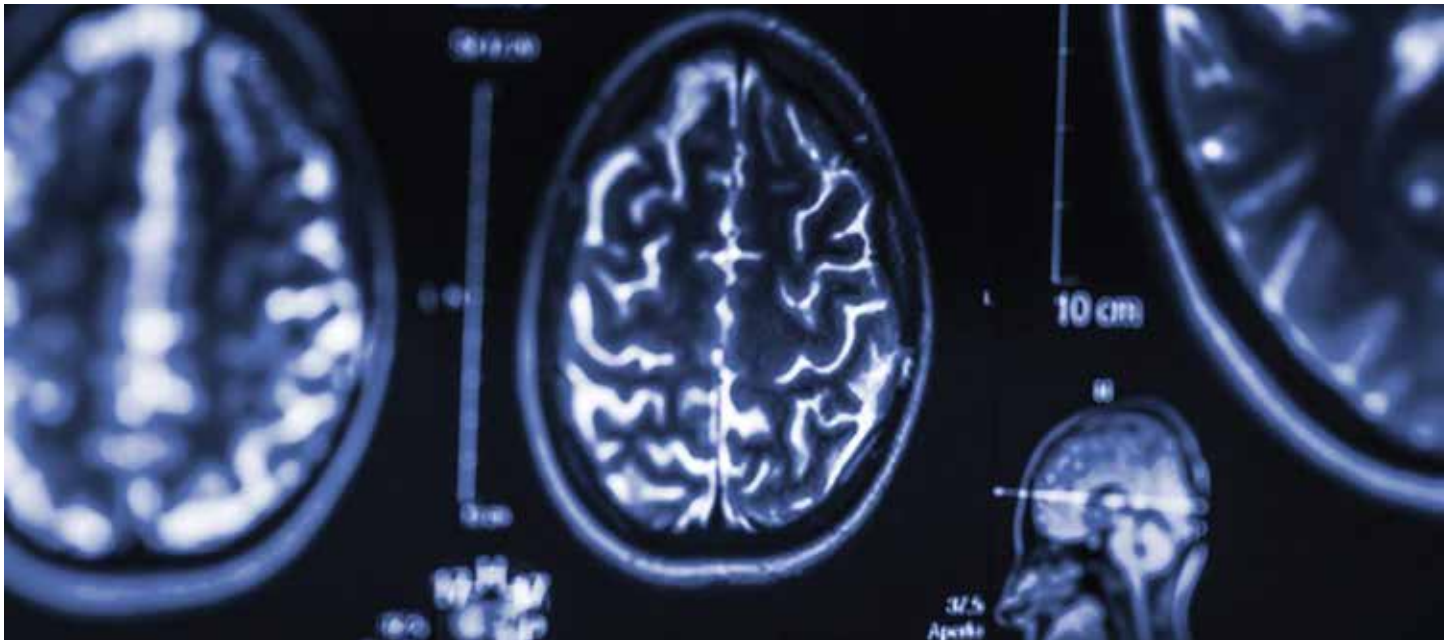
Flight operations at University of Utah Health will be geared toward building out a more cost-efficient medical delivery system as the campus undergoes tremendous growth. New medical construction includes its new Acute Care Center, Craig H. Neilsen Rehabilitation Hospital and Sugar House Health Center. The addition of drone logistics will help establish an environmentally responsible, short-range transportation solution in support of the state's Utah Clean Air partnership.¹

AMERISOURCEBERGEN

UPS partners with wholesale pharmaceutical distributor AmerisourceBergen, a leading global healthcare solutions provider, to transport certain pharmaceuticals, supplies and records to qualifying medical campuses served by AmerisourceBergen across the United States, and then expand its use to other sites of care.²

CVS PHARMACY

UPS is rolling along with its drone delivery program, working with partner CVS Pharmacy to deliver prescription drugs to customer doorsteps via its newly deployed commercial drones. UPS delivered medications to two paying customers on November 1, 2019, using the Matternet M2 drone system that the logistics company is using in partnership with Matternet.³



Professor at City of Hope Launches First of Its Kind Clinical Trial for Brain Tumor Patients

The trial, which received \$4.1 million in grants from the National Institutes of Health and Gateway for Cancer Research, combines City of Hope’s unique CAR T cell therapy with immune checkpoint inhibitors.

City of Hope has opened a first-in-human clinical trial for patients with recurrent glioblastoma — the trial being the first to combine City of Hope’s chimeric antigen receptor (CAR) T cells that target the IL13R α 2

antigen common on brain tumor cells in combination with nivolumab (commercial name: Opdivo), an anti-PD1 antibody, and ipilimumab (commercial name: Yervoy), also a checkpoint inhibitor that blocks the CTLA-4 protein.

To launch the randomized trial, National Institutes of Health

(R01CA236500)

awarded \$3.3 million over five years to Behnam Badie, M.D., Heritage



Provider Network Professor in Gene Therapy and chief of City of Hope’s Division of Neurosurgery, and

Christine Brown, Ph.D., City of Hope’s Heritage Provider Network Professor in Immunotherapy and deputy director of City of Hope’s T Cell Therapeutics Research Laboratory. Brown and Badie also received \$800,000 from Gateway for Cancer Research.

“Our hope is that by combining two

powerful immunotherapies — CAR T cell therapy and checkpoint inhibitors — we can find additional treatments for patients with malignant glioma, who currently have few options,” Brown said. “In addition, the trial will allow us to conduct liquid biopsies of the cerebrospinal fluid throughout the treatment time to query the central nervous system, furthering our understanding of how checkpoint inhibitors alter the function and persistence of CAR T cells, as well as how it potentially promotes endogenous immune responses in the brain.”

The trial will deliver CAR T cells that target IL13Rα2 locally to the brain by direct injection to the tumor site and through infusion into the ventricular system. City of Hope was the first to use this type of delivery for glioblastoma patients receiving CAR T treatment, as well as the first to investigate CAR T cells targeting IL13Rα2. A 2016 case study in the *New England Journal of Medicine* outlined how a City of Hope patient’s brain cancer regressed for 7.5 months after receiving CAR T therapy to effectively attack cells with IL13Rα2.

With product provided by Bristol-Myers Squibb, patients will also receive nivolumab and ipilimumab. Nivolumab is an immune checkpoint inhibitor that can prevent the PD-1 protein from doing its job, which is to suppress the immune system from fighting cancer. By putting PD-1 in check, the body’s immune system can better fight cancerous cells. Ipilimumab blocks the CTLA-4 protein in a similar way.

Our hope is that by combining two powerful immunotherapies — CAR T cell therapy and checkpoint inhibitors — we can find additional treatments for patients with malignant glioma, who currently have few options.”

~ Christine Brown, Ph.D., City of Hope’s Heritage Provider Network Professor in Immunotherapy and deputy director of City of Hope’s T Cell Therapeutics Research Laboratory

For the trial, all patients will receive the IL13Rα2 CAR T cells weekly combined with nivolumab every other week. Patients on the experimental arm will additionally receive ipilimumab and nivolumab, each dosed once 14 days prior to the start of combination therapy with CAR T cells plus nivolumab.

The U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) has approved the use of nivolumab for patients with various cancers including metastatic melanoma, nonsmall cell lung cancer, classical Hodgkin’s lymphoma, and head and neck cancer. Clinical trials are underway at City of Hope and other institutions to expand the use of nivolumab for other cancers or for use with other therapies. The FDA has approved the use of ipilimumab for metastatic melanoma or in combination with nivolumab for renal cell carcinoma and colorectal cancer.

Mustang Bio Inc. (NASDAQ: MBIO) is the exclusive licensee of City of Hope patents covering its IL13Rα2-specific CAR T cell therapy.

ABOUT CITY OF HOPE

City of Hope is an independent biomedical research and treatment center for cancer, diabetes and other life-threatening diseases. Founded in 1913, City of Hope is a leader in bone marrow transplantation and immunotherapy such as CAR T cell therapy. City of Hope’s translational research and personalized treatment protocols advance care throughout the world. Human synthetic insulin and numerous breakthrough cancer drugs are based on technology developed at the institution. A National Cancer Institute-designated comprehensive cancer center and a founding member of the National Comprehensive Cancer Network, City of Hope is the highest ranked cancer hospital in the West, according to U.S. News & World Report’s Best Hospitals: Specialty Ranking. Its main campus is located near Los Angeles, with additional locations throughout Southern California.

Source: www.cityofhope.org/news/nih-grant-for-car-t-clinical-trial-for-brain-tumor-patients

Humana Expands Medicare Advantage Offerings in California

Medicare Beneficiaries in San Luis Obispo County Can Choose a Humana Medicare Advantage Plan for Coverage

Thanks to Humana, Medicare beneficiaries in San Luis Obispo County will now have more Medicare Advantage health plan coverage options during the 2020 Medicare Advantage and Prescription Drug Plan Annual Election Period (AEP).

Starting January 1, 2020, Humana expanded into San Luis Obispo County by offering its Humana Gold Plus HMO Medicare Advantage Plan. People with Medicare in San Luis Obispo County were able to enroll in this Humana Medicare Advantage health plan during the AEP, which ran from October 15 through December 7, 2019.

Humana's Medicare Advantage HMO plan members in San Luis Obispo will have access to Coastal Communities Physician Network (CCPN), a Heritage



Provider Network (HPN) physician group and one of the nation's most experienced and effective physician-led value-based care organizations, thanks to an agreement that was announced last year between the two organizations. Value-based care is designed to offer patients more time with their doctors and personalized care that is tailored to their unique health situation.

In California in 2020, Humana will offer the following Medicare Advantage plans:

- Humana Gold Plus HMO plan in Contra Costa, Fresno, Kern, Kings, Los Angeles, Madera, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Stanislaus, Tulare and Ventura counties.
- Humana Community HMO plan in Riverside and San Joaquin counties.
- Humana Honor HMO plan in Kern, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego and Ventura counties. The new Honor HMO is designed with military veterans in mind and compliments VA benefits.
- Humana Value Plus HMO plan in Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino and San Diego counties.
- Dual Eligible Special Needs Plan (for patients qualifying for both Medicare and Medicaid) in Fresno,



Kern, Kings, Madera, San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, Stanislaus, Tulare and Ventura counties.

These Humana plans provide people with Medicare in these California counties with affordable alternatives to original Medicare only, or original Medicare paired with a Medicare Supplement plan. With these plans, members can enjoy all the benefits of original Medicare, as well as prescription drug coverage on most plans along with added benefits and important financial protections.

Humana Medicare Advantage plans offer members \$0 or low monthly plan premiums, low co-payments for

doctor visits and no-cost annual routine physicals, coverage for most annual screenings at no charge, a network of physicians, specialists and hospitals, and emergency coverage anywhere in the world.

“Humana believes it’s important for people with Medicare to find the right healthcare and wellness solutions, especially since their needs might change as they age,” said Rick Beavin, California Medicare president. “We’ve listened to what people with Medicare in California want, and used our experience in health benefits to offer more options that fit their health needs at every stage in their health care journey.”

“Heritage Provider Network is very pleased to expand our relationship with Humana,” said Richard Merkin, M.D., President and CEO of Heritage. “Over the last 40 years we have focused on developing care management solutions that improve the health and well-being of the people we serve. We are excited to now be able to offer these solutions to Humana’s Medicare Advantage members in San Luis Obispo County.”

Many Humana Medicare Advantage health plans also include access to meals after a hospital stay, routine vision benefits and an over-the-counter pharmacy benefit, as well as the SilverSneakers fitness benefit. SilverSneakers provides no-cost memberships at participating fitness centers and access to classes designed with the Medicare beneficiary in mind.

Humana Medicare Advantage is an alternative to original Medicare (but you must keep original Medicare coverage), not a supplement plan. For more information about enrolling in any Humana plans, visit [Humana.com/Medicare](https://www.humana.com/Medicare) or call (800) 213-5286 (TTY: 711), Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. local time.

ABOUT HUMANA

Humana Inc. (NYSE: HUM) is committed to helping millions of medical and specialty members achieve their best health. Their successful history in care delivery and health plan administration is helping to create a new kind of integrated care with the power to improve health and well-being and lower costs. Their efforts are leading to a better quality of life for people with Medicare, families, individuals, military service personnel and communities at large.

To accomplish that, Humana supports physicians and other healthcare professionals as they work to deliver the right care in the right place for their patients. Their range of clinical capabilities, resources and tools — such as in-home care, behavioral health, pharmacy services, data analytics and wellness solutions — combine to produce a simplified experience that makes healthcare easier to navigate and more effective.

Source: www.humana.com

Healthcare Rankings Soar at Heritage Provider Network from America's Physician Groups



Elite Status Achieved for All Medical Groups From Standards of Excellence Survey

On November 13, 2019, Heritage Provider Network (HPN), one of the nation's most experienced and innovative physician-led, value-based care organizations and its family of medical groups saw rankings soar from America's Physician Groups (APG) annual Standards of Excellence (SOE) survey. All nine medical groups earned Elite Status, the top ranking in the nation.

"Every year APG reviews the quality and standards of healthcare from providers nationwide," said Dr. Richard Merkin, president and CEO of HPN. "Once again we have achieved the highest possible ratings for all of our medical groups. Congratulations to our teams who work hard to achieve Elite Status. They are the 'stars' who earned this recognition.

We are grateful to our members who trust us to deliver exceptional care throughout our healthcare networks."

Elite 5-star Status in all categories of the survey was achieved by HPN's family of medical groups including:

- Affiliated Doctors of Orange County
- Bakersfield Family Medical Group
- Coastal Communities Physician Network
- Desert Oasis Healthcare
- Heritage Sierra Medical Group
- Heritage Victor Valley Medical Group
- High Desert Medical Group
- Lakeside Community Healthcare
- Regal Medical Group

APG is the country's leading organization representing physician groups practicing coordinated care. APG's SOE Elite award for patient care includes care management practices, information technology, accountability and transparency, patient-centered care, group support of advanced primary care, and administrative and financial capability.

"HPN is one of the leading physician groups in the country and will continue to drive innovation and help transform our industry for the better."

~ Don Crane, President and CEO of APG

"Heritage Provider Network continues to set the highest standards of healthcare in the nation as evident in our survey results with all medical groups ranking Elite Status," said Don Crane, president and CEO of APG. "HPN is one of the leading physician groups in the country and will continue to drive innovation and help transform our industry for the better."

Barbara Wold Appointed Director of the Merkin Institute for Translational Research

By Lori Dajose, Caltech



Barbara Wold, Ph.D., Bren Professor of Molecular Biology, has been appointed as the director of the Richard N. Merkin Institute for Translational Research at Caltech. The Institute, established in 2019, aims to help Caltech scientists and engineers transform their breakthroughs into advances in human health and enhance resources for every step in translational science, from basic discovery through clinical collaboration and the introduction of new treatments.

"Caltech's great, unchanging strength is our capacity to make fundamental scientific breakthroughs and the inventions that flow from them," Wold says. "Those advances can drive big changes in medicine, but

the path from a basic discovery to a treatment or medical device can be long and full of roadblocks. The new Merkin Institute promises to remove roadblocks and catalyze the best at each step: We make a discovery, relate

the insight to human biology, develop the medical applications, and then mine data from precision medicine to drive new rounds of discovery. To me, the brilliance of Richard Merkin's investment in Caltech is how it leverages our basic science to make the distance from breakthrough to patient treatment as short as possible."

Wold is a genome biologist whose research is focused on discovering how gene activity is encoded in the DNA and developing the technologies needed to figure that out. She and her research group use genomics to understand the basis of cellular identity, how it is disrupted in disease and how it can be engineered. Her group is active in building international functional genomics databases and computational resources.

Wold served as the director of the Beckman Institute at Caltech from 2001-2011 and was the founder, in 2012, of the National Cancer Institute's Center for Cancer Genomics. She has been a member of the Caltech faculty since 1981.



HIGH DESERT MEDICAL GROUP LAUNCHES

Behavioral Telehealth for Seniors

For many senior members, seeking behavioral health services can be stressful and challenging, as many still carry the stigma that comes from being diagnosed with behavioral health issues or feel embarrassed to share their symptoms with family and friends. The fear and sense of losing control can further trigger depression and anxiety that is common among the older adult population. This along with the rising number of seniors with diabetes, heart disease and other chronic illnesses leave many healthcare organizations unprepared for how to best care for this population in such a way where they can effectively meet their needs and at the same time provide ample resources to be successful.

To help mitigate this growing concern, High Desert Medical Group (HDMG) in partnership with SCAN initiated a program to provide Medicare Advantage patients access to behavioral health specialists through a tele-psychiatry company

called Regroup. Regroup delivers tele-psychiatry consultations via a secure, HIPAA-compliant, virtual care platform to areas where behavioral health services are limited, such as in the High Desert communities.

With HDMG's Behavioral Telehealth program, members can schedule a video appointment to see a psychiatrist from the comfort of the Wellness Center, located within HDMG's offices. The comfort and familiarity with the staff and the office help members to feel more at ease about receiving behavioral healthcare.

Another important component of the program is the utilization of a common electronic medical record by both the telehealth physician and the members' primary and specialty care doctors. This affords the treatment team visibility into the patients' various diagnoses, treatments and medications. This shared view minimizes possible medication contraindications, treatment or test redundancies, and further facilitates coordination of care.

"The SCAN Behavioral Telehealth pilot project has been an invaluable asset to High Desert Medical Group and our senior members," expressed Anthony J. Dulgeroff, M.D., associate medical director at HDMG. "Depression and other mental health disorders are very common in the senior population, yet are often underdiagnosed and undertreated.

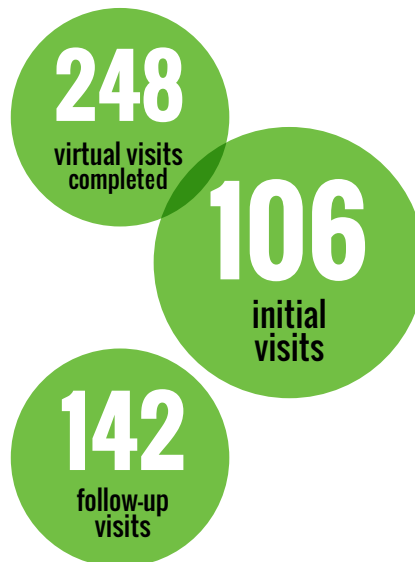
"Complicating matters even more is the lack of access to mental healthcare in the Antelope Valley. Failure to treat mental health issues can lead to

"Depression and other mental health disorders are very common in the senior population, yet are often underdiagnosed and undertreated."

~ Anthony J. Dulgeroff, M.D.,
Associate Medical Director at
HDMG



HDMG Behavioral Telehealth Virtual Visits as of September 2019



worsening of medical conditions and more frequent emergency room visits and hospitalizations. Having access to quality mental healthcare with the Behavioral Telehealth program has allowed us to better serve our patients and improve their health and their lives. Our members have expressed their gratitude time and time again for having such great access to the excellent mental healthcare afforded by the project, and we are already seeing the results of the care they have received. We truly appreciate SCAN and Regroup for the opportunity they provided by pioneering this project."

One satisfied member who benefited from using Behavioral Telehealth added, "My experience was wonderful! Dr. Mora was very personable and really listened to my issues. I felt very comfortable talking with her. My blood pressure was on the high end before my appointment and was back to normal after seeing Dr. Mora. She was very calming. Please keep this program going."

To continue on their path to success, HDMG plans to expand accessibility by adding hours to their tele-psychiatry program with the overall goal of making this resource available to seniors beyond those members who have Medicare Advantage.

Desert Oasis Healthcare Promotes Heart Health with “Life Is Why” Initiative



Heart disease is the No. 1 cause of death in the U.S. At Desert Oasis Healthcare (DOHC), they aim to help the fight against heart disease by offering “Life is Why,” a collaboration effort with the American Heart Association (AHA).

Life is Why is built upon the philosophy that each person has a “why” when it comes to the prevention of heart disease. Perhaps your “why” is a family member or friend who lost their life after a heart attack. If you have high blood pressure, also known as hypertension, this is a great “why” to begin a heart-healthy lifestyle. The “why” in our lives creates our motivation to maintain our health.

One way to help track heart health is to use AHA’s Check.Change.Control. Blood Pressure tracking program. By visiting cctracker.com/aha/dohc,

members can set up an account with the code DOHC1 to start self-monitoring and begin tracking blood pressure at home. Other great tools are available on the AHA website at heart.org where they can also access and learn about Healthy for Good and My Life Check – Life’s Simple 7. Everyone is encouraged to help support the AHA by volunteering for or donating to their Heart Walk or Go Red for Women events.

Throughout the year, DOHC is actively involved in health fairs, employer group events and other venues to offer free

blood pressure readings, calculate body mass index and measure blood glucose services. They also provide resources on how heart disease and other health conditions can be improved with lifestyle modification. DOHC offers members a variety of free classes as well as nutrition counseling to improve their health and well-being.

With more than 1,000 employees, DOHC is as committed to the health of their staff. They are proud to say that when the AHA announced their 2019 Workplace Health Achievement Index, DOHC had achieved Silver Level recognition for a third year in a row. This recognition has inspired them to work that much harder to reach Gold Level. That being said, DOHC has already won national recognition from the AHA and the American Medical Association by achieving Gold Target: BP for helping to lower blood pressure.

As the heartbeat of their community, DOHC is dedicated to making hearts everywhere as happy and as healthy as possible.

Heritage Sierra Medical Group Roundtable Discussions With Steve Roberts, Director of Operations

On Wednesday, September 18, 2019, The Signal, Santa Clarita's local publication, held a healthcare roundtable discussion that was formalized in the October edition of the Santa Clarita Valley Business Journal.

The discussion involved several business leaders from Santa Clarita including Steve Roberts, director of operations at Heritage Sierra Medical Group and representatives from Henry Mayo Newhall Hospital, City of Hope and the Santa Clarita Chamber of Commerce. The roundtable focused on healthcare issues impacting the Santa Clarita Valley including the use of technology in healthcare, the opioid epidemic, issues related to homelessness, and the recruitment and training of clinical resources.

In the article, Roberts mentioned that one thing that sets Heritage Sierra Medical Group apart is that they have about 25 unique primary care doctors throughout Santa Clarita, and it has now almost become known as concierge medicine because of its small one and two doctor office practices. Roberts also provided the following responses to some important questions that were asked of each of the attendees about the evolving marketplace.



Standing, from left, Ivan Volschenk, Dr. Gary Hajjar, Marlee Lauffer, John Musella. Sitting front to back, Steve Roberts, Dr. Chris Avelino and Cynthia Cifuentes.

Talk about where you're seeing the growth for your respective agencies in the healthcare field.

Roberts: We already know there's somewhat of a shortage of physicians, so physicians are trying to do more with less. Everybody's impacted. We are seeing an influx of specialists, but we were surprised by how few there actually are. We have people who were born here in Santa Clarita, educated here in Santa Clarita, moved away, went to medical school, did their residency and fellowship, and are now coming back and establishing a practice and bringing in patients.

When you look at the technology that's available now for healthcare providers,

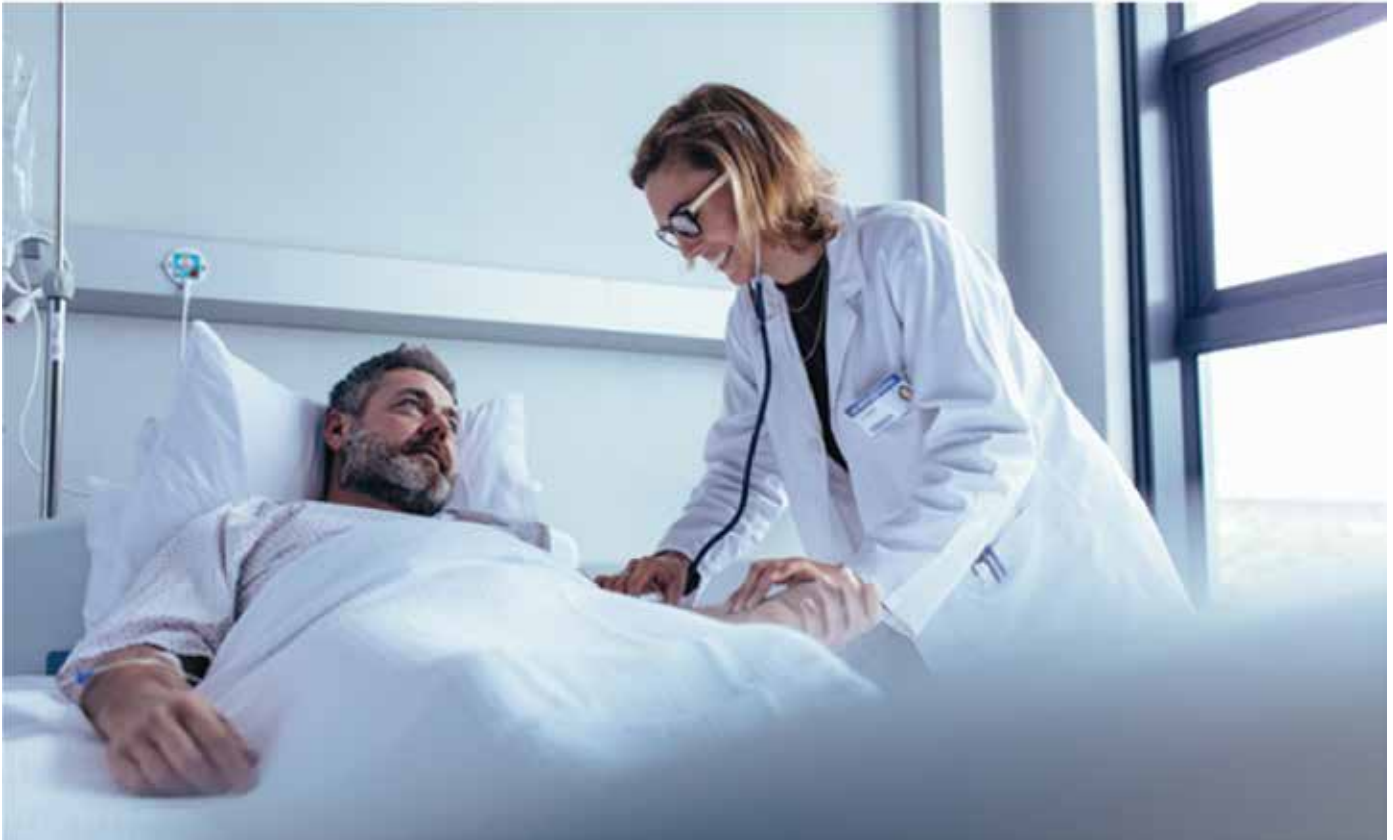
do you see the senior population taking advantage of that technology?

Roberts: I think we're always struggling with the question, "How do we make technology useful but not a barrier between the doctor-patient relationship?" I think through mobile devices, the ability to Facetime with patients and televisits — I think we're closer to being able to use technology in a clinical setting but still keep it personal and not feel as though there's a digital barrier.

The opioid crisis is everywhere, but it's starting to become more of an issue here in recent years. Let's talk about how that's being addressed.

Roberts: At Heritage Sierra, we look at it one of two ways: We either intervene, quickly, so that doctors don't have to prescribe opioids, or oftentimes doctors come to us and take the initiative. The next step is weaning patients off of opioids. And then that last mile is the hardest, that mental health aspect. But, along the lines of prescribing — we're getting providers who are just saying, 'No, we don't prescribe those.' But when you just cut that population off from something they're seeking, then oftentimes, they'll seek it from other sources.

To read the full article in The Signal, visit signalscv.com/2019/10/health-care-in-the-scv-an-evolving-marketplace.

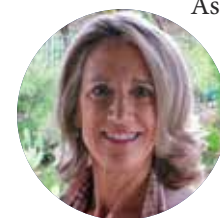


Regal Medical Group:

The Growing Role of Nurse Practitioners in Hospital Settings

In recent years, there has been a surge of nurse practitioners (NPs) transitioning from the traditional role of being in an inpatient medical workforce to a full-time hospitalist setting. Jennifer Dixon, Lead NP at Regal Medical Group, an affiliate of Heritage Provider Network, has embraced her role as an NP working collaboratively with physicians to provide patient care in a unique and oftentimes more demanding hospital environment.

Dixon has been with Regal Medical Group for more than seven and a half years and is also a California



Association for Nurse Practitioners (CANP) Tri-Valley Chapter member. As a newly graduated NP when she first joined

Regal, Dixon went through the process of becoming credentialed. During this three to four month process, she performed yearly wellness exams on senior patients within Regal's primary care offices. After she received her credentials, she began working as an NP hospitalist.

“As an NP hospitalist, be prepared to fully utilize your skills and education. Your scope of practice will be at the highest level.”

~ Jennifer Dixon, Lead NP at Regal Medical Group

Unlike physicians who are commonly trained in a specific specialty, NPs like Dixon are trained in a much broader field to cater to a variety of practice areas, such as acute care, family medicine, geriatric care and so on. There are no limits to the type of work that requires her skills set.

During a recent CANP interview, Dixon stated, “Family, adult and acute can all work in a hospital setting. There are no real barriers that I have seen. NPs do not have a residency program like physicians do, so we train with the physician we work with, within our scope of practice.”

Credentialing and obtaining full privileges allow someone to admit patients, make rounds and discharge them without supervision or co-signature. Rarely do NPs receive full privileges as most are usually given associate or ancillary privileges. Today, more and more physicians are recognizing the value of adding NPs to their practices. They pay closer attention to NPs they can coach and mentor into their chosen specialty. For physicians, what’s even more important than the specialty itself is finding the ideal personality fit and communication skills that will yield a

positive impact on patient care delivery. It’s having this type of confidence in an NP that inspires physicians to continue to mentor them so that they can expand their level of expertise and experience, therefore resulting in a win-win situation for patients and physicians.

In addition to their training, the ability for an NP to connect on a personal level is vital to their profession. NPs must also possess a strong work ethic, learn to develop strategies, master their communication skills, learn how to properly approach people, educate families, offer end-of-life care and provide emotional support.

When asked what advice she would give to NPs who are contemplating pursuing work in a hospital setting, Dixon replied, “As an NP hospitalist, be prepared to fully utilize your skills and education. Your scope of practice will be at the highest level. Develop a close relationship with physicians, nurses and other staff members. Communication skills are key as taking care of hospitalized patients is a team effort. Always remember to put yourself in your patient's place and care for them as you would like to be treated.”

Heritage Sierra Medical Group Hosts Medicare Advantage Local Events

Heritage Sierra Medical Group, serving the Antelope Valley and the Santa Clarita Valley, hosted their Annual Enrollment Period (AEP) Medicare lunches and dinners for the senior population in their respective areas.

To kick-start the events, presentations were made by Medicare Advantage broker consultants after which seniors were able to participate in a free mini health assessment. They were also given a tour of the clinics and had the opportunity to schedule appointments on the spot with specific Medicare consultants.

This collaborative effort brought in more than 180 seniors, resulting in 22 new member enrollments. Brokers were also present to meet with senior prospects during their clinic visits for their individual health assessments and tours.

Year after year, Heritage Sierra Medical Group continues to offer best-in-class healthcare services and options to families in the communities they serve.



Bakersfield Family Medical Center's Weekly Coffee Club Enriches Lives of Seniors

Bakersfield Family Medical Center (BFMC) has always been committed to enhancing the health and lives of their community. In the last two years, the BFMC staff focused their attention on the senior members who were isolated at home or had little interaction with family and friends. BFMC recognized the need to bring this community together and a decision was made to start their very own "Coffee Club."

The Coffee Club meets once a week on the main campus of their offices. All Bakersfield seniors are invited to attend whether they are members or nonmembers. During the hour, coffee and light refreshments are served and the topic of the day is introduced. Everyone is encouraged to engage and the environment created is warm, friendly, and inviting.

Since its inception, the Coffee Club has developed a regular following, becoming a successful meeting place for local seniors. As a result of this endeavor, new member enrollment has risen from either group participation in the Coffee Club or as direct referrals from existing members.

One Coffee Club member expressed, "I'm thankful for the Coffee Club because I've met new people here and

they have become my friends."

"It's fun and you get to meet new people. Also, you have a place to go on Mondays," shared a loyal club attendee.

Another senior member added, "It's a very happy group of folks, all my own age."

With over 30 seniors who attend the Coffee Club and more expected to join, BFMC can be proud of their efforts and dedication as this is just one of many ways they have chosen to make a positive difference in the lives and health of their community.

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azprioritycare.com

Phone: (480) 499-8700
585 N. Juniper Drive, Suite 200
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Bakersfield Family Medical Center

bfmc.com

Phone: (661) 327-4411
4580 California Ave.
Bakersfield, CA 93309
Counties Served: Kern

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Heritage Colorado Care

heritagecolorado.com

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and San Bernardino

Heritage Victor Valley Medical Group

hvvvmg.com

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Victorville, CA 92395
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High Desert Medical Group

hdmg.net

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Recognition of Commitment and Excellence

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