

# PFCA

## Wellness Update

PRINCETON FAMILY CARE ASSOCIATES, LLC

WINTER 2022



### Message from Dr. Fernandez

**S**eason's Greetings to all. Hoping that this issue keeps you up to date on recent developments in our practice.

First is my article on what makes for a good clinician and good clinical care. Apply it not only to your psychiatric experience at this practice but also when you visit your other doctors. Ask yourself "Am I getting good clinical care?"

Wellness includes more than just the proper medicines and can in-

clude many other activities that also promote good health. Read about the benefits of Pilates.

Lastly, the administrative articles bring you up to date on administrative issues at PFCA. Also check out the Covid 19 link at the CDC for the latest information on COVID 19.

Again, Season's Greetings to all and stay warm!

*Dr. Fernandez*

### Good Clinical Care: Seeing the Forest AND the Trees

*by Ricardo Fernandez, MD*

**A**t Princeton Family Care Associates, our vision has always been your wellness, not just response to your medicines. Your health and wellbeing are not only about symptomatic improvement but also about resolution of your illness. What do we mean by that?

Relating it to a more easily understandable medical (non-psychiatric) problem, let us take the symptom of a cough.

Let's say you develop a cough, and you go to the doctor. The doctor documents the cough from your history and your physical examination, understands the cough as a symptom, then looks for other symptoms

that can define the clinical syndrome which will require a more thorough treatment approach.

Cough is a symptom of many medical illnesses ranging from allergies to colds, to congestive heart failure. A good clinician does not only see the tree, the cough, but also sees the forest, the clinical syndrome causing the cough. A good clinician would not just treat the cough (the symptom) with a cough suppressant and send you home but would also treat the syndrome depending on what the diagnosis is, providing not just a symptomatic resolution but syndromal resolution. Not just better, well.

My vision for this practice is like-

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### Health Benefits of Pilates

*By Marisa Fernandez*

**P**ilates is low-weight resistance training which aims to strengthen the core muscles around the spine, while fostering a mind-body connection. After initial healing of physical injury, many doctors and physical therapists will recommend Pilates to their patients, to continue to strengthen the body and encourage movement. Indeed, studies suggest that Pilates may help to improve muscle endurance and flexibility, reduce chronic pain, and lessen anxiety and depression.

Pilates is beneficial to everyone, whether you prefer to exercise at home or at the gym with the assistance of a Pilates instructor. Pilates is particularly beneficial for those on the path to rehabilitation from physical injury, athletes, and pregnant or postpartum women by safety strengthening the core and conditioning the pelvis. However, it is not an exercise that can be done without mindfulness; without proper concentration, you likely will not reap the benefits, and could risk injury.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention recommends adults devote 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity and two days of strength training per week; Pilates could certainly be incorporated in one's weekly schedule to meet these strength training requirements. Experts recommend starting with one-on-one or small group training sessions, so you can learn the basics,

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## ANNUAL BLOODWORK

Our clinical staff reviews patient's metabolic health annually. The next time you have your annual primary care visit, include Princeton Family Care Associates with a copy of the lab results. You may be able to downloading a pdf file from your lab's online account and email to us at [reception@drfernandez.org](mailto:reception@drfernandez.org).

In addition, thyroid medication and certain mood stabilizers that we prescribe require routine monitoring. Please speak to your clinician to see if this is relevant in your care.

## INSURANCE REIMBURSEMENT FOR TELEMED APPOINTMENTS

As we predicted formerly, commercial insurance companies are beginning to deny reimbursement for out-of-network telemedicine visits. Check with your insurance carrier to verify what their post pandemic policy is. We are requiring patients to be in-person at least once to twice annually and we are scheduling these in person appointments currently.

### UPDATED CDC LINK FOR HEALTH RECOMMENDATIONS

## GOOD CLINICAL CARE

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wise. I strongly encourage all the clinicians working at Princeton Family Care Associates to see the trees *and* the forest.

That means that when you tell a clinician you have "attention problems" (the tree), we recognize the symptoms but understand that symptom of inattention occurs in a wide variety of psychiatric syndromes ranging across a wide variety of psychiatric disorders.

The same goes for symptoms of anxiety, sadness of mood, irritability, insomnia or any other symptom you may present with. Each one is just a symptom (the tree). We then further assess your history and scales to determine other symptoms (other trees) and these lets us understand the context, the specific psychiatric syndrome (the forest) in which these symptoms manifest.

Thus, we may treat the symptoms, perhaps give you something that quickly alleviates the symptom, a medicine to help you sleep, a medicine to quiet your anxiety, but we will always attempt to treat you for the syndrome. This is the healing part, the art of good clinical care.

We want you to be well, not just better. That is the practice vision, and it will remain such as long as I am the medical director of Princeton Family Care Associates, LLC.

I was granted the gift of healing, a rare gift, and I want to pass it on to you, your family, and any clinicians that work within this practice.

## ANNUAL HOUSEKEEPING

As the New Year approaches, we look to amend our patient records. This includes updating patient intake form, authorization forms for therapists and family members and include annual bloodwork labs. Look for additional forms included in your first appointment package in 2023.

## Amy Derrick's New Role at PFCA

**A**my Derrick, RN has completed her coursework for her Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Master's in Nursing degree. Throughout her practicum experience at PFCA she has had the opportunity to work with many of our patients under Dr. Fernandez's and Raquel Rahim's supervision. She will be continuing her work here as a Registered Nurse while she prepares for her National Credential testing and licensing applications.

Ms. Derrick will continue to work closely with Dr. Fernandez and the Advance Practice Nursing staff in facilitating direct patient care, assessments, medical recommendations,

orders and education. She will also be instrumental in triaging patient phone calls, processing medication prior authorizations, orders, labs, letters, and forms.

Making a difference is Amy's main inspiration in pursuing a lifelong career in mental health. Amy has a particular interest in Geriatric Psychiatry and her strong background in medicine makes her particularly capable in handling the complicated medication regimens and health conditions that geriatric patients will present with. She welcomes the opportunity to be a part of Princeton Family Care Associates, and hopes to be a contributing part of your clinical care.

## BENEFITS OF PILATES

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but if you are recovering from injury or experiencing chronic pain, you may benefit from a more intimate environment. Additionally, before signing up with a Pilates instructor, make sure you research their credentials, and find someone who has completed a certification program, which requires at least 400 hours of training.

If you are interested in reading more about Pilates, click on this link to be directed to the original NY Times article.

## ADMINISTRATIVE STAFFING CHANGES

We have some staffing changes to announce. Regrettably Catherine Scotto has moved to another opportunity outside of our practice. She will be missed and we wish her well. Cindy Mendelsohn has transitioned into the Reception Manager role. She will be in the office Monday thru Friday handling the day-to-day practice functioning. We recently hired a part time receptionist, Grace Boekhout, to assist Cindy on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. Our Psych Tech, Marisa Fernandez, has reduced her office schedule while she pursues a Bachelor of Nursing degree.