

October 10, 2018

Dear Patients,

I made a house call last week to see a special patient. Catherine is going to be 98 years young in a few weeks. Catherine has been our patient for over 25 years. I ring the doorbell and anticipate a short pause as Catherine makes her way to the front door with her walker to let me in. Catherine makes her bed daily, does her own laundry, and cooks daily for her and her son. She stops frequently to catch her breath, then continues on, with what she was doing.

Catherine told me a wonderful story from her childhood. Her uncle was a family physician, whose practice treated patients from Canal Street to Bywater, the River to Claiborne Avenue. She would occasionally accompany the doctor on house calls. I likewise would make rounds with my dad when I was young. One day they visited the home of sick child. Her uncle attempted to examine the boy without success until he caught the sight of Catherine's eyes. The little boy then suddenly jumped on Catherine's lap, and permitted the doctor to examine and give the boy a shot. Catherine became a frequent assistant at future house calls with her uncle. I feel privileged now, to visit and care for Catherine, as she continues to live in her own home.

Healthcare has made rapid progress in technology since those days in old New Orleans, but have we made that same progress in the art of caring? There has been a trend recently, a "decentralization of care". Often, you may find physicians are being replaced by nurse practitioners or physician assistants. The use of non-physician care providers may be convenient, but it further isolates the patient from true individualized care from your physician. Insurance and pharmaceutical companies further dilute that individualized care by limiting access due to arduous prior authorizations and exorbitant drug costs. Arleen, Sabrina and I, are here to return that personal, one to one care, back to you.

With our electronic record, I can now see, for most of you, what you will pay at your pharmacy for a medication. This way, we can work together, to help make affordable decisions. Sabrina's expertise in getting drug authorizations helps me to keep you on the medications, that I believe are important in your care. Arlene's charm can schedule your appointments with specialists, in a reasonable amount of time, and also schedule tests that I deem necessary. Most of all, we are there for you, whether in times of crisis, or times you simply need a hug. You are all part of our family, and we strive to care for you as such.

I am available on cell phone at night, and on weekends, to assist you any medical problems that arise. I continue see my hospitalized patients, to ensure continuity, when you are in most need of critical care.

Practicing medicine, the old-fashioned way, puts an emphasis on caring. Yes, technology is important, but it is only a tool. True caring comes from the heart, one to one, physician to patient. Each time I visit Catherine in her home, listen to her heart and lungs, and hold her hand, I remember my father's care for his patients, and the importance of "one to one" care.

Administration fees will, once again, remain unchanged. Additionally, we will continue our discount for fees received in our office by December 31st 2018. My practice is still open to new patients, family or friends, that might wish a more caring practice. It has been our pleasure to provide you with high quality care, in the setting of a small practice. We thank you for your trust and will do our best to ensure you live a long and healthy life.

Sincerely,

Alan N. Yager, MD

SUPERBOWL SAINTS!!!!