



## **On-Site Primary Care Offers Enhanced Care to Community of Seniors**

There were no signs, and a Mapquest search revealed no such address, but at 2222 Welcome Place, Dr. Sanford Melmed and his staff were there to greet their patients at the new Harry & Pearl Polster Medical Center.

On December 13, 2007, the primary care practice opened its doors to those living within the Wexner Heritage Village system of services as well as to a long list of current patients and the community at-large. A partnership with Grant Medical Center and its parent company, OhioHealth, the Polster Medical Center became the first in a central Ohio nursing home.

“Placing a private practice inside a nursing home is a new concept that has been successful in some larger cities, but we are the first to do it in our area,” Dr. Melmed said.

Dr. Melmed, a Grant internist, pioneered the unusual arrangement when he relocated from an office in downtown Columbus to the WHV campus. “This arrangement has allowed us to fill a gap in the medical care we can provide to those we serve,” said David Rosen, WHV president and chief executive officer. “For years families have told us that we needed to better meet the medical needs of their loved ones here. This provides a very valuable service to our community and is long overdue.”

The Polster Medical Center offers priority and same-day urgent appointments to patients of the primary care practice as well as to more than 500 individuals served by Wexner Heritage Village. They also serve as the employee health providers for WHV employees.

The practice, which now offers another option for Bexley and Berwick residents, just added a second doctor this summer. Dr. Kamilah Abrams, a former Chief Resident at

Grant Hospital, joined the team in July. Drs. Melmed and Abrams are also supported by John Windzogl, a physician assistant.

Located adjacent to Creekside at the Village, seniors living independently are also finding value in the new arrangement. Though some have their own transportation, a majority of those living independently rely on scheduled transportation to get them to their medical appointments throughout town, and can now just walk to the doctor's office from their apartments.

The biggest benefit, however, has come in the form of offering enhanced care to those living in the campus' many settings – particularly the nursing home.

“It helps to see the Village's patients right away because they tend to be more fragile and subject to complications, when compared to younger populations,” Melmed said. “Additionally, we want the surrounding neighborhoods to understand that we are here for all of their health care needs, whether it's for a routine physical, or a more urgent acute problem. Some people told me that housing a neighborhood medical practice inside of a nursing home was a ‘crazy idea.’ I'm happy to report that we can now say with confidence that nothing could be further from the truth!”

Utilizing the Polster Medical Center for care is a choice for all residents and employees within the organization. Those wishing to stay with their current physicians can do so, though many of the residents of Wexner Heritage House have enjoyed seeing a doctor without leaving the building.

“I think it's wonderful,” said Sylvia Pastor, a resident at Wexner Heritage House. “This building is the epitome of what a nursing home should be. It's wonderful that it is growing and can offer more options.”

Pastor visited Dr. Melmed for the first time recently, and stated that she has always had to leave the building for medical appointments in the past, or has accessed attending physicians in her own room, an arrangement she hasn't always been happy with.

“One clear advantage is that I am almost always here. The nursing home residents won't need to be transported out nearly as much to receive medical care, and those served in other sites on and around the WHV campus are, in some cases, just steps away” said Melmed, who also serves as medical director of Wexner Heritage Village.

Moving his practice on-site enables Melmed to deliver medical services, such as cardiac and pulmonary testing, minor surgeries, wound care, and infection and pain control that might otherwise not be so readily available to the nursing home population.

Additionally, planned expansion of the medical center will allow an even greater array of care to include a full-scale laboratory testing site, a pharmacy satellite location, an imaging center, and the addition of several subspecialties ranging from cardiology to

podiatry. New medical center also allows for quick and easy patient access to the Grant Medical Center Spine Care Program and other Grant specialists and services.

“The traditional nursing home is nobody’s idea of a picnic,” Rosen said. “The trend is toward providing more options that enhance the quality of life for consumers. Dr. Melmed’s presence at Wexner Heritage Village, with his long list of services, is a great example of how innovative thinking and valuable community partnerships can help us achieve that for those we serve.”

**Dr. Melmed and Dr. Abrams can be reached at the Harry and Pearl Polster Medical Center by phone at 614-338-8833.**

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***About Grant and OhioHealth:***

*Grant Medical Center is part of OhioHealth, a nationally recognized, not-for-profit, charitable, healthcare organization serving and supported by the community. Named by FORTUNE Magazine as one of the “100 Best Companies To Work For in 2007,” OhioHealth is based in Columbus, Ohio, and is a family of 15 hospitals, 20 health and surgery centers, home-health providers, medical equipment and health service suppliers throughout a 46-county area. OhioHealth hospitals in central Ohio include Riverside Methodist Hospital, Grant Medical Center, Doctors Hospital, Grady Memorial Hospital and Dublin Methodist Hospital. For more information, please visit the Web site at [www.ohiohealth.com](http://www.ohiohealth.com).*

***About Wexner Heritage Village:***

*A non-profit provider, Wexner Heritage Village offers health, housing and supportive services to meet the needs of the aging and disabled within the local community. Established in 1951, the traditional nursing home has since expanded to include today’s system of senior services, including a market-rate independent housing setting, two HUD-subsidized independent apartment buildings, a home-based and inpatient hospice program, three sites serving adults with MR/DD, and more. For more information, go to [www.whv.org](http://www.whv.org) or call 614-231-4900.*

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