

Bend medical practice values patients' time, restores quality patient-doctor relationship

by Bend Weekly News Sources

Bachelor Butte Internal Medicine, located on Bend's Westside, is a medical practice that puts many common complaints of doctors' appointments to rest and improves the patient-doctor relationship. Many of the common reasons patients dislike visiting a doctor's office are related to how they must spend their time waiting. At Bachelor Butte Internal Medicine (BBIM), time is managed from a patient's point of view, which is difficult to achieve in a typical medical office.

Currently, many patients can't get an appointment within a day or two during an urgent situation, causing them to visit an emergency room or urgent care center. This leads to fragmented, expensive care and is overwhelming many emergency rooms. At BBIM, same day or next day appointments are built into the schedule to accommodate urgent matters. Patients often wait anywhere from five minutes to two hours to be seen by a doctor. At BBIM the typical wait time is less than five minutes, allowing them to get back to work on time or plan the rest of their day. The average time spent with an Internal Medicine physician is approximately 20 minutes. At BBIM the initial visit lasts from 30 minutes to 2 1/2 hours, reducing the number of follow-up appointments. Follow-up appointments are 15 minutes to 45 minutes. Those with questions after the appointments can more easily contact the doctor directly for improved communication. Patients are also contacted with all lab results -- even if they are normal, so every patient knows their labs and tests have been reviewed.

The convenience of time is not the most important aspect -- restoring the patient-doctor relationship is. When patients can be seen as needed, spend a minimal amount of time waiting to be seen and then have the physician's undivided attention to go over all concerns, patients know their health and time are being cared for. The current system implies that the patient's time and health aren't of utmost importance. Otherwise, why do they wait so long for so little time and attention from their physician? Being able to review a patient's complete medical history, current conditions and symptoms allows the doctor to engage the patient's input. With longer appointments, patients can be empowered to direct their healthcare and collaborate with the doctor. Patients know they are being heard and validated.

When a physician signs an insurance carrier contract, many restrictions and costs are injected into how a medical practice is managed. BBIM doesn't sign insurance carrier contracts, allowing more time and energy to be devoted to patients' needs. These contracts are written by the insurance carriers and are not typically negotiated by physicians. Consequently, the insurance company has significant control over how physicians practice medicine. They stipulate that the doctor can't decide medical necessity for the patient, which some would argue is a conflict of interest. Insurance companies retain more revenue the more services are denied. To be fair, healthcare services are expensive and require some limitation. However, who can better determine what a patient's needs are than a doctor who has thoroughly evaluated the patient's concerns and medical history? Ultimately, patients need to determine which is more important -- convenience of a participating

doctor who accepts payment from the insurance company or a doctor whose practice is designed to meet their needs. Unfortunately, this is not an easy choice for the doctor or the patient.

About Dr. Mike Henderson, D.O.

Dr. Henderson graduated from Mountain View High School in Bend, Oregon and attended Central Oregon Community College before completing his bachelor of science degree in biology from George Fox University, with a 3.7 GPA. He then obtained his Doctor of Osteopathy degree from Des Moines University, graduating number 21 out of 207 students and completed his Internal Medicine training at Botsford General Hospital in Farmington Hills, Michigan. Internal Medicine physicians specialize in taking care of every major organ system in the body, provide preventive medicine and coordinate care among subspecialists. As a relatively new physician, Dr. Henderson is trained in Evidence Based Medicine, which is the application of clinical research to individual patients to provide the best known treatment, diagnosis and prognosis. He is also a member of The Archimedes Movement (<http://www.wecandobetter.org/>) started by Dr. John Kitzhaber, which is attempting to redesign Oregon's healthcare system.

About Bachelor Butte Internal Medicine (BBIM)

BBIM is located in Suite 101 at 2855 NW Crossing Drive, in Bend, Oregon. They may be reached at 541.330.6003, or by fax at 541.330.6456. Visit their web page at www.bachelorbuttemedicine.com.

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