

# Center for Successful Aging

## Care for Aging Adults

### **Convenient, coordinated care for patients; peace of mind for families**

The aging process impacts every aspect of a person's life—physical, mental and emotional—as well as the lives of family members and caregivers. As people age, they often see many healthcare providers for a variety of different conditions. They go from one appointment to another, seeing multiple doctors with little to no coordination of care. This can be frustrating and confusing—for both patients and their loved ones, too.

### **Patient-centered care for better long-term health**

The Center for Successful Aging at MedStar Good Samaritan Hospital is dedicated to addressing the unique needs of people experiencing age-related conditions. We provide patient-centered care which is comprehensive and coordinated among doctors, nurses, therapists, and other caregivers—all in one convenient location. These specialists partner with patients and their families to provide individualized "Life Plans" (treatment plans that evolve with patients' changing needs). This care also continues regardless of the type of setting patients may require in the future—including home, hospital and long-term facilities. This makes us one of the few programs in the region where the same experts treat patients regardless of the care setting they require.

### **Common age-related problems**

Aging comes with its own challenges, which can be complicated and difficult to understand. The good news is that many problems and conditions that commonly affect older adults are manageable or treatable, allowing them to lead fulfilling lives. Common age-related problems include:

- Dementia
- Confusion or memory problems
- Behavioral changes, including depression or anxiety
- Chronic medical conditions
- Decreased mobility
- Difficulty in performing daily activities
- Frequent falls
- Impaired vision or hearing
- Managing multiple medications
- Re-occurring or constant pain
- Slower reaction times

### **Customized care from a specialized team**

Services are provided based, in large part, on the needs and preferences of our patients and their families and include:

- Primary care services, particularly for individuals with numerous health care needs
- Consultations for specific geriatric conditions
- Co-management of care with primary care physicians for patients with multiple health issues who may benefit from a team approach  
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This care is provided by an integrated team with special training in caring for older adults. This team includes:

- Geriatricians
- Nurse practitioners
- Care coordinators
- Social workers
- Pharmacists
- Dietitians
- Physical therapists

Each team is led by a geriatrician—a physician trained in internal medicine who also studied geriatric medicine and has specific expertise in diagnosing and treating conditions that commonly occur with aging.

A care coordinator on each team (usually a geriatric nurse practitioner) serves as a navigator to ensure that patients receive the care they need while providing education, support and encouragement—for both patients and caregivers. This coordinated care follows patients through transitions from home, hospital and other needed facilities, so caregivers can feel assured that all of the patients' needs are being met.

Depending on a patient's condition, our teams may also consult with other experts, including:

- Cardiologists
- Endocrinologists
- Neurologists

- Palliative Care Specialists
- Psychiatrists
- Urologists
- Other medical subspecialties

#### **Our collaborative approach to care**

New patients who come to the Center for Successful Aging receive a thorough health assessment to identify medical and functional issues and determine if they are at risk for other conditions. The needs of caregivers are an important consideration during this assessment.

Based on this assessment, an individualized "Life Plan" is developed to help patients and their caregivers manage medical conditions and encourage good health habits by providing recommendations for the best possible physical, mental and emotional health.

The entire care team works together to ensure consistent care for patients, following up with them on a regular basis, even at home, if patients are unable to come to us. If patients require specialty treatment, our geriatricians coordinate treatment and recovery plans with specialists, other caregivers, and primary care physicians, as well as patients and their families.

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