



Kidsline

The Newsletter of Annapolis Pediatrics

www.annapolispediatrics.com

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Arnold Office

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New Friends and Old

Annapolis Pediatrics is enthusiastic to introduce 2 Nurse Practitioners who will join our staff this winter.

Ann Purcell, CPNP

The first is a familiar face to many. Ann Purcell served as a Nurse Practitioner with our practice until 2003. Ms. Purcell left Annapolis Pediatrics to pursue a part-time position in a school-based health clinic in Baltimore. However her heart remained close to Annapolis Pediatrics. Ms. Purcell has filled in for us to cover busy schedules when needed, and she remained close to many of her colleagues at Annapolis Pediatrics. With the expansion of our Waugh Chapel office and the planned opening of our Kent Island office in 2008, Ann was invited to bring her warmth and dedication to children back to Annapolis Pediatrics. We are thrilled to welcome her back and hope you will be as happy to see her as we are!



Ann Purcell, CPNP

Julia Caschera, CPNP

We are also delighted to announce the arrival of our newest Nurse Practitioner, Julia Caschera. Julia is also a familiar face to some as she trained with us while finishing her Masters in Nursing from Johns Hopkins University. Julia has both her RN and MSN from Hopkins, where she worked for the last 7 years in increasingly senior positions as a pediatric nurse. Ms. Caschera has worked with newborns in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unity (NICU) as well as many children requiring hospital admission due to chronic illnesses, asthma, and serious injury. She is highly experienced in managing



Julia Caschera, CPNP

and treating chronic respiratory conditions, an expertise we're happy to add to our practice. Ms. Caschera is excited about joining Annapolis Pediatrics, where we have an unsurpassed continuity of care. Patients and providers alike typically stay with Annapolis Pediatrics for a long time. While she'll miss the fast-paced hospital environment, Julia is looking forward to following patients throughout their childhood and adolescence with us.

Winter 2008

Physicians and Nurse Practitioners

Dwight Fortier, MD
Samuel Libber, MD
Katherine Edwards, MD
Stanley Weimer, MD
James Rice, MD
Margaret Turner, MD
Charles Parmele, MD
Sefanit Fassil, MD
Jennifer Corder, MD
Dana Kim, MD
John McGrath, MD
Anita Weissburg, CPNP
Gwyn Reece, CPNP
Julia Caschera, CPNP
Roseanne Thompson, CPNP
Linda Murray, CPNP
Gina Friel, CPNP
Ann Purcell, CPNP

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Jane Howson, RN

An Open Letter of Thanks

By Jane Howson, RN; Nursing Supervisor

I would like to take this opportunity to say Thank You to the nursing, front desk, and business office staff who worked so hard this year to ensure that as many children as possible received their flu vaccine. These women gave up weekends when they were off work to make the flu clinics run as smoothly as possible. Please join me in thanking them for their hard work and dedication to your children.

We held 9 flu clinics this year and vaccinated approximately 1,500 children.

The staff of Annapolis Pediatrics continues to impress me with their dedication to the practice and service to our patients. It is an honor to work with such a wonderful group of people.

New Developmental Screening Programs

One of the most important roles of a pediatric health care provider is to utilize the best and most current preventative medicine available. One way we do that is by undergoing continual medical education so we are aware of the best tools and techniques for your family.

One area of preventative medicine that has undergone rapid changes recently is developmental screening. Annapolis Pediatrics sees the identification of developmental delays as part of the foundation of providing excellent care to children and their families.

“Annapolis Pediatrics wants to be the leader in pediatric developmental screening in the Annapolis area,” says Sefanit Fassil, MD, “and, as such, we are starting a new initiative for infants and toddlers.” Studies have shown that because delays can be subtle and can occur in children who appear to be developing typically, most children who would benefit from early intervention are not identified until after they start school (Glascoe, 2000, published in *Pediatrics in Review*).

Our infants and toddlers screening pro-

gram is geared toward children ages 9 to 24 months and requires parents to complete questionnaires to help assess the developmental progress of their children. These questionnaires take the guessing out of developmental screening. Parents don't have to decide when a concern is worth discussing with their pediatrician, nor do they have to worry about forgetting to talk about development at their child's well-baby exam. The 24-month old questionnaire is more detailed and is aimed specifically at Autism Spectrum Disorders.

These tools are intended to help parents identify issues that should be brought to their pediatrician or pediatric nurse practitioner. They also ensure topics that should be reviewed regarding development are not overlooked or left to interpretation. With easy-to-use checklists, parents and medical providers work as a team to provide the very best care for our children and to identify even the smallest developmental delays or risk factors in order to pursue further evaluation and treatment, if necessary.

Please talk to your provider for more information.



Sefanit Fassil, MD



Phone Triage: Behind the Scenes

One of the services that makes Annapolis Pediatrics so convenient for our patients is a dedicated phone-triage nursing staff who responds to questions by phone during all our business hours. This is wonderful for those times when you might need some advice from a medical professional, when you aren't sure if you need an appointment.

Patients and staff have noticed how important this service has become, as we've had to add more nurses to the triage service during peak call hours, typically Mondays and Tuesdays, as well as mornings during peak cold and flu season. Once you leave a message for a triage nurse, you may not realize what goes on behind the scenes.

Dedicated to Triage

We have two or three (depending on the day) nurses who solely respond to your messages. They work in a room in the Annapolis Office dedicated to phone calls, separate from the hubbub of the office. In addition to their expertise, our triage nurses have at their fingertips all of the standard medical references for children as well as the latest information on medicines and medical protocol. Of course, they are only steps away from our pediatricians and pediatric nurse practitioners when they do need to seek additional assistance.

First and Foremost

Our automated phone system offers several advantages. First and foremost, it allows us to respond to your calls in order of medical acuity or importance. We check our incoming

messages constantly throughout the day. Your message will always be retrieved within the hour. This means that serious medical concerns will be responded to as rapidly as possible. We need to respond to the sickest children first. This doesn't mean your child's persistent diaper rash or even potentially serious behavioral problem doesn't concern us, but it may not require the most immediate medical attention of our triage calls for the moment.

Keep on Talking

Make sure we can hear you. It may sound silly, but our system is designed for efficiency, so it will stop recording you when it hears silence. If your child is crying or playing in the background (which we understand), the machine will continue to record, slowing down the prompts, often to your frustration. If you want to be as speedy as possible, call from a quiet location without interference, which sometimes means your cell phone isn't the best either.

Be as specific as possible in your message. If you want to know how to best manage a symptom your child has, be specific about the symptom (coughing, stuffiness, ear pain, nausea). If you are following up on an office visit you recently had, please let us know. This helps us determine whether we should find your child's medical records before we call you back. If you are seeking lab results, let us know what kind of results (such as "blood-work from Quest on Defense Highway")



The Phone Triage Room at Annapolis Pediatrics.

Winter Hours

Winter Hours are in effect in the Annapolis Office and will go into effect in Waugh Chapel as of January 1, 2008.

Annapolis Office:

Mon-Fri walk-ins: 7:30 – 8:30 am
 Mon-Thu: 8 a m – 9 p m
 Friday: 8 a m – 5 p m
 Saturday: 8 a m – 1 p m
 Sunday : 9 am – 11 am

Waugh Chapel Office:

Monday: 8 am – 7 pm
 Tue-Fri : 8 am – 5 pm

Arnold Office:

Mon - Fri : 9 am – 5 pm



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Superior Healthcare for newborns,
children, adolescents and young adults

Annapolis Pediatrics Email List

Want to be kept up to date on the latest information from the practice? Please visit our website and sign up to receive emails directly from us. We intend to use the list to send out the quarterly newsletter as well as timely updates, such as the scheduling of our flu vaccine clinics or important policy changes.

Don't worry, just like you we hate cluttered inboxes, so we won't pester you with unnecessary emails, and you can opt out at any time. Try it out and see.

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Phone Triage continued

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Medical Records

Medical records are an important point, because one thing that can slow us down in returning calls is tracking down your child's medical history. If your child has an appointment already scheduled for that day, is a patient of a doctor who works primarily outside the Annapolis Office, or you've left more than one message in different voicemail boxes on our phone system, we may not be able to easily find your chart. Let us know this on your message, as well (such as, "We're scheduled to see Dr. Edwards this afternoon, but..."). This will start us looking in the right place and save time responding to your call, as well as others!

Construction Update

It's been a busy year for our offices, and not just because we've seen so many kids this year! And while the offices undergoing construction are definitely getting some terrific upgrades in space and comfort, we know that the construction hasn't always been easy on everyone.

Happily, as we go to press our Waugh Chapel expansion is nearly complete. We can't thank our Waugh Chapel families enough for their patience and understanding during the inconveniences of our expansion. Thankfully, the new space is lovely and will allow us to see more patients during periods of high demand (such as the winter cold and flu season) and improve the flow so the office won't seem crowded.

While the Arnold office itself hasn't

We ask a lot of questions, not to frustrate you on your busy day, but we've got a lot of patients with similar names. Please be clear with your child's name and spelling, as well as his or her birthday. That way we will know we've got the records for the right John Miller.

Help Us Help you

We know that sick kids make the day crazy—we've got kids, too. However, you want us to reach you as fast as possible, so be sure to give us a number where you can be reached. We prefer land-lines, to have a good connection, but if you're heading out to the carpool line or soccer practice, leave your cell phone number and, by all means, keep your phone handy!

been under construction, the main areas of the building are undergoing beautification. Again, our patients have been kindly sidestepping work crews and dust while looking forward to brighter, more modern stairways and corridors.

And progress is going smoothly for the opening of the Kent Island office. We're planning on starting seeing patients there around April 1, 2008. If you are a Kent or Queen Anne's County patient, look for a letter to come home with all the necessary office information once it is set (such as hours, a local phone number, and more). If you would like more information on the Kent Island office and don't live across the Bay, please check our website for updates or sign up for our email list to be sure to be in the loop.