

# Family Wellness Group Provides Vital Link to Healthcare

## Meet our Staff



### G. Summers Chaffin, M.D.

Specialty: Family Medicine  
 Medical School: Vanderbilt University School of Medicine, Nashville, TN (1975)  
 Residency: John Peter Smith Hospital, Ft. Worth, TX (1978)  
 Board Certification: American Board of Family Practice  
 Professional Membership: American Academy of Family Practice and Senior FAA Medical Examiner



### Matthew DeBoer, D.O.

Specialty: Family Medicine  
 Medical School: Andrew Taylor Still University, Kirksville, MO  
 Kirksville College of Osteopathic Medicine, Kirksville, MO  
 Residency and Internship: Wellington Regional Medical Center Lecom, Wellington, FL  
 Board Certification: American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians  
 Professional Membership: American Academy of Family Physicians



### Carol Varnado, M.D.

Specialty: Family Medicine  
 Medical School: St. Georges University School of Medicine, Grenada, West Indies  
 Residency: Family Medicine, Medical University of South Carolina, Charleston, SC  
 Internship: Pediatrics, Albert Einstein Medical Center, Philadelphia, PA  
 Board Certification: American Board of Family Medicine



### Stephen Sharpe, PA-C

Specialty: Family Medicine  
 Training: Trevecca Nazarene University Physician Assistant Program, Nashville, TN (2006)  
 Certification: National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants



### Terry Witherington, RNC, FNP

Specialty: Family Medicine  
 Training: University of Tennessee Memphis School of Nursing, Memphis, TN (1994)  
 Certification: American Nursing Credentialing Center  
 Professional Membership: American Academy of Nurse Practitioners  
 Affiliation: Director of the Pediatrics Nurse Practitioner Program with Vanderbilt School of Nursing

*It can be tempting to shrug off preventive medicine if you feel healthy. However, did you know that there are many benefits to having a primary care physician? A primary care physician will be familiar with the physical, psychological, and lifestyle factors that affect the health of you and your family; you will have a medical home for you and your family allowing your medical information to be in a central location; the relationship you develop with your primary care physician can be key to keeping illness away; you can learn about preventative care that will keep serious medical problems from ever occurring; a primary care physician has the ability to provide a wide range of medical care; and your physician can treat acute illness quickly.*



Family Wellness Group is a long-standing and successful primary care group that has served patients in the Hendersonville, White House, Gallatin and Nashville markets for over 10 years. Filling the important role of a family's need for a primary care physician has been the goal of Dr. G. Summers Chaffin since he first began his practice in family medicine in 1982.

## Primary Care at the Front-lines

"Primary care is really the front-line of healthcare delivery," explains Dr. Chaffin. "We take pride in establishing long-term relationships with our patients and caring for them throughout the different stages of their lives." In fact, Dr. Chaffin and the other providers at Family Wellness Group treat several generations of families including seeing the children of patients who first saw Dr. Chaffin when they were children themselves.

Seeing the same patients and their families for much of their lives allows primary care physicians like those in practice with Family Wellness Group to develop a rapport with their patients and be especially familiar with the physical, psychological and lifestyle factors important to their health. It is therefore crucial that primary care physicians are given accurate information about the lives of their patients, ranging from emotional states and lifestyle choices, to marital status and dietary habits.

When the providers at Family Wellness Group are armed with this type of information, they seek to improve their patients' health by recommending certain steps to be taken and educating them on why these steps are important. They can also refer patients to a specialist when necessary, when they are not able to treat various conditions. When patients are referred to a specialist, the staff at Family Wellness Group monitors the care and treatment they receive. For this reason, many people refer to the primary care physician as the patient's gate-keeper.

## Partnering for the Future of Healthcare

Because choosing the right health-care facility and the right primary care physician for your family is such an important decision, Family Wellness Group takes pride in providing a personalized approach to family medicine. Its recent partnership with Sumner Regional Medical Center assists the group in offering families a full continuum of care and helps further the mission of Sumner Regional Health Systems (SRHS). FWG joined SRHS and moved into a new office in January, 2009.

"Many reports have been published in the past year alerting the health-care industry to the importance of expanding primary care services nationwide. This will become increasingly important as legislators consider universal healthcare coverage which would broaden the demand for primary care physicians," said William T. Sugg, President and Chief Executive Officer. "We want to make sure that Sumner Regional has the right resources and partners in place to address the future needs of our communities we serve."

Dr. Chaffin says he is proud that Family Wellness Group can play a role in fulfilling these needs.

"We know that Sumner Regional understands the great value and benefit of broadening patient access to family medicine, and we are proud to extend our services to even more patients through our partnership," said Dr. Chaffin.

Family Wellness Group provides comprehensive family practice for pediatrics, adolescents, adults and seniors, and compliments the existing family medicine staff at Sumner Regional Medical Center.

"We're so excited to have Family Wellness Group as part of our team," said David Popen, Senior Vice President and Chief Development Officer at SRHS. "They have already made a tremendous impact, introducing a large number of their patients to the state-of-the-art services at Sumner Station, including diagnostics, Imaging for Women, and rehabilitation. The communities of Hendersonville, White House and surrounding areas are seeing immediate benefits to this partnership through increased access to high-quality healthcare services."

## Five Reasons You Should Have a Primary Care Physician

### #1 Better Preventative Care

One of the main responsibilities of a primary care physician is to provide preventative care. A primary care physician is something like a coach. They can provide recommendations that will help you protect your health. They can get to know you, your history and your family history. They can provide the screenings you need, and identify and treat many minor problems before they become major ones.

### #2 Continuity of Care

Having a skilled primary care physician provides a continuity of care that health maintenance over a lifetime requires. He or she can treat the whole person, taking into account your history and existing conditions.

### #3 A Central Point of Contact

A primary care physician coordinates information between health-care providers. When patients have questions, or are getting conflicting reports, they can call their primary care physician. They can also make sure there is no duplication of care and testing, and that nothing is being left out.

### #4 A Key Resource

A primary care physician should be the first person in the health-care system that you contact when you have a question or a problem. He or she can provide answers and care, or can recommend a specialist to meet your needs. Your doctor can also help you find other resources, such as support groups and classes.

### #5 Fewer Trips to the ER

Your primary care physician can offer options that may prevent you from making unnecessary trips to the emergency room. For example, your doctor may be able to answer questions about a condition that concerns you, or may call in a prescription or suggest a course of action you can take at home.



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