

Premier HealthCare Embodies “Medical Home” Model



These days, the healthcare needs of individuals with developmental disabilities are getting more media coverage than ever before, from medical publications to local newspapers. Just the other day, I read an article in the *Boston Globe* about a 26-year-old man with Down syndrome who still receives services from his pediatrician because he cannot find suitable care elsewhere. The lack of coordinated care for people with disabilities – and the media attention devoted to it – has created a national push for a dramatic shift in the relationship between a patient and primary care physician. Today, a patient-centered approach defined as the “Medical Home” is gaining momentum, with an emphasis on more coordinated and long-term care, and increased access to medical and community resources.

Medical Homes, according to standards set by the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) in 2008, emphasize enhanced care through added services such as: personalized coordination, open scheduling, expanded hours and use of information technology. Since its inception, **Premier HealthCare (PHC)** has embodied the principles of the Medical Home by providing comprehensive, coordinated care for individuals of all ages with developmental, learning and physical disabilities.

A Team Approach

Much like a Medical Home, PHC provides well-organized and coordinated care that is accessible, family-centered and comprehensive. Our practice locations serve as a central place for patients to receive the majority of their medical and healthcare services. Each patient has an ongoing relationship with a primary care physician, who works with other health care specialists, outside agencies and the families themselves to coordinate personalized healthcare services.

‘Much like a Medical Home, PHC provides well-organized and coordinated care that is accessible, family-centered and comprehensive.’

In our new **Weight and Health Management Program**, for example, a PHC primary care physician refers an individual to a nutritionist, and then may recommend physical or occupational therapy and counseling sessions. This comprehensive approach has helped several individuals reach their weight and health goals.

Quality of Services

Premier HealthCare is on the pulse of changing times and technological advances. I am happy to report that we are closer than ever to digitizing our medical records. Electronic medical records will be extremely helpful in reviewing a patient’s needs in a timely manner. We’ll be able to search for previous diagnoses, medication trials

and allergies, minimizing any margins of error and providing more comprehensive healthcare. To better serve our patients, we also offer flexible hours, including evenings and weekends, and multiple service locations in the Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan and Queens.

When a person visits Premier HealthCare, he or she is likely to be greeted and seen by the same physicians, therapists, nurses, social workers and other trained professionals. This is one of the many reasons our services have been cited by the U.S. Surgeon General as a national model for the provision of health care for people with developmental disabilities.

Premier HealthCare is dedicated to raising the bar for health care for this population. We take the time to get to know each person on an individual basis. Our providers establish long-term relationships with patients, and our practice managers are always there to address their needs. Our patients take great comfort in that, and so do we.

As the Medical Home model gains more attention from the media and throughout the medical community, we applaud it as a comprehensive, person-centered approach that shares so many of our own fundamental principles for the effective provision of health care.

Peter Della Bella, M.D.
Director of Clinical Programs

Dr. Peter Della Bella Promoted to Director of Clinical Programs



We are pleased to announce that **Dr. Peter Della Bella** has been promoted to the position of Director of Clinical Programs for Premier HealthCare. Dr. Della Bella has been the Chief of Psychiatry since PHC's inception in 1997, and was appointed Associate Medical Director shortly thereafter.

In his new role, Dr. Della Bella's duties will expand to encompass the oversight of Premier HealthCare's clinical systems, including direct supervision of the Psychiatry,

Rehabilitation, Mental Health, and Nursing programs. "Dr. Della Bella will work closely with **Dr. David Kaufman**, PHC's Medical Director, to further develop and promote a number of new health care strategic initiatives," said **Marco R. Damiani**, Director of **YAI/NIPD's Clinical and Family Services**. "Both Dr. Kaufman and Dr. Della Bella will facilitate even greater collaboration and affiliations with various other health care entities throughout the New York metropolitan area."

Dr. Della Bella is the co-founder of the **Premier HealthCare Training Institute** and its annual medical conference. He has been instrumental in developing a post-graduate training fellowship in autism in collaboration with the **Mount Sinai School of Medicine**, and a training clerkship for NYU medical students. Dr. Della Bella has also played a pivotal role in the

development of **PHC's Weight and Health Management Program**. He serves on the teaching faculty at **New York University Medical School**, lectures throughout the New York metropolitan area, and maintains a small private practice.

Dr. Della Bella graduated from Cornell University and received his medical degree from the State University of New York at Buffalo, School of Medicine. He was the Chief Resident in Psychiatry at St. Vincent's Hospital, elected Fellow in Public Psychiatry at Columbia University as well as a Fellow in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at New York University/Bellevue Hospital. Dr. Della Bella is Board Certified in Psychiatry.

Dr. Philip E. Levine Promoted to Chief of Psychiatry

Dr. Philip E. Levine has been promoted to the position of Chief of Psychiatry for Premier Healthcare.

"My experiences at Premier HealthCare have been wonderful. In my new role, I look forward to continuing to partner with a group of dedicated professionals to develop the highest standards and best care for people with developmental disabilities," said Dr. Levine.

Dr. Levine joined PHC as a Senior Psychiatrist in 1999. Instantly, he became a highly valued member of the PHC team, and a driving force behind the opening of our **Bayside** practice, which opened in 1999. Under the leadership of Dr. Levine, Bayside has become a full-service center that meets the clinical needs of over 1,200 people with developmental disabilities.

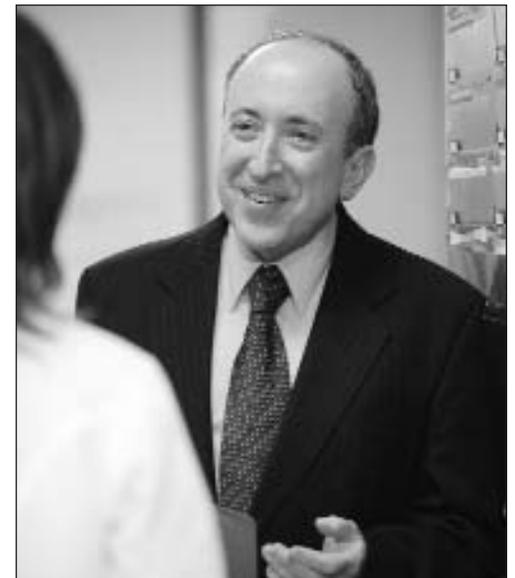
Dr. Levine is a highly respected physician within the greater community. He has been a member of the **National**

Association for the Dually Diagnosed (NADD) since 1995 and is a founding member of the **Long Island Psychiatrists in Developmental Disabilities**. Dr. Levine is also a member of the **American Psychiatric Association**, the **New York State Psychiatric Society**, and the **Greater Long Island Psychiatric Society**.

As patients, families, and colleagues are quick to point out, Dr. Levine is unassuming, welcoming and always centered on the highest quality service.

"Dr. Levine is always respectful of patients with special needs," said **Marianne**, whose daughter receives services from Dr. Levine. "He is extremely patient, professional and compassionate, and he has a holistic approach to treating the patient and to addressing all aspects of that person's life."

"Dr. Levine is an outstanding clinician, mentor and leader in the developmental disabilities field. He models what community service and



quality medical care is all about," said **Dr. Peter Della Bella**, Director of Clinical Programs for Premier HealthCare. "He has provided community outreach, taken on the most challenging cases, and become one of the best doctors I've ever known."

PHC Welcomes New Physicians and Dentists!

Nancy McAfee, Internal Medicine and Pediatrics, Midtown West



PHC welcomes **Dr. Nancy McAfee**, who received her medical degree at Creighton University School of Medicine in Omaha. She completed her post-graduate training in combined Internal Medicine and Pediatrics at the University of Missouri. She has special understanding of issues related to obesity, women's health and pregnancy.

Paris Arianas, Psychiatry, Pelham Bay



PHC is pleased to welcome **Dr. Paris Arianas**, who received his medical degree at Vanderbilt School of Medicine in Nashville. He completed his post-graduate training at SUNY Stony Brook, where he had a residency in Adult Psychiatry and fellowship in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry. Dr. Arianas is certified by the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology and the American Board of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry.

Srilakshmi Mitta, Internal Medicine and Pediatrics, Midtown West



PHC welcomes **Dr. Srilakshmi Mitta**, a graduate of Brown Medical School. Dr. Mitta completed her residency training at Mount Sinai School of Medicine and was Chief Resident in 2007-2008. In 2006, she received an award for "Outstanding House Staff and Excellence in Teaching" She is certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine.

William Duggan, Neurology and Internal Medicine, Midtown West



Dr. William Duggan is a welcome new addition to PHC's Neurology team. He received his medical degree at SUNY Medical Center College in Brooklyn and completed post-graduate training at St. Vincent's Hospital and at Columbia Presbyterian. He is board certified by the American Board of Neurology and American Board of Internal Medicine.

Albert Speranza, Psychiatry, Brooklyn Heights



PHC welcomes **Dr. Albert Speranza**, who received his medical degree at the Medical College of Wisconsin. He completed his post-graduate training at Mount Sinai Medical Center and at St. Vincent's Hospital. Dr. Speranza is certified by the American Board of Adult Psychiatry and American Board of Addiction Psychiatry.

Robert Hwang, Dentistry, Midtown West



PHC is pleased to welcome **Dr. Robert Hwang** to our Dentistry team. He is a graduate of the Dentistry Program at Columbia University and completed a fellowship in Special Care Dentistry at the Rose F. Kennedy Center. Dr. Hwang has been in private practice since 1995 and has 16 years of experience as an instructor of Pediatric and Special Care Dentistry.

Sun Won, Dentistry, Midtown West



Dr. Sun Won is an important addition to PHC's Dentistry team. She is a graduate of the Dentistry Program at New York University and completed her residency at New York Hospital in Queens, where she provided dental services for people with special needs.

Jessica Petros, Internal Medicine and Pediatrics, Midtown West



Dr. Jessica Petros is a welcome new staff member who received her undergraduate degree from Brown University and graduated from the Mount Sinai School of Medicine. There, she also completed her residency training in the combined fields of Internal Medicine and Pediatrics. Dr. Petros has served as a teaching assistant, mentored high school students and participated in various community outreach programs. She is certified by the American Board of Pediatrics and American Board of Internal Medicine.

"This group of physicians brings a great deal of knowledge and expertise to Premier HealthCare. We are happy to have them as part of our team."

— Dr. David M. Kaufman, Medical Director

Aruna Sheth, Psychiatry, Pelham Bay



Dr. Aruna Sheth is an important addition to PHC's Psychiatry team. Dr. Sheth received her medical degree from India's Calcutta National Medical College. Her post-graduate training at Metropolitan Hospital Center in New York includes a fellowship in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and residency in General Psychiatry. She has been an Attending Psychiatrist in hospitals throughout Queens, the Bronx and upstate New York.

Rajani Lowe, Internal Medicine, Marine Park



We are pleased that **Dr. Rajani Lowe** has joined the Internal Medicine Team at PHC's Marine Park practice. She obtained her medical degree from Bangarole Medical College and was previously Chief Resident of the Department of Internal Medicine at Long Island College Hospital. She is certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine.

Raguh Mitra, Psychiatry, Pelham Bay



PHC welcomes **Dr. Raghu Mitra**, who received his medical degree from Maulana Azad Medical College in India. His post-graduate training includes a diploma in Psychological Medicine from Royal College of Medicine in London and residency in Psychiatry at the New York School of Psychiatry. Dr. Mitra is board certified by the American Board of Psychiatry and the American Board of Neurology.

Health Education Workshops Address Complex Medical Needs

Since 2006, Premier HealthCare's free series of **Health Education Workshops** have become well regarded by service coordinators, residential staff and other professionals serving people with developmental and learning disabilities throughout New York City.

"People with disabilities have complex health care needs," said **Jennifer Shaoul**, Senior Coordinator of **YAI Link**. "These workshops provide an opportunity for Premier Healthcare staff to share our expertise in caring for these individuals. They are a way to bring a community together to discuss how to provide the best possible care for people with disabilities."

Last fall, we continued our series to educate professionals on important health care topics for individuals with disabilities.

Top experts in the field, ranging from doctors, nutritionists, therapists and medical social workers, led 14 workshops throughout October and November at PHC locations in Manhattan, Queens, Brooklyn and the Bronx. They addressed



Abigail Tayman, Supervisor of Occupational Therapy, Premier HealthCare, presents on helping individuals overcome sensory issues.

a variety of topics, including: autism spectrum disorders, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), weight management and nutrition, and psychotropic medication.

We were delighted to learn that many attendees found the workshops to be extremely valuable. Here are some of the comments we received:

"What great and educated speakers!"

"I learned how to help individuals on the autism spectrum disorder better communicate their thoughts and feelings."

"I was very interested in ADHD and learned a lot about how the effects of various medications, particularly how fast they work. Great job!"

"I would like to incorporate some of what I learned into my own occupational therapy practice."

"Very well organized and executed. I learned how to better help people with disabilities lead healthy and meaningful lives. I hope there are more workshops soon."

We are grateful to the New York City Council's "1 in 150" Autism Awareness for providing partial support to this workshop series.

Our next series of health education workshops will take place in the spring. For more information, contact YAI LINK at 1-866-2-YAI-LINK.

Weight and Health Management Program Promotes Balanced Lifestyle

As obesity becomes an increasingly important issue for people with developmental disabilities, their families, and professionals throughout the field, **Premier HealthCare's Weight and Health Management Program** is taking significant measures to help individuals lose weight and make informed nutritional and exercise choices that contribute to a healthy lifestyle. Launched last year, thanks to a generous grant from the **New York Community Trust**, the program is making a difference in the lives of many PHC patients.

"Despite the tremendous volume of media exposure regarding the national obesity epidemic, few of our patients and their families recognize the power of healthy diets in promoting physical and emotional well being," said **Dr. Steven Lowe**, Senior Physician at PHC and Chief of its Weight and Health Management Program. "Our program has been instrumental in spreading the important message of healthful lifestyles to our patients with disabilities."

A Personalized Approach

The Weight and Health Management Program is a collaborative effort between PHC and **YAI/NIPD's Center for Specialty Therapy**. It provides patients with a personalized, multidisciplinary approach that includes coordinated medical and nutrition services, and physical and occupational therapy, as needed. Patients may also receive psychiatric consultations



PHC Nutritionist Jenny Sy provides tips for healthy eating.

to determine if medications which cause significant weight gain can be modified.

"Individuals are making real progress," explained **Melissa Benzuly**, Project Coordinator of the Weight and Health Management Program. "In addition to losing weight, they are exercising more and eating smaller portions, have less pain in their joints, and are more knowledgeable about making healthy choices. The key is to provide education and encouragement so that individuals exercise, however they are able to, eat right, and remain committed."

Support Groups

One of the ways PHC staff helps individuals remain committed is by offering weekly group counseling sessions in Brooklyn Heights. The group, facilitated by **Catherine Conway**, Chief of Nutritional Services, and **Dr. Robert Doty**, Psychiatrist, offers a relaxed, friendly environment for individuals to voice concerns, share stories and support one

another to make healthy food and lifestyle choices. During one session, the group discussed how to read food labels and pick out the "bad ingredients;" at another meeting they talked about the importance of "portion control."

'Despite the tremendous volume of media exposure regarding the national obesity epidemic, few of our patients and their families recognize the power of healthy diets in promoting physical and emotional well being.'

— **Dr. Steven Lowe**

"A group such as this is extremely important," noted Dr. Doty. "It provides regular and sustained opportunities for individuals to express their feelings and get support. I've noticed

increased physical activity and more positive behavior among attendees."

"Another nice thing about our group is that everyone is asked to bring along a sponsor, so that they may receive added support in their home. And the more support you have, the better you are going to do," added Catherine Conway.

'Everyone who comes to our group is very excited to be there. I think they get a lot out of it.'

— **Catherine Conway**

"Everyone who comes to our group is very excited to be there. I think they get a lot out of it. One person, for example, had difficulty controlling how much she eats. We played a game with Hershey's Kisses, in which we encouraged everyone to eat the chocolate in as many bites possible. This person ate the small chocolate in 32 bites, and that helped her understand how to savor her food and control her portions."

Catherine also runs a nutritional support group to help individuals with developmental disabilities that have diabetes maintain a healthy, balanced diet.

PHC's Weight and Health Management Program is currently offered at our Brooklyn Heights center, and will be starting in Manhattan soon. For more information, contact YAI LINK at 1-866-2-YAI-LINK.

Meet PHC's Autism Fellow: Dr. Maria McCarthy



Premier Health Care (PHC) is proud to announce **Dr. Maria McCarthy** as our new Autism Fellow. Dr. McCarthy joins PHC as part of our ongoing partnership with **Mount Sinai School of Medicine (MSSM)** and its **Seaver and New York Autism Center for Excellence**.

As a PHC Autism Fellow, Dr. McCarthy shares duties between both organizations, performing clinical work, including evaluations; serving as a liaison to facilitate patient referral and coordination of care, sharing up-to-date ASD research and information with our clinical staff, and contributing to newsletter articles and presentations at our conferences and lecture series.

"I was particularly interested in this fellowship because Premier HealthCare is the model for providing patient care to people with developmental disabilities," said Dr. McCarthy.

Dr. McCarthy brings with her a vast knowledge of autism spectrum disorders. She was previously a Fellow of Child and

Adolescent Psychiatry, and Psychiatry Resident at the Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic in Pittsburgh. She was a contributing author to a chapter on Child and Adolescent Psychiatry in the Oxford Handbook of Psychiatry and wrote articles on developmental biology and neuroscience for several other peer-reviewed publications. Additionally, Dr. McCarthy has done extensive research on the effects of various medications on children and adults with autism.

"Dr. McCarthy's extensive background is helping PHC gain a deeper understanding of treating people on the autism spectrum. Her work, and our partnership with Mount Sinai, is pivotal," said **Dr. Peter Della Bella**, Director of Clinical Programs.

'I was particularly interested in this fellowship because Premier HealthCare is the model for providing patient care to people with developmental disabilities.'

— **Dr. Maria McCarthy**

For more information visit **YAI/NIPD's Autism Center website: www.yai.org/autism**



YAI Autism Center

Premier HealthCare is a network of innovative medical practices which offer a full range of quality, state-of-the-art primary care, medical specialty, dental, rehabilitation and mental health services specifically designed for people with acquired and developmental disabilities and their families. Our locations include:

Manhattan

Midtown West
460 W. 34th Street
Entrance at 406
Tenth Avenue
New York, NY 10001
212-273-6515

Brooklyn

Brooklyn Heights
175 Remsen Street
Brooklyn, NY 11201
718-306-1300

Marine Park
3364 Nostrand Avenue
Brooklyn, NY 11229
718-743-3850

The Center for Assistive Technology at Brooklyn College
Boylan Hall
2900 Bedford Avenue
Brooklyn, NY 11210
718-421-7635

Bronx

Pelham Bay
3060 E. Tremont Avenue
Bronx, NY 10461
718-239-1790

Queens

Bayside
211-11 Northern Boulevard
Bayside, NY 11361
718-705-1000

Part-time service locations are also offered in Queens.

For referrals to health care services or to any of the programs offered through the YAI/NIPD Network, call **YAI LINK** at 1-866-2-YAI-LINK (1-866-292-4546). For TDD, call 212-290-2787.



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