

SEPTEMBER 2024

System MEC and Hospital Medical Staff

Operating Council Reports

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Sept. 17 is National Physician Suicide Awareness Day

A Message from Iahn Gonsenhauser, M.D., MBA, Chief Medical Officer

National Physician Suicide Awareness Day is a time for us to reflect on the challenges that disproportionately affect physicians and all healthcare workers. Particularly those that affect our mental well-being. The statistics are unsettling: Physicians have one of the highest suicide rates of any profession. More than half of physicians know a physician who has either considered, attempted or died by suicide in their career. It is estimated that a million Americans lose their physician to suicide each year. That's 300-400 physicians lost to suicide every year.

National Physician Suicide Awareness Day encourages us to talk about mental health—and to act (not just today, but year-round)—so mental health struggles don't become mental health emergencies. The National Physician Suicide Awareness Day website, www.npsaday.org, has resources for immediate and ongoing support, as well as guidance on what to look for in someone who may be suicidal. Check out the "Take Action" section of the website and please start a

conversation and take action if warranted. Help is also available 24/7 by dialing 988 to reach the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline.

We recognize the pressure, challenges and struggles our physicians and the entire healthcare team face and the impact it can have on our well-being. We care about you; you are never alone and help is always available.



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Night Prescription Availability at Gulf Coast Medical Center

Since July of 2023, the Lee Health Pharmacy at Gulf Coast Medical Center has been available for prescription dispensing 24/7, 365 days a year. If a patient requires urgent overnight pharmacy services (8 p.m. to 8 a.m.), providers can e-prescribe prescriptions to the pharmacy at Gulf Coast Medical Center. Patients are then routed to the Gulf Coast Medical Center Emergency Department waiting area where they can communicate with the pharmacy via an intercom and prescriptions will be delivered to them by a pharmacist. Although the majority of overnight patients originate from Lee Health Emergency Departments, any Lee Health physician can route “urgent-to-start” patient prescriptions after 8 p.m. to the pharmacy at Gulf Coast Medical Center via this process. This service is not designed for routine non-urgent prescriptions or traditional paper prescriptions.

Submit articles for future issues of Medical Staff News to:

Yolene.DenisSaint@LeeHealth.org

Lee Health | Lee Health Corporate Center | Ft. Myers, FL 33916 US

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