

Expanding TO MEET YOUR NEEDS

With a recent redesign, clinic expansion and another doctor added to the practice, **Heathrow Internal Medicine** in Lake Mary is growing with the community.

By Kevin Fritz

Primary care providers are the first line of defense. From urgent care to chronic cases, the initial step in getting better is to see your doctor, and for adults, there is no better option than internists, better known as doctors of internal medicine.

Since they are primary care providers, people come to doctors of internal medicine largely from positive word-of-mouth experiences relayed by family and friends. That's how the majority of patients have come to know about the comprehensive care at **Heathrow Internal Medicine** in Lake Mary. For those who have been in the area for a few years, you may know it as the former Lake Mary Primary Care, but my how things have changed.

Two doctors, **Dr. Jesse W. Johnson Jr.**, and **Dr. Diwya Uday Ranjit**—one from Gator nation, one schooled in India—along with nurse practitioner **Rita K. King** and practice manager **Katryna Elmer** have not only changed the name of the practice, but just completed an expansion and beautiful new redesign of their office space so they can treat more patients and make everyone's experience more enjoyable. They now have 12 exam rooms where they once had six. Their space went from 2,400 to 3,200 square feet. And they have added new insurance companies to their acceptance directory.

According to Elmer, the project also incorporated some "green" attributes into the redesign. Energy efficient light bulbs are now used throughout the space, low-flow toilets were installed in the two new bathrooms, and the build-out side of the project has automatic lights that turn themselves off once sensing no activity after a few minutes. In addition, the office consists of all wood floors and no carpet,



Dr. Diwya Ranjit examines a patient.

MICHAEL CAIRNS, WET ORANGE STUDIOS

which is now known to breed allergens. The expansion, which was conducted by Design Enterprises, located in Altamonte Springs, gave Heathrow Internal Medicine room for more staff, storage, and space for a laboratory that is scheduled to open Jan. 1, 2010.

The redesign is now complete, and soon additional staff and providers will join the ranks. All employees at Heathrow Internal Medicine are professionally employed by Hospital Corporation of America Physician Services (HCAPS) and Dr. Ranjit, Dr. Johnson, and King are referred to as providers. The goal now is to add three more providers to the practice, and Elmer says they will have to build up their current support staff of seven to keep things running smoothly.

"I am very excited about the expansion," says Dr. Ranjit, who recently joined the team in March. She says the new office space allows the practice more opportunities to help people, whose most common ailments are diabetes, high cholesterol and high blood pressure.

Different Paths, Same Goals

Dr. Ranjit had quite a diverse path leading her to Heathrow Internal Medicine this year to join the practice established by Dr. Johnson and Dr. Dennis Abraham 22 years ago. It all started when she left her home in Uganda to attend medical school at the University of Bombay in India. After graduation and upon completing her residency in 1984, she immigrated to the United States shortly after much of Africa experienced the torment of Idi Amin. After finishing her required second residency in Flint, Michigan, she moved to Central Florida where she has been practicing medicine for more than 18 years. Today, she lives in Longwood with her husband, a physician, and has two daughters who are both attending medical school at the University of South Florida.

Dr. Johnson grew up in Orlando and attended Edgewater High School. He completed his undergraduate work at the University of Central Florida. And he's a Gator, graduating medical school from the University of Florida in 1984. After his three years of residency in Savannah, Ga., he came home to join the practice of his childhood doctor in Sanford, Dr. Robert Smith. Two years later, Dr. Johnson formed Lake Mary Primary Care with Dr. Abraham, who recently

moved out of state. Dr. Johnson and his wife still live in Seminole County, sharing their home in Longwood with their dog and cat. They have three grown children, one of



Jesse W. Johnson, Jr., MD

Primary Care Provider, Heathrow Internal Medicine
Masters, Microbiology, 1979, University of Central Florida
Doctor of Medicine, 1984, University of Florida,
Board Certified American Board of Internal Medicine.



Diwya U. Ranjit, MD

Primary Care Provider, Heathrow Internal Medicine
Bachelor of Medicine and Surgery, 1979, University of Bombay
Doctor of Medicine, 1984, University of Bombay,
Board Eligible American Board of Internal Medicine.



Rita K. King, ARNP

Primary Care Provider, Heathrow Internal Medicine
Bachelor of Science in Nursing, 1992, Capital University
Master of Science, 1995, University of South Florida,
Board Certified American Nurses Credentialing Center.

whom is heading to medical school.

Although Dr. Johnson has Orange and Blue running through his blood, he also considers himself a Knight. He received his graduate degree in microbiology there before heading off to UF. He later helped transform the pre-med curriculum at UCF by adding a mentoring and shadowing program.

UCF has not forgotten their prodigious son. In 2007, he was honored with the first UCF College of Medicine Professional Achievement Award.

King, who has more than 12 years under her belt working as a nurse practitioner and has been in the medical field since the late 1970s, rounds off the decades-long experience of Heathrow Internal Medicine's providers.

Dedication and Commitment

Experience and dedication is evident everywhere at Heathrow Internal Medicine. Dr. Johnson, for example, has been practicing internal medicine for 24 years and 22 of them have been in the same building. And through the years, as the Medplex in Lake Mary where his office is located has been upgraded, so has the practice. Tenfold.

"Now we want to build Heathrow Internal Medicine," Dr. Johnson says, noting the providers changed the name of the practice to coincide with the expansion of the office space.

"There are not enough practitioners for adults," Dr. Johnson explains, estimating there

are only four to five such offices with doctors still practicing in the Lake Mary-Heathrow area. "There is a primary care crisis in America. There are very few of us who care for people who are chronically ill."

And now the entire staff, led by Dr. Johnson, Dr. Ranjit and nurse practitioner Rita King, is out to change the course of health care in Central Florida.

The Underserved will be Served

Dr. Johnson says the challenge before them is caring for the community as Baby Boomers continue to age.

If you are an adult, that's why having a doctor of internal medicine is so important to have. Whether you are feeling tired or your arm hurts, Dr. Johnson says finding out if what ails you is serious or simply needs to be monitored, is what internists do

best. Think of internists as family doctors for adults, although internists tend to become more involved with the patient's lifestyle and delve into much more detail than a family physician, adds Dr. Ranjit.

Internists are essentially several doctors in one, and many times must diagnose and treat patients with a variety of ailments all in one visit.

And in an era of constant chatter about rising health care costs, Heathrow Internal Medicine staff do their best by thoroughly investigating the most cost-effective treatment plan.

Dr. Ranjit adds that she chose to come aboard Heathrow Internal Medicine because of the staff's attention to not just being a quick-fix clinic, but a practice that wants to build relationships with patients and the community.

"It's nice to see how you can help somebody," Dr. Ranjit says about being a doctor. "When somebody gets better, it makes me feel good."



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