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## Building relationships

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know  
residents  
and  
families*



Life is both exhilarating and peaceful for Heather Tipton, an LPN at Bradford Village and also a BMX dirt bike racer.

by James Coburn, Staff Writer

Building relationships is what Heather Tipton is all about. She enjoys the team of professionals she works with at Bradford Village where she works as an LPN and MDS coordinator in Edmond.

"I love what I do. I love being MDS coordinator and being able to see the different aspects of each department and how it correlates with each resident, she said.

Tipton earned her nursing license in 2008 after graduating from Platt College in Oklahoma City. Her career has always centered upon geriatrics and she came to Bradford Village four years ago.

See TIPTON Page 3

## Peace of mind Home Companion Solutions provides safety with loving touch

by James Coburn, Staff Writer

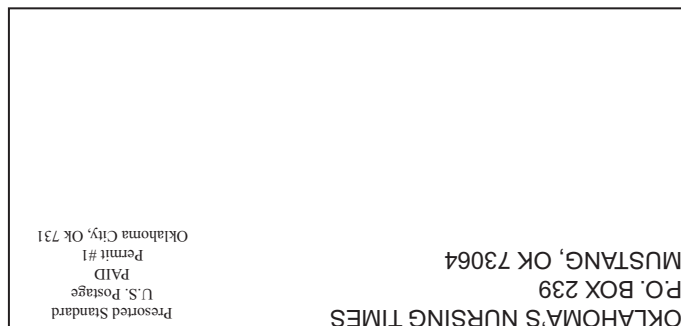
Home Companion Solutions treats it's clients like family. It is a private duty care company for senior adults, said Ashley Smith, office manager and co-owner. Home Companion Solutions is a branch of Integrity Senior Care which offers hospice, palliative care and home health.

Integrity Senior Care has been in business since 2009 with Home Companion Services joining about a year ago, Smith said.

"We do companionship for those who are home-bound," Smith said. "And we provide companionships, socialization. We have meal preparation; we take care of their plants, their animals, office appointments, beauty shops and things like that."

She said the companions have great worth ethics and are good team players. They communicate well and are very nurturing, she said. All of the clients are ambulatory for the non-medical company.

See HOME Page 2



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## HOME

Continued from Page 1

"Some of them are in a wheelchair so they can transfer themselves. Most of them have walkers," she said "We are there basically to provide comfort and safety measures."

Home Companion Solutions looks for things in the home to provide optimum security, including fire hazards and fall risks. Some of the clients live with dementia so the caregivers make sure the clients will not wander away from the safety of their homes.

Clients are kept safe during severe weather alerts. The company has contracts with nursing homes to shield loved ones in a safe place.

"We make sure that they are safe, make sure the doors are locked and there are fire alarms, smoke alarms. We remove rugs and any type of fall hazards," she said.

Smith said she enjoys the appreciation that the company receives from family members. The clients, themselves, are not the decision makers, she said. Rather the family is very communicative, even when living far away.

"They always keep in touch with us," Smith said. "We keep them

abreast of their loved ones. Peace of mind is what they're wanting to know their loved ones are being taken care of. That is what we look for from them so that their support is there.

"We don't really look for much from our clients themselves because some of them are not even aware of the present state they may be in."

Some of the clients may not be open to even having a caregiver, Smith said. But the companion caregivers are trained to understand the concept of care so that they are not overwhelmed. There are boundaries established, Smith said. There is an orientation for the companions to understand the process of aging along with the expectations and the realization of dementia. She said the companions will be there to lovingly take care of what the client with dementia can no longer provide for themselves.

Each of the companions is certified through the Department of Health Nurse Registry application. They must be a certified nurse aide or a home health companion, Smith said.

"If they are not certified, they have experience, and we send them to get certification."

Home Companion Solutions also collaborates with separate hospice programs. Companions will be there when other professional services come to the home such as home health, Smith said.

"That's really good. It enhances the whole realm of care because the caregivers can learn, too, from the other people, the other professionals that are coming in,"

Smith's life is enriched knowing that she communicates effectively with the caregivers and family members. So as a team, Home Companion Solutions will know whenever a different course of action is necessary to take. They want to ensure that the caregiver is the right match for the client due to personality types.

"So we will have in-services where our aides or homemakers would come together and discuss the client without calling a name for HIPAA policy," she said.

A supervisor will visit the home at times to speak to the client without the caregiver being present. Companions are people who don't come to work for a pay check. This is their calling, Smith said.

"They are very compassionate. They are nurturing," she said. "They treat that client like a family member."



photo by James Coburn

Judith King, caretaker; Betty Miller, client; and Christa Melvin, team member enjoy each other's company provided by Home Companion Solutions

Sometimes the companion gives up Christmas and other holidays to spend with their client in need. Often the client may not have family who can be present at the time, she said. If a companion is with a client all year and wants Christmas day off, the client would have no one to

consider as family present.

"So when we're interviewing them that's one of the first things we look for," she said. "We are family here."

The company accepts long-term care insurance, private pay and veterans' assistance.

## Special Event: August 19, 2017

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## TIPTON

Continued from Page 1

She loves the parent company Brookdale and the residents she serves and cares for at Bradford Village, she said. Bradford Village opened in 1957 as a mission of the Disciples of Christ. About 15 years ago, the Oklahoma Christian Home was sold. Today many residents call Bradford Village their home at 906 N. Boulevard in Edmond.

Nurses know that Bradford Village is the residents' home. And they are treated with the dignity and respect of being at home.

Residents chose what they want to eat from menus provided to them at every breakfast, lunch and dinner. They have the option of using the dining services or eating in their rooms.

"Between the residents and the residents being like extra grandmas and grandpas, I've built a lot of relationships here with the staff," Tipton said.

Tipton spends a lot of time educating the residents and staff. She said the nursing staff are all very caring about the residents and consider them as family.

"They have all got close relationships and know the residents' little quirks and personalities," she said. "A lot of time I sit here with my office door open and I can hear everything the nurses and the staff are talking about with the residents. It's like sitting around a family dinner table listening to the family interact."

Her experience of building relationships with the family members and the residents throughout the cycle of life is comforting, she said. She reinforces family members emotionally by letting them know it's alright not to experience feelings of guilt along the journey.

"Just being there and being a support system is really one aspect that I get complete job fulfillment from," she continued.

Being there is sitting in the residents' room sharing conversations, she said. She always learns additional bits of information about them to build upon their care plan.

"One resident I have - I'll go in there and we'll sit and talk for a while and it's another story," she

said. "They open up their lives to you. And the fact they do that and they share their life story with you I think is amazing, because then that becomes something in my life that I get fulfillment from, enjoyment just having them. Tipton loves building friendships with them."

"So I really like that and the next time I go in there, I'll talk to a resident who will say, 'Oh you remember so and so I just talked about?' I just talked to him on the phone."

Being an MDS coordinator requires being very detail oriented. The task requires a lot of auditing. She sends regulatory information to the state and federal government agencies. Her career takes a lot of energy, so she spends her leisure time rejuvenating by racing BMX bikes on light motor cross tracks. Tipton competes in local and national races or sometimes just enjoys watching her son and husband as they ride.

"It's really cool right now. They're having the UCI World races being held here in the United States. So I watch my fellow friends and a lot of people at a

local track in Oklahoma have won first place. So that's really cool," she said.

She races on the dirt but does not do any of the flips while racing. There are eight slots on a gate so when the gate drops they go through as many of the obstacles as they can. Tipton and her husband will also perform dirt jumps at the Oklahoma City Boat House District.

"I like to jump," she said. "It normally takes about 45 seconds to do a lap on a BMX track."

It keeps her in shape, too. Being a nurse will often require constant movement, she said, so racing helps her to keep up the pace.

There are times when some residents may get a little anxious, needing one-on-one attention.

"So you really got to be on your game," she said. "I love what I do. I wouldn't change it for the world and that's why I'm here."



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# CAREERS IN NURSING

## A HELPING HAND: ADON PAYS CLOSE ATTENTION TO DETAIL

by James Coburn - Writer/Photographer

Victoria Burdine was not raised with her grandparents. They were deceased, she said, regarding her childhood in Louisiana. Burdine always was the family member who cleaned house and cared for elderly people in her neighborhood in a little town named Rayne.

"I enjoyed it," said Burdine, LPN, ADON and wound care nurse at Tuscany Nursing Center in Oklahoma City.

Burdine has been a nurse since 2009 and has always served in long-term care. She was a proud CNA for 15 years. Becoming a CNA was a smooth adjustment for Burdine after cleaning neighbors' homes and running errands at the store for them.

"That's my passion. A grandmother I could talk to and a grandmother -- I didn't have that," she said. "So I take these residents here as my grandparents."

She began working at Tuscany

Nursing Center on the day it opened. There was one resident and Burdine was working the night shift, she said. Burdine was the LPN on the floor, and four months later she was asked to become the wound nurse. In early July she added the credential of certified wound nurse to her resume. Certification required rigorous study and taking a test.

"I started at 7 p.m. Sunday night and finished at 3 a.m. in the morning," Burdine said. "So I am a board certified wound nurse."

There were a lot of things she was already doing as a wound nurse, but she also learned a lot, she said. The extra education was valuable for her and also added job security to her career, she said.

Burdine said she admires that the nursing staff works well together as a team. At 3 p.m. everyday a few of the residents join her in her office for coffee and cookies. She loves it and said there is something

about them that reflects her passion for the elderly.

Residents are of all ages. Some of them are in their 30s and 40s and she loves them, too. Some have been in accidents.

"You never know. It's sad. I have a few that's younger than me," she said. "It is true that back in the day our grandparents would be in a nursing home, but these days it's really young people, too."

Burdine said it's important to let the residents have choices. If they don't feel like taking a bath at a certain time they can choose a later time.

"If there are certain things they want to eat -- let them do it," she said. "Just give them that freedom of choice. That plays an important role."

Every once in a while Burdine will work in the skilled nursing unit when needed. Skilled nurses need to pay attention to detail and

understand their role as a nurse, she said.

"There's some hard work back there," she said.

For long-term care a nurse needs to be compassionate, Burdine continued. Nurses without compassion and a love for their job will burnout and not make it in the industry.

"I love my job and I'm very compassionate," Burdine said. "There's things I do for a couple of people out of my pocket. Ladies like wigs. They like makeup. Some of them do have family and their family does not come. So I take out of my money and I buy them what they want."

"If you're here for the money it's the wrong place to be."

One of the residents has a 90-year-old mom that called Burdine from Las Vegas. She wanted to say

Continued on next page


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Victoria Burdine is in her niche caring for residents at Tuscany Village Nursing Center.

how appreciative she is of Burdine for taking the time for her daughter to pay attention to small things.

"That means a lot," Burdine said. "In my mind, the one thing I keep saying is, 'This may be me one day.' You know I wish somebody would take the time out if that happens to be me."

"I want that same person like I am today to be caring. Take a little minute and just listen."

Burdine tells the CNAs that the residents could be their kids. Across the U.S. nurses and CNAs need to stop what they're caught up in life

and pay more attention to detail, she said.

"Just listen because really that's all they want you to do," Burdine said. "So I always say this could be me."

Currently Burdine is also caring for her mother who came to Oklahoma from Louisiana. She visits Burdine in the summertime.

When returning to Tuscany Village her residents are glad to see her. One of the residents called her at home and Burdine was happy to bring her a hamburger.

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Immediate openings for PCAs, CNAs, and HHAs in the OKC Metro area to care for individuals in their homes. Must be 18 years of age or older and able to pass the OKScreen background check. Exp. a plus but will train the right candidates. RN/PRN requires Valid OK License. Please contact Karen Mangan, RN,BA,CM at (405) 256-2998 or (405) 443-1018 if you are interested in a position with us.

**204 REGISTERED NURSE**

### We are seeking Full-time Pre-Op Registered Nurse with experience

at Eye Surgery Center of Tulsa located at 7191 South Yale Avenue, Tulsa, OK 74136. In search of a full time Pre-Op Registered Nurse with experience. We are a fast paced outpatient surgery center. Great pay and benefits. No nights, weekends, holidays or call.

### We are seeking an exceptional Registered Nurse Leader.

Soon to open elegant, assisted living community on the campus of St John Broken Arrow is seeking an **exceptional RN leader**. Skilled in utilizing positive management, extraordinary communication skills, geriatric nursing and sense of humor! Prairie House Assisted Living & Memory Care 2450 N Stone Ridge Dr, Broken Arrow, OK 74012

**204 REGISTERED NURSE**

### We are seeking dedicated Registered Nurse (RN).

Inverness Village is seeking a dedicated Registered Nurse (RN) to work in our Skilled Nursing department. As an RN, your responsibilities will include but not limited to providing direct nursing care to residents as well as supervising day-to-day nursing activities. Successful candidates must be dependable, compassionate, have good time management and communication skills and have a desire to work with the elderly. They must also have the flexibility to work various shift times to include: evenings, weekends, holidays and nights. Associates receive free access to our on-campus gym, on-going training opportunities, and a work environment rich in our philosophy of valuing associates. Working at Inverness Village can provide you with rewards that extend far beyond pay and benefits. You can be fulfilled both personally and professionally. 3800 W 71st St, Tulsa, OK 74132



# 10-Year-Old Boy Hospitalized for 236 Days *Finally Goes Home*

Austin Norton, of Little Axe, Okla., first came to INTEGRIS Baptist Medical Center on Nov. 26, 2016 with third degree burns covering more than 77 percent of his body. He was just nine years old at the time and had been injured in a bon fire accident.

Little did he know then, that he would spend the next 236 days in the hospital.

Austin would endure multiple surgeries and a variety of different treatments during his extended stay. He celebrated his tenth birthday within the hospital walls; as well as Christmas, New Years, and all of the major holidays since.

He finally got to go home Thurs., July 20, 2017.

To date, he is the largest pediatric burn injury ever treated at INTEGRIS. The Paul Silverstein Burn Center opened in 1975, and since that time the facility has treated mostly adults. Oklahoma children routinely had to be sent out of state to receive specialized burn care – until recently.

Working closely with the INTEGRIS Children's Pediatric Unit at INTEGRIS Baptist, the burn center started accepting some pediatric patients in late 2013. They started with small burns and have slowly begun to see children with a greater percent of burns.

To signify the eight months Austin spent in the hospital, he was allowed to ring the hospital bell eight times upon his departure. One ring for

each month he was hospitalized.

The Oklahoma State Firefighters Association loaned the burn center an actual fire bell from its museum to be used specifically for children. Upon discharge, pediatric burn survivors ring the bell to signify their personal victory and medical accomplishment. A similar bell in the burn unit is for adult use.

Austin & Dr. Lentz "We feel this is a fitting and symbolic way to applaud all burn survivors, regardless of their age, for their determination and hard work, and to recognize the courage and bravery it takes to overcome this type of devastating injury," says Christopher Lentz, M.D., medical director of the Paul Silverstein Burn Center.

Austin still has a long road ahead of him that includes more surgery and months, possibly years, of rehabilitation. But on this day, he got to live a childhood dream. The Little Axe Fire Department picked him up from the hospital and took him home riding in the front-seat of a firetruck.





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## Oklahoma's Nursing Times Hospice Directory

- another free service provided by Oklahoma's Nursing Times -

**Alpha Hospice:** 7512 N Broadway Ext., suite 312  
Okc, 405-463-5695 Keith Ruminer/volunteer  
coordinator/chaplain

**Autumn Bridge Hospice:** 405-440-2440

**Autumn Light Hospice:** 580-252-1266

**Carter Healthcare & Hospice:** OKC - OKC  
Pat McGowen, Vol. Coordinator, 405-947-7705, ext.  
134; Tulsa - Samantha Estes, Vol. Coordinator,  
918-425-4000

**Centennial Hospice:** Becky Johnson,  
Bereavement Coordinator 405-562-1211

**Choice Home Health & Hospice:**  
405-879-3470

**Comforting Hands Hospice:** Bartlesville:  
918-331-0003

**Companion Hospice:**  
Steve Hickey, Vol. Coordinator, Guthrie:  
405-282-3980; Edmond: 405-341-9751

**Compassionate Care Hospice:** Amy Legare,  
Bereavement/Vol. Coordinator, 405-948-4357

**Cornerstone Hospice:** Vicky Herrington, Vol.  
Coordinator, 918-641-5192

**Crossroads Hospice:** Elizabeth Horn, Vol.  
Coordinator, 405-632-9631

**Cross Timbers Hospice:** Ardmore-  
800-498-0655 Davis-580-369-5335 Volunteer  
Coordinator-Shelly Murray

**Excell Hospice:** Toni K. Cameron, Vol.  
Coordinator 405-631-0521

**Faith Hospice of OKC:** Charlene Kilgore, Vol.  
Coordinator, 405-840-8915

**Frontier Hospice:** Amber Cerney, Vol.  
Coordinator, 405-789-2913

**Golden Age Hospice:** 405-735-5121

**Good Shepherd Hospice:** 4350 Will Rogers  
Parkway Suite 400 OKC OK 73108 405-943-0903

**Grace Hospice Foundation:** Sharon Doty, Dir  
of Spec. Projects - Tulsa 918-744-7223

**Harbor Light Hospice:** Randy Pratt, Vol.  
Coordinator, 1009 N Meridian, Oklahoma City, OK  
73107 405-949-1200

**Horizon Hospice:** LaDonna Rhodes, Vol.  
Coordinator, 918-473-0505

**Heartland Hospice:** Shawnee: Vol. Coord. Karen  
Cleveland, 405-214-6442; OKC: Vol. Coord. Tricia  
Woodward, 405-579-8565

**Heavenly Hospice:** Julie Myers, Coordinator  
405-701-2536

**Hope Hospice:** Bartlesville: 918-333-7700,  
Claremore: 918-343-0777 Owasso: 918-272-3060

**Hospice by Loving Care:** Connie McDivitt,  
Vol. Coordinator, 405-872-1515

**Hospice of Green Country:** Tulsa:  
918-747-2273, Claremore: 918-342-1222, Sapulpa:  
918-224-7403

**INTEGRIS Hospice, Inc. & the INTEGRIS  
Hospice House:** Ruth Ann Frick, Vol.  
Coordinator, 405-848-8884

**Hospice of Owasso, Inc.:** Todd A. Robertson,  
Dir. of Marketing, 877-274-0333

**Humanity Hospice:** Sala Caldwell, Vol.  
Coordinator 405-418-2530

**InFinity Care of Tulsa:** Spencer Brazeal, Vol.  
Director, 918-392-0800

**Indian Territory Home Health & Hospice:**  
1-866-279-3975

**Interim Healthcare Hospice:** 405-848-3555

**Image HealthCare :** 6116 S. Memorial Tulsa,  
Ok. 74133 (918) 622-4799

**LifeChoice Hospice:** Christy Coppenbarger,  
RN, Executive Director. 405-842-0171

**LifeSpring In-Home Care Network:** Terry  
Boston, Volunteer and Bereavement Coordinator  
405-801-3768

**LifeLine Hospice:** April Moon, RN Clinical  
Coordinator 405-222-2051

**Mercy Hospice:** Sandy Schuler, Vol.  
Coordinator, 405-486-8600

**Mission Hospice L.L.C.:** 2525 NW Expressway,  
Ste. 312 OKC, OK 73112 405-848-3779

**Oklahoma Hospice Care:** 405-418-2659  
Jennifer Forrester, Community Relations Director

**One Health Home Health in Tulsa:**  
918-412-7200

**Palliative Hospice:** Janet Lowder, Seminole, &  
Sabrina Johnson, Durant, 800-648-1655

**Physician's Choice Hospice:** Tim Clausing,  
Vol. Coordinator 405-936-9433

**Professional Home Hospice:** Sallisaw:  
877-418-1815; Muskogee: 866-683-9400; Poteau:  
888-647-1378

**PromiseCare Hospice:** Angela Shelton, LPN -  
Hospice Coordinator, Lawton: (580) 248-1405

**Quality Life Hospice:** 405 486-1357

**RoseRock Healthcare:** Audrey McCraw,  
Admin. 918-236-4866

**Ross Health Care:** Glenn LeBlanc, Norman,  
Chickasha; April Burrows, Enid; Vol. Coordinators,  
580-213-3333

**Russell Murray Hospice:** Tambi Urias,  
Vol. Coordinator, 405-262-3088; Kingfisher  
405-375-5015; Weatherford-580-774-2661

**Seasons Hospice:** Carolyn Miller, Vol. /  
Bereavement Coordinator, 918-745-0222

**Sequoyah Memorial Hospice:**  
Vernon Stone, D. Min. Chaplin, Vol. Coordinator,  
918-774-1171

**Sooner Hospice, LLC:**  
Matt Ottis, Vol. Coordinator, 405-608-0555

## Merck Manuals Survey: 88% of Nurse Practitioners Spend at Least Half of Appointment Times on Patient Education *95% of NPs believe their patients attempt to diagnose themselves prior to appointments*

Nurse practitioners play a crucial role in helping patients decode medical information, according to the findings of a Merck Manuals survey released today. The survey of 210 NPs, conducted at a recent medical conference, revealed that most (88 percent) believe they spend at least half of appointment times educating patients on diagnoses, treatments and prescriptions.

A majority of NPs (78 percent) do prefer their patients do research ahead of appointments. However, many patients tend to turn that research into assumed diagnoses. Ninety-five percent of NPs say most of their patients attempt to diagnose themselves prior to appointments.

This is particularly concerning given that when asked to characterize the health literacy of patients, nearly half (45 percent) said their patients' lack of understanding is a barrier to maintaining their health. Forty-eight percent said their patients understand enough to follow basic treatment instructions, and just seven percent said patients are knowledgeable, with specific ideas about their treatment.

"Today, effective patient care requires NPs to help their patients cut through the clutter of medical misinformation," said Dr. Robert S. Porter, M.D., Merck Manuals Editor-in-Chief. "A little bit of research before an appointment can help educate patients, but only if they reference a credible source and plan to discuss their findings with their healthcare professional."

According to the survey, NPs believe their patients prepare for appointments in several ways:

- \* Doing online research (59 percent);
- \* Talking to a physician/nurse they know (31 percent);
- \* Printing materials to bring to the appointment (10 percent).

But about half (51 percent) say their patients don't prepare for appointments at all.

"Sometimes patients see a commercial on TV and research it, and automatically diagnose themselves

with a condition they don't necessarily have. Then they want therapy or treatment that's not appropriate," said Jessica, an NP from Austin, TX, surveyed at the conference. "So one of the biggest challenges is working through the misinformation, and educating them as to why they don't have what they think they have."

When asked about the top factors challenging the nurse practitioner/patient relationship, half of respondents ranked shortened appointment times as the most crucial, followed by low health literacy and increased dependency on paperwork/digital records.

"Physicians and NPs can help their patients prepare to discuss their medical condition and treatment options," Dr. Porter said. "This is especially important as more patients access medical information online. Having a free resource like MerckManuals.com for consumers and professionals allows NPs to quickly share trusted medical information, written in understandable language."

Learn more about the Merck Manuals' mission to make the best medical information freely accessible to 3 billion consumers and healthcare professionals around the world by 2020 at MerckManuals.com.

First published in 1899 as a small reference book for physicians and pharmacists, The Merck Manual grew in size and scope to become one of the world's most widely used comprehensive medical resources for professionals and consumers. As The Manual evolved, it continually expanded the reach and depth of its offerings to reflect the mission of providing the best medical information to a wide cross-section of users, including medical professionals and students, veterinarians and veterinary students, and consumers. In 2015, The Merck Manual kicked off Global Medical Knowledge 2020, a program to make the best current medical information accessible by up to three billion professionals and patients around the world by 2020.

The Hospice Directory above does not represent a list of all Hospice facilities statewide. For a complete list visit [www.ok.gov/health](http://www.ok.gov/health)



## MATERNAL-FETAL MEDICINE SPECIALIST JOINS PRACTICE

Blake W. Porter, M.D., a maternal-fetal medicine specialist, has joined the staff of OU Physicians. He has also been named an assistant professor with the University of Oklahoma College of Medicine.

Maternal-Fetal Medicine physicians -- also called perinatologists -- are obstetrician-gynecologists who completed additional training in the diagnosis, treatment and ongoing care of complicated pregnancies. Porter is specifically interested in working with patients with maternal congenital heart disease and diabetes, as well as twin gestations and fetal anomalies.

Porter is board certified in obstetrics and gynecology and board eligible in maternal-fetal medicine. He completed a fellowship in maternal-fetal medicine at the University of Missouri at Kansas City. He completed his residency and internship at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. He earned his medical degree at the OU College of Medicine.

Porter is a Fellow of the Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine and Association for Maternal-Fetal Medicine Management. He is a Junior Fellow of the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists.

OU Physicians maternal-fetal medicine specialists see patients on the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center Campus. For an appointment with an OU Physicians maternal-fetal medicine specialist, call (405) 271-5400.

With more than 975 doctors and advanced practice providers, OU Physicians is the state's largest physician group. The practice encompasses almost every adult and child specialty. Many OU Physicians have expertise in the management of complex conditions that is unavailable anywhere else in the state, region or sometimes even the nation. Some have pioneered surgical procedures or innovations in patient care that are world firsts.



**Vicki L Mayfield, M.Ed., R.N., LMFT Marriage and Family Therapy Oklahoma City**

*If you would like to send a question to Vicki, email us at [news@okcnursingtimes.com](mailto:news@okcnursingtimes.com)*

**Q. My wife has been trying to get me to go to marriage counseling but I don't really want to. I just can't see how it could be that beneficial. What should I expect if I decide to go?**

**---- Eric**

A. Marriage counseling (couple counseling, couple's mediation) gives the couple an opportunity to have an unbiased trained professional to assist in problem solving with a healthier perspective.

The universal problem sending couples to therapy is unhealthy communication; it dictates the outcome of every issue. The presenting issue may be financial distress, lack of intimacy, differing opinions on how to discipline the kids or who should pay the bills but the real problem is how the couple talks or doesn't talk to each other.

If you can acknowledge your role in the unhealthy communication that is a huge start. Don't go to counseling and blame your wife for the problems. Everyone plays their part. Couples make big improvements if they come prepared, as if they are taking a Relationship Communication class. It is not a place to blame, belittle or embarrass your partner but it is a place to get real.

Here are some of the communication pitfalls:

1. Men often do not know what to do with their partner's emotions. They tend to want to fix the problem and not just "let her vent."

2. Women often do not know what to do with their partner's lack of emotion, which makes them fight harder to get the response they need.

3. Both sexes may be listening to respond instead of listening to understand. Really big difference!!!

4. Neither may be clarifying what the other said. For example, after communicating to your partner have them repeat back what you have said, just to make sure there are no misunderstandings.

(Not everyone may like this step, one male client told me that he would find that very patronizing if his wife asked him to repeat back to her.)

5. Remember the 24 hour anger rule: IF YOU ARE STILL OBSESSING ABOUT SOMETHING YOUR PARTNER SAID OR DID 24 HOURS LATER, YOU MUST TALK TO THEM ABOUT IT OR LET IT GO!!!! There is only so much you can file away and not have it erupt at some point.

**RESENTMENTS WILL DESTROY YOUR INTIMACY!!!!**

If you go to marriage counseling with the idea that you are going to learn some new ways to interact with your partner and really commit to the process, you will graduate a healthier communicator. In other words you will get out of it what you are willing to put into it.

Give counseling a try. It is a very proactive way to grow as a person and as a partner.

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Each week we visit with health care professionals throughout the Metro



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"Helping the elderly that need help. They are amazing and very friendly."



Esther Korondo, CNA

"I love my job because of the residents and making them feel at home."



Chelsea Cooper, CNA

## St. Anthony Welcomes ENT Physicians and Audiologist



St. Anthony is pleased to announce that the six providers formerly known as the Oklahoma City Ear, Nose and Throat Clinic have joined St. Anthony Physicians Group. The new St. Anthony Physicians ENT practice will include long-time members of the St. Anthony medical staff David Hunter, M.D., Keith Clark, M.D., Troy Major III, DO, Chris Regier, DO, and Kenneth Stein, PA-C. St. Anthony Physicians Audiology will include Elizabeth Harder, AuD, CCC/A.

St. Anthony Physicians ENT and St. Anthony Audiology see both adult and pediatric patients. Their office is located in the Saints Medical Plaza Building, 535 NW 9th, Suite 300, in Oklahoma City. Call 405-272-6027 to schedule an appointment.



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