

Prioritizing Primary Care (Interview Transcripts)

Andy Peterson, M.D., Primary Care Physician, OSF HealthCare Saint Luke Medical Center

“Primary care is what I consider as somebody’s main physician, so that is who you are going to go to with the first step for any health problems in my mind. It is kind of your first stop in the world of medicine to say, ‘I am going to go to this primary care doctor, figure out what is going on, work it up a little bit’ – and if we think that we need help from a specialist, then we do that.” (:21)

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“Even if you’re feeling okay, even if you have no complaints, there are so many preventative things we do in the world of primary care to keep you healthy if you are feeling healthy. Whether that be evaluating your family history, your personal history, and deciding if you would benefit from checking for cholesterol or diabetes because the earlier we catch that stuff, the less likely it is to cause problems down the road.” (:26)

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“If you walk in to an urgent care or a prompt care or any other clinic and you have something going on with you, if that person has never met you before they have to kind of catch up on your entire medical history to make sure that they are treating you appropriately – whereas if you walk in the door to your primary care physician and you have something going on, they are going to know that background history already and be more prepared to take care of you.” (:23)

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“I’m a firm believer that good primary care is how we improve healthcare around this country. Making sure we are staying up-to-date on all the preventative measures, talking about healthy food choices and activity – all of those sorts of things that go into preventative care. And then if you have problems, you have somebody who kind of knows you well, knows those problems well, knows what treatments you’re on, and helps you best manage some of those acute things that may pop up or new things that pop up.” (:25)