

PRINT-OSF CompleteCare 55+ marks first year with growth and improved community health

Carla Richardson of Beverly on the southwest side of Chicago loves it when her grandson tells her, "You're lookin' fresh Nonnie!" She jokes, "This is what 77 looks like. But then again, I'm an old hippie."

Richardson also credits her "fresh look" to her positive attitude and the consistent care she's been receiving at OSF CompleteCare 55+. The clinic at 99th and Western Avenue in Evergreen Park opened a year ago this month. It offers a new kind of primary care targeting older adults with ongoing health conditions who are looking for community, hands-on care and 24/7 access to real providers, not chatbots.

For Richardson, the vibe is great.

"They're glad to see you. You don't feel like you're a patient. You feel like you're going somewhere where someone really cares about you. They keep in touch with you, which is so important. I get texts from Taylor [Taylor Wen, PA, her OSF CompleteCare 55+ provider] on MyChart, and it's just an interaction that is rare."

Richardson was diagnosed four years ago with [pulmonary sarcoidosis](#), and she has a history of pulmonary embolism and pneumonia. Plus, she has to be on blood thinners. Frustrated with her previous care, she tried OSF Complete Care 55+ shortly after it opened, and she's been thrilled with her experience.

"My first experience with Taylor was just phenomenal. She was knowledgeable, patient, and she seemed like she cared. And going to doctors, sometimes you're just a patient number. And I didn't feel that here."

Wen, a certified physician assistant, also sent Richardson to get a bone density scan where Richardson learned she had severe osteoporosis – so bad that she had to reduce the weight of her purse for fear it would break her wrist. Richardson is so grateful because she believes knowledge is power.

Staying connected to consistent care

Although she doesn't consider herself computer savvy, Richardson says she's learned to use OSF MyChart, and it keeps her connected to Wen.

"It's easy to use, and it helps me monitor and keep up with my own health issues. I like the fact it reminds me when I have appointments coming up. I'm retired but I'm still busy."

Richardson remembers when doctors made house calls and says the care she's getting now reminds her of that.

"When the doctor would come to your house with his bag. I know it was 100 years ago. But it's so personal now, here. And you go to other places, and you're waiting and waiting. And no one really seems to care."

The 6,300 square-foot clinic features 12 exam rooms and on-site labs. Sandy Valino Stock, DO, medical director of OSF CompleteCare 55+, says many people enjoy the option to connect digitally 24/7. Virtual visits make it easy to get answers to questions, especially after hours when symptoms aren't severe enough for emergency care. Richardson says that kind of convenience could save her from long waits in the emergency department, only to be sent home with a quick evaluation and remedy.

Dr. Valino Stock says about half of the people who use the clinic take advantage of virtual visits, while the other half are seen in-person.

"Patients love the virtual concept because they don't have to miss as much work. It's just convenient for them," Dr. Valino Stock shares. "Sometimes it's a case where the patient comes into the clinic and their loved one wants to be tuned in, but they're at work. So, they can be virtual during that visit, and they can be present if they need to be."

More than half of the clinic's patients have high blood pressure and/or high cholesterol, one-fourth have diabetes and significant osteoarthritis, and about 10% have heart failure.

But consistent care is helping improve those conditions. For example, almost 80% of patients are now meeting blood pressure and A1c targets, up from 34% and 58% respectively.

The clinic has also seen success in increasing completion rates for screenings such as mammograms, bone density tests and colon cancer screenings. These preventive steps are often overlooked, but they play a key role in long-term health.

GLP1 medication management is available

As people age, weight management can also become more difficult as metabolism naturally slows. Dr. Valino Stock explains that metabolism typically declines by 1% to 2% each year after age 20. At CompleteCare 55+, more than half of patients are overweight or meet obesity criteria. This is important because extra weight on the body leads to most of the medical conditions being treated.

GLP-1 medications such as Mounjaro or Ozempic are, as Dr. Valino Stock put it, "magical" in helping people lose weight. But the GLP-1 journey requires regular check-ins and medication management.

"We see them monthly for the most part as they're getting started on these GLP-1s. So patients have better success at getting healthier, whether it's controlling their blood sugars or lowering their weight and doing it in a healthy manner where they can maintain their muscle and minimize the side effects."

Many who enroll in OSF CompleteCare 55+ are women in pre-menopause and menopause. The outlook for Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) for menopause has fundamentally shifted in the past 10 years. Following major reviews, experts now recognize that for most healthy women under 60 or within 10 years of the onset of menopause, the benefits of HRT far outweigh the risks.

“If no contraindications, we can help women sleep better, have a little bit more energy, feel themselves and just continue life because life is very busy. So if we can help a woman get a good night’s sleep, everything changes for that woman.”

Beyond direct medical care, digital health care navigators at a “Connect Bar” in the lobby also help with insurance issues, coordinating appointments with specialists and navigating OSF MyChart and other tools to monitor their health. Events such as Tech Tuesday also allow for group sessions to address technology challenges.

Navigators also connect people with resources to address social needs, such as transportation to appointments or senior centers or food insecurity. Through educational events with speakers on health topics and partnerships with local organizations, clinic leaders also continue to learn more about the needs of the people they’re serving.

Additionally, regular outreach efforts keep providers connected. For example, at the OSF CompleteCare 55+ clinic, any community member can access free blood pressure screenings from 10 a.m.-noon every first and third Tuesday of the month.

[Learn more here](#) about OSF CompleteCare 55+ primary care.

.