

Integrated care between you, your physician and St. Elizabeth's Hospital is our priority.

In recent years, a new specialty of medicine has emerged called the "Hospitalist." These are physicians who specialize in caring for patients during their stay in a hospital.

Because these physicians are based in the hospital, they are available throughout the day for admissions and emergencies. They take care of patients in the same manner as your regular physician might, including ordering treatments, tests and consulting with specialty physicians where appropriate. They will also keep your primary care physician abreast of any unexpected changes or developments, and provide a detailed summary of your stay following discharge, when you are placed back in the care of your primary care physician.

Studies have shown the benefit of Hospitalist care for patients include extra availability and specialized focus during your stay, plus there is often a decrease in the length of stay and lower rates of readmission.

Our hospitalists are board certified in family medicine and see patients who have been referred by emergency room doctors, primary care doctors, or other physicians in the hospital. They also serve patients who are admitted through the emergency room and who do not have a primary care physician.



HSHS
Medical Group

HOSPITALIST SERVICES
at St. Elizabeth's Hospital

FAQ

Why is a hospitalist caring for me?

Your own primary care physician may request that a hospitalist be in charge of your care during the hospital stay. In this way you have the benefit of being seen by a doctor whose practice is entirely focused on the care of hospitalized patients. Additionally, this can enable your primary care doctor to be more available to you in the office, rather than trying to go back and forth between seeing patients in the office and in the hospital.

How does the hospitalist practice work?

The hospitalist will be in charge of your care and will see you every day to direct your treatment while you are in the hospital. This doctor is available to you and your family to answer questions and discuss your care. The hospitalist works at the hospital full-time to provide for your care and attend to any emergencies that may arise. The hospitalist may consult other doctors to participate in your care as well.

The hospitalist will make arrangements for any prescriptions you may need when you are discharged. You may be asked to make an appointment with your primary care doctor or with other doctors soon after discharge.

Since hospitalists do not have an outpatient patient practice, you will not have an appointment to see the hospitalist again after discharge. You may contact the hospitalist after discharge if you have any questions about the hospital stay.

What is the relationship between the hospitalist and my primary care physician?

The two doctors work together. Your primary care physician can provide information about your past health history to the hospitalists, and the two doctors can discuss any significant findings or events. At the time of your admission and discharge, the hospitalist prepares a detailed report of findings and treatment plans that is sent to your primary care physician.

Your primary care physician asks the hospitalist to be in charge of your care while you are in the hospital, but is welcome to check on you and discuss your care with the hospitalist anytime during your hospital stay. When you are discharged, you will return to the care of your primary care doctor.

What if I need another specialist while in the hospital?

Consultations from other physicians are necessary in some cases, and the hospitalist can arrange for these as necessary. If you have already been seeing other doctors at St. Elizabeth's Hospital or elsewhere, be sure to let us know so that we can keep them informed about your hospital stay.

Meet our team:



**Shelly S.
Harkins, MD**



**Jacqueline
Rickard, MD**



**Julie
Wittenauer, MD**



**Micael
Nash, MD**