

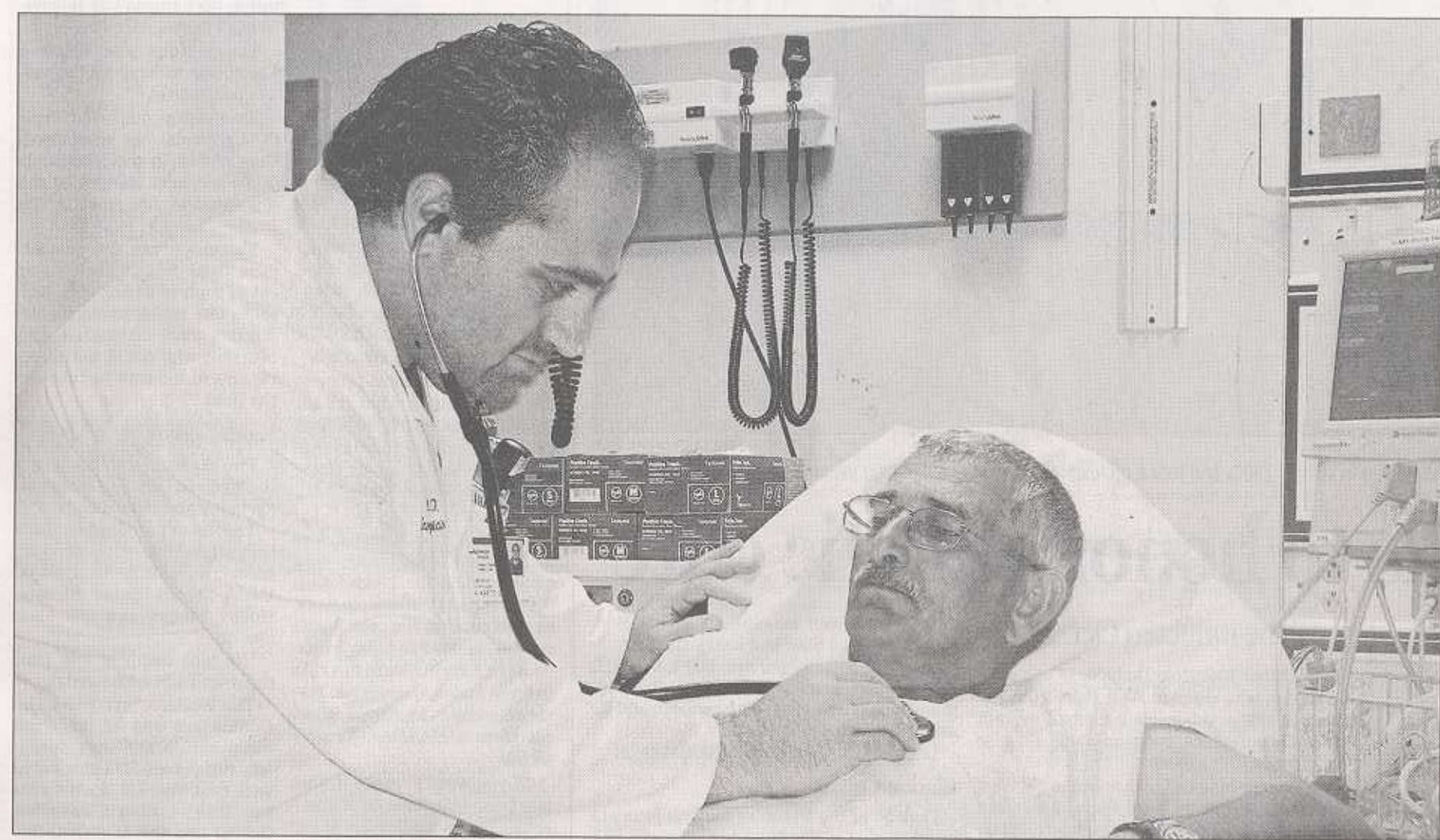
SOUTH VALLEY

HEALTHY LIVING

a Guide to Healthcare

188196

The banner features a collage of images: a woman smiling with a young child, a male doctor in a white coat, a woman with glasses reading a book, a large pill, and a male doctor in a white coat. The text 'SOUTH VALLEY' is at the top in a bold, outlined font. 'HEALTHY LIVING' is in the center in a large, 3D block font. Below it, 'a Guide to Healthcare' is written in a smaller, plain font. A small number '188196' is on the right edge.



Adventist Health hospital emergency departments in Hanford and Selma are seeing progress from efforts to improve patient care and satisfaction.

Hanford, Selma emergency departments improve wait times, patient satisfaction

With new physicians and processes in place, Adventist Health hospital emergency departments in Hanford and Selma are seeing progress from efforts to improve patient care and satisfaction.

All three sites reduced wait times, and two boosted patient satisfaction scores over an 18-month period.

Selma Community Hospital's Emergency Department led the improvement effort in late 2006 with Central Valley General Hospital and Hanford Community Medical Center joining this year. Combined, the three hospitals average about 5,200 visits a month.

One of the most dramatic changes has been a new mix of physicians, says Imamu Tomlinson, M.D., emergency department medical director of Hanford Community and Selma Community, and Milton Teske, emergency department medical director of Central Valley in Hanford. Both lead the local physician teams for CEP America, the national emergency physicians group that took over the Emergency Department contract for the two Hanford hospitals this year.

"We look for top-notch physicians who are committed to emergency medicine, and we've recruited them from throughout the country," Tomlinson says. "We want to promote long-term practices for emergency doctors and be active in the hospitals so that we can have a positive effect beyond the shift. We also want to avoid the turnover of emergency physicians that can happen in the Valley."

Three physicians who are residency-trained in emergency medicine have joined the Hanford Community staff in recent months along with a fourth who is board-certified in family medicine. All are committed to emergency care, Tomlinson says.

The physicians are making a

difference, Teske says. "We're committed to the highest level of emergency care."

Process changes such as immediate bedding and Rapid Medical Evaluation are also helping as patients are seen and orders are written more quickly. With the changes, patients undergo a minimal registration and then are assessed quickly so that orders may be started earlier in the process.

The most recent change at Hanford Community, which began Oct. 1, provides more physician coverage as two physicians' schedules overlap during typically busy times. This allows the medical provider to assess patients, which helps speed the process as well. At Selma Community, although the physicians don't overlap schedules, a provider there also assesses patients as they arrive, dramatically reducing wait times.

"That way, if the patient has a simple complaint, the medical provider can write the prescription and get the patient home, freeing up a bed," Teske says. The new schedule also builds camaraderie among physicians, Tomlinson adds.

With the changes, patients are spending much less time in the waiting room. Combined, the

departments cut their arrival-to-assessment time in half, to an average of 37 minutes, from January 2006 to July 2007.

Patients and their family members are seeing a difference. One patient's daughter wrote

in September that she was "happy and shocked" with the short time she had to wait with her mother compared to a year ago.

Patient survey results are also showing improvement. Both Hanford Community and Selma Community saw 18 percent increases in positive scores related to the overall quality of care from January 2006 to July 2007.

Department leaders including directors Gladys Barnes in Hanford and Deborah Quinn in Selma are encouraged by the progress so far, says Kendall Fults, vice president of ambulatory services, but they're not done yet.

The next step is to establish a four-bed transition unit at Hanford Community for Emergency Department patients who are being admitted to the hospital. The project is expected to be completed by Nov. 1.

"This transition area will move the patients out of the busy emergency room and into a quiet place where a nurse can

care for them while their room is being prepared," Fults says. "It will also free up the emergency beds faster so we can care for more patients."

The Emergency Department transformation at all three hospitals is related to Adventist Health's goal for its services, he said.

"We want to be a regional health care network that is recognized as the best place to receive care. We're seeing great, consistent improvement, but we want to speed up processes even more and improve every patient's experience."

New Emergency Department physicians

The following are among the providers who have joined CEP America and the Hanford Community emergency team recently:

■ Joe Ginejko, D.O.,

Residency: Emergency medicine, Botsford General Hospital in Farmington Hills, Mich.

D.O.: Kansas City University of Medicine and Biosciences College of Osteopathic Medicine, Missouri

■ Ashraf Kasto, D.O.,

Residency: Emergency medicine, Henry Ford Hospital, Detroit, Mich.

D.O.: Touro University, Vallejo, Calif.

■ Michael Kirschner, D.O.

Residency: Family medicine, State University of New York Health Science Center at Syracuse College of Medicine Residency

D.O.: Arizona College of Osteopathic Medicine

■ David Nguyen, M.D.

Residency: Emergency medicine, Long Island Jewish Hospital

M.D.: Brown University, RI
Previously practiced in Porterville, 1999-2007, and Hanford, 1993-1999

Central Valley General Hospital, Hanford Community Medical Center and Selma Community Hospital are part of Adventist Health, a not-for-profit, faith-based health system operating in California, Hawaii, Oregon and Washington. Founded on the Seventh-day Adventist heritage of Christian health care, the system comprises 19 hospitals with more than 2,800 beds, 18,000 employees, numerous clinics and outpatient facilities, 16 home care agencies and three joint-venture retirement centers. For more information, visit www.hanfordhealth.com or www.adventisthealth.org.