

UnityPoint Clinic: Pulmonologists improve patient access

The addition of two new pulmonologists increases the UnityPoint Clinic team to a total of six pulmonology specialists. “We’re offering a comprehensive program with pulmonologists who have specialized interests, including sleep disorders and pulmonary rehabilitation, as well as a full range of interventional diagnostic procedures at the hospital,” said Donald Paynter, MD, UnityPoint Clinic.

Improved accessibility

Patients can be seen at the clinic within 24 hours of referral for comprehensive diagnostic and intervention services. Coverage at the hospital will include a dedicated night-time pulmonary intensive care specialist and 24/7 intensivist coverage. “We’re improving night-call coverage and increasing the hours of coverage in the intensive care unit,” Paynter said. “Our physicians will no longer be torn between night-call and daytime responsibilities. This will improve the efficiency and availability of physicians during the day because they won’t have been up all night.”

All UnityPoint Clinic pulmonologists in Cedar Rapids have specialized critical care training. The pulmonology practice also incorporates nurse practitioners with extensive hospital and office experience, which enables them to provide even better access and closer monitoring of patients for transfers and discharges. Outreach clinics at UnityPoint Health –

Jones Regional Medical Center and Marengo Memorial Hospital bring services to patients in their own communities. The clinic plans to expand its outreach locations in the next year.

Specialized care

The pulmonology team also collaborates with physicians through the Helen G. Nassif Community Cancer Center Lung Care Clinic on a weekly basis. “Our newer physicians are fully trained and qualified in the latest diagnostic techniques, such as endobronchial ultrasound and navigational bronchoscopes, which can increase the accuracy and speed in which we diagnose and stage lung cancer,” Paynter said.

“Our first priority is to provide the best, most up-to-date care for people with respiratory illnesses, providing continuity for patients both in the office and in the hospital. As we increase the scope of our practice, we’re providing better service to our patients so they will not have to seek specialty care outside our community,” Paynter added.

Pulmonary conditions treated at UnityPoint Clinic include:

- Asthma
- COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease)
- Cystic fibrosis
- Interstitial lung disease
- Lung cancer
- Pulmonary hypertension
- Pulmonary tuberculosis
- Sarcoidosis of the lungs
- Fungal lung infections

Pulmonary conditions treated in the hospital include ARDS (acute respiratory distress syndrome), pneumonia and sepsis.



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Donald Paynter, MD, UnityPoint Clinic