



# BEACH CITIES MEDICINE

## PERSONALIZED MEDICAL CARE

### **A Letter From Our Founder**

As I was about to press “submit” for my applications to orthopedic surgery residency programs, I was struck with the realization that what I loved about medicine was not the operating room, but the patients themselves. I enjoyed the procedures, but I couldn’t wait to see how my patients were doing in clinic and getting to know them better. This late-game realization directed my path into a family medicine and sports medicine hybrid, where I could get to know my patients over the course of many years and still hone my musculoskeletal expertise through a sports medicine fellowship.

During my sports fellowship, I was also moonlighting in a local urgent care to establish myself in the community, planning on hanging my own shingle. But in 2004, an opportunity opened up for me to join the premiere primary care group in the area. The rest, as they say, is history. Over the next decade, I had great partners in private practice in Torrance, and subsequently joined Torrance Memorial’s newly founded Physician Network in about 2013. Shortly thereafter, I established our new office across the street from my kids’ school in Hermosa Beach.

On the sports medicine side of things, I was also fortunate enough to be able to work as a team physician with teams like the Los Angeles Dodgers, the LA Galaxy, and several others for two decades. We are appreciative of countless priceless memories along the journey. Before starting Beach Cities Medicine, I was also able to maintain a very small concierge practice for many years, which we used philanthropically to fund charities around the world to the tune of almost a million dollars. To say that I’ve been absurdly blessed in my work is an understatement - and I do not take it for granted.

And yet - the pace of volume-based medical care became one that I could no longer sustain with the quality of care that I want to provide. The 12-15 hour days I have always worked were taking a toll on my health and family, and I kept me from being at my very best for patients. As my patients age and get more complex, well – I’m not getting any younger either and I need to build the next chapter of my career for success as well. So I took time to reflect on what “success” really means. And I decided that it doesn’t have to do with volume.

The very thing that attracted me to primary care and away from a more lucrative surgical field - the doctor-patient relationship - is too often compromised in high-volume arrangements. I didn't have the time to research medical problems in the depth I would like to do. I was unable to communicate with specialists the way that I'd want to if it were my own parent I was caring for. I would often run late with my patients because I took the time to really listen, understand, and thoughtfully explain things with my last patient – only to frustrate the next person waiting for me. And the only one more frustrated that I'm running behind was me.

Both sides of the doctor-patient relationship were less than what they should be. Even topping the charts with indicators of “quality” left much to be desired in a volume-based system. The inherent struggles – whether from telephones and inconvenient communication, from unstable staffing, or simply from myself being spread too thin – these issues proved to be inescapable. And while I don't prefer the term “concierge” (I'm not making dinner reservations, I'm a physician...), I became really excited about the idea of being able to provide better care, albeit to fewer people. Like all physicians, our ability to do our best is, in part, inversely proportional to the number of people we are trying to care for as their lead physician.

When I was moonlighting in 2002, planning to hang my own shingle and open a solo private practice allowing me to stay on my academic A-game, I bought the domain name [www.beachcitiesmedicine.com](http://www.beachcitiesmedicine.com). I maintained that website for all those years with just a PO Box address and a baby picture of my first child, holding onto the idea that one of these days, I'd build my idealized medical practice. A generation and a pandemic later, the time finally came for a dream deferred as I launched my own practice at Beach Cities Medicine in 2022.

For the thousands of patients who made this journey possible, thank you. For the amazing colleagues who taught me and helped manage patients with me, thank you. For all those people who I look forward to seeing such that my long workdays truly just feel like I'm working with and taking care of good friends – thank you. Thank you to those who made the first half of my career so fulfilling and rewarding. It has truly been the adventure of a lifetime and a career I'd never dreamed would be this good. But I have always dreamt big, and Beach Cities Medicine is my next chapter. And for those who have joined me in this adventure, it's been amazing to be able to step up and do my best work with you as your physician. I can't thank you enough and look forward to the journey ahead.

Thank you for the memories - past and future,

**Dave**

*(aka David H. Wallis, MD, FAAFP, CAQSM / Founder, Beach Cities Medicine)*