

Serving San Antonio Seniors the Gonzaba Way

For nearly 60 years, Dr. Bill Gonzaba has been a central figure in positively changing the way family-practice medicine is delivered in San Antonio.

Born and raised on the south side of the nation's seventh-largest city, Dr. Bill has built a nationally recognized model of care for seniors that not only is transforming patients' lives for the better, but also providing care at costs much lower than the national average.

The journey to this value-based care for the Gonzaba Medical Group began early in Dr. Bill's practice, and he is still going strong at 83 years old. As a young physician, he noticed what he believed was a dangerous trend toward physicians spending less and less time with patients, who were seeking care for more and more complex conditions.

This was particularly true in San Antonio's southside neighborhoods, where the predominantly Mexican cuisine contributes to higher rates of chronic disease such as diabetes and chronic heart failure.

"In my mind, in my heart, I felt there was a great need to find a way to spend more time with those patients who had increasing needs," says Dr. Bill.



Gonzaba Medical Group partnered with the San Antonio Food Bank to provide free healthy vegetables to area seniors at no cost.

As Dr. Bill saw it, spending quality time with patients was the key to helping seniors live their best lives. In most physician practices today, the trend is to spend less time with patients and focus on treatment of a single symptom rather than better understanding the overall cause.

"Treatment of a single symptom might allow a doctor to see more patients in a day, but it means the patients may not really be getting the care they deserve," says Dr. Bill. "Chronic diseases are the result of multiple symptoms going untreated as a whole."



Dr. Bill Gonzaba- Founder - committed to the idea that our seniors should "Age Well" via healthy eating and activity.

Dr. Bill believed patients needed a medical home: a clinical environment where the physicians and the staff could take the time to really get to know patients, understand what they are feeling, and focus on their unique medical conditions. The physician had to be empowered as the leader of the medical home to direct all aspects of team-based care. And, most important, Dr. Bill believed patients should be treated como familia, like family.

"I grew up on the south side of San Antonio," says Dr. Bill. "We were a family of modest means, as were most of the southside families, but we lived in a community that celebrated life and cared about each other. Although I did not really realize it at the time, growing up in the south side of San Antonio created the foundational values that would guide me in my later years. After being educated to become a doctor, I knew I wanted to come back to this community to bring the best possible medical care to people who deserved the best."

Early on, he began to realize that something in the traditional practice of medicine was flawed. In the traditional model, the more patients a physician can see in a given day, the more a physician gets paid. Specialists make more money by conducting more tests, many of them unnecessary. Hospitals get paid more to keep someone in the hospital rather than helping them heal faster. Most of all, the traditional model of care was often financially devastating to families of modest means.

"I would see my friends, I would see southside families, losing everything if they had a medical crisis," says Dr. Bill. "I would see them choosing not to seek medical care that they might desperately need because they were afraid they would not be able to pay the bills."

Watching families struggle with chronic

health problems and access to care, Dr. Bill envisioned a system where physicians would get rewarded for keeping people healthy, for helping them stay out of hospitals, and for working collaboratively with a care team to better manage their chronic diseases.

Today, the concept has become known as value-based medicine, which puts the best outcomes for the patient at the center of the medical model. In the national debate about the future of health care, Dr. Bill's San Antonio model is often cited as an example of providing the highest-quality care to patients while lowering costs.

And quality is key. In independent national evaluations, the Gonzaba Medical Group has earned 4.57 stars on a scale of 5 for its quality of care. Its Urgent Care Centers have earned the Gold Seal of The Joint Commission, one of the most respected independent evaluators of medical quality in the nation.

With seven clinic locations throughout San Antonio, Gonzaba patients have easy access to care and minimal travel times, with supporting services such as physical therapy, radiology, urgent care, and medical specialists all under one roof.

"Como familia, like family, has long been the driving force on which we built our medical practice," says Dr. Bill. "When someone seeks medical care, they come to us with their hearts in their hands. This is the ultimate act of trust. We have an obligation to meet that trust with the best we have to offer, every day. That is the Gonzaba way, and the Gonzaba difference."

For those turning 65 or older, the opportunity to choose a Gonzaba physician for personal medical care is available via Medicare open enrollment in health plans through December 31 in Bexar County.

To find out more, call 210-960-9195.

Dr. Gonzaba is investing \$10 Million on a new facility to serve the growing West and Northwest area of San Antonio. The new facility will open in June of 2018.

