Welcome to a special edition of the Best Practice newsletter highlighting the Physician Management Team. Our hope is that this special edition will provide our members with a valuable resource and more importantly, an up-close look at the physician management executives who serve as the conduit between physicians and their office staff and RWJBarnabas Health.

The Physician Management Team, representing various RWJBarnabas Health facilities, is dedicated to building meaningful relationships with physicians and their office staff by understanding their needs and addressing concerns. They serve as a vital resource for ease and access to RWJBarnabas Health services. Each member of the Physician Management Team is committed to ensuring that physicians, their office staff, as well as their patients, have a flawless experience at all of the RWJBarnabas Health facilities.

In this special edition, you will find a more in-depth look at the Physician Management Team for a better understanding of how they became involved in physician management, and their unique interests outside of this critical role.

I have had the awe-inspiring privilege of working with this team over the years and have always been incredibly impressed by the depth of their talent and unwavering commitment. As you Read the Team, you will get a glimpse of their personal lives outside of their physician management role and undoubtedly share my steadfast admiration. As you turn the pages and Meet the Team, you will read about their athletic ambitions, culinary abilities, and remarkable interests and accomplishments. I especially found interesting the sage advice each team member received that has provided guidance in their success from both a personal and professional perspective.

Take a moment to Meet the Team – I am confident you will walk away with a greater appreciation for the Physician Management Team and a more intimate understanding of who they are.

With kind regards and safe keeping,

Alyssa Ruby-Mako
Regional Director, Physician Relations
Meet Alyssa Ruby-Mako
Regional Director, Physician Relations
RWJBarnabas Health

A candid conversation between Alyssa Ruby-Mako and one hospital CEO about how to engage physicians and their offices took Alyssa’s career in an entirely new direction. She advocated treating physicians like high rollers, a similar marketing tactic she utilized in her position as the Executive Director of Advertising & Marketing at the Tropicana Casino and Entertainment Resort. By advocating the VIP treatment for physicians and their staff, Alyssa rolled the dice on a career transition from entertainment to healthcare and ultimately helped develop the RWJBarnabas Health Physician Management division.

Since her days in the gaming industry, Alyssa has developed an acute understanding of the ever-changing role of healthcare and has been on the forefront of looking at new ways to cultivate relationships to build loyalty and volume. She is extremely resourceful and views each day as a new opportunity to work smarter. Her current role as Regional Director of Physician Relations allows her to work with leadership to identify potential business opportunities and nurture relationships with physicians and their office staff.

One of Alyssa’s proudest achievements has been her involvement with the creation and oversight of the Office Managers Association (OMA). The sheer size and scope of the OMA is a testament to the support of RWJBarnabas Health leadership and their commitment to further enhance their relationship with affiliated physician offices. Alyssa has a tremendous sense of pride knowing that this type of organization is exclusive to a healthcare system like RWJBH in New Jersey and possibly throughout the country.

Alyssa’s determination and grit has been ingrained in her from a young age. Her dad taught her to always follow her dreams and persevere even when it may not be the easiest of tasks. He explained to her that there may be disappointments along the way but to remain true to herself and to never give up.

As a black belt in Tang Soo Do, a Korean Martial Art, Alyssa is accustomed to determination and also understands and appreciates the beauty of life. With the utmost reverence for nature, she can easily be found gardening in her spare time and plans to pursue becoming a Master Gardener.

Contact Information:
Alyssa Ruby-Mako
Regional Director,
Physician Relations
Monmouth Medical Center
300 Second Avenue
Physician Relations, 3N
Long Branch, NJ 07740
Alyssa.Ruby-Mako@rwjbh.org
732-272-7772
Meet

Ashley Esposito
Assistant Director, Physician Relations
Monmouth Medical Center and
Monmouth Medical Center Southern Campus

A part-time job at the neighborhood drug store paved the way for a lifelong career for Ashley Esposito, who has spent the past 10 years as Assistant Director of Physician Relations at Monmouth Medical Center and Monmouth Medical Center, Southern Campus. Shortly after beginning her job as a cashier, the drug store began piloting a prescription delivery service for the elderly and she was asked if she would be interested in the role. Ashley jumped at the opportunity, and through it, learned that she loved engaging with people while also helping them obtain their necessary prescriptions to ensure their health.

A graduate of Rowan University with a bachelor’s degree in Business Administration with a concentration in Marketing, Ashley soon realized that she had found her calling in the healthcare field. One of her favorite aspects of her role at RWJBarnabas Health is creating relationships with the physician offices and providing educational information about the system’s outstanding services as well as sharing of best practices. Ashley’s ability to think outside the box and provide exceptional follow-up has allowed her to cultivate and maintain positive rapport with physicians, office staff, and hospital personnel.

One of Ashley’s proudest accomplishments is the creation of a release form for the physicians’ offices to make it easier for patients to come to their Breast Center. “Sometimes patients find it difficult to switch imaging centers because they’d just rather stay where it is familiar, even if they’re unhappy, but this form helps to eliminate some extra steps for the patient, making both the patient and physician offices happy.”

In her free time, Ashley likes to spend time with her boyfriend traveling and hiking. Together, they created a National Park bucket list and are looking to visit Yellowstone National Park for their next trip. Ever so adventurous, Ashley recently taught herself to surf.

One of the greatest pieces of advice Ashley received in both her personal and professional life came from her parents who advocated for her to just be herself and to do something that she loves. Her current role allows her to do just that.

Contact Information:
Ashley Esposito
Assistant Director, Physician Relations
Monmouth Medical Center
300 Second Avenue
Physician Relations, 3N
Long Branch, NJ 07740
Ashley.Esposito@rwjbh.org
732-966-2576
Meet

Jamie Caamano
Physician Account Manager
Saint Barnabas Ambulatory Care Center
Imaging Department

Commitment, focus, perseverance, and encouragement – these are characteristics of elite athletes and ones that are quite familiar to Jamie Caamano who has swam competitively most of her life. These qualities are also the characteristics that transition nicely to Jamie’s current role as Physician Account Manager at Saint Barnabas Ambulatory Care Center, a position she has had held for a little over two years.

Jamie’s favorite aspect of being an Account Manager is the opportunity to interact with different offices to build relationships with colleagues and to generate new business prospects for the Ambulatory Care Center Imaging Department. Her time in the pool really helped prepare Jamie for this role as she has needed to lead by example, develop effective communications skills and follow through on goals.

Jamie’s career in the medical field began as a Medical Device Representative. In that role, she learned about the importance of formulating partnerships between the medical staff and the patient. Jamie worked closely with physicians who were attending to patients trying to manage their chronic pain. She found the experience extremely rewarding and the knowledge gained from her eight years of interactions with both physicians and patients have proved invaluable in her current role at Saint Barnabas Ambulatory Care Center.

Competitive swimming and the experience of interacting with various personalities at RWJBH have also prepared Jamie for her favorite role as mom to two-year-old daughter, Mia. She is hoping to share the wisdom given to her by her grandfather that the “cream rises to the top” to encourage her daughter to always strive to be better and be a go-getter.

Contact Information:
Jamie Caamano
Physician Account Manager
Saint Barnabas
Ambulatory Care Center
200 South Orange Avenue
Physician Relations, Suite 217
Livingston, NJ 07039
Jamie.Caamano@rwjbh.org
201-247-9539
Meet
Diane Sirna Miller
Physician Account Manager
Saint Barnabas Ambulatory Care Center

With a degree in Consumer Affairs from Queens College (NY), Diane Sirna Miller did not seem a likely candidate for the role of Physician Account Manager for Saint Barnabas Ambulatory Care Center; however, the skills she acquired from previous sales and marketing positions transitioned her perfectly into her healthcare role as both fields require the ability to listen.

Diane believes the ability to listen, really listen, coupled with curiosity, a desire to learn, and a calm demeanor are just a few of the qualities needed to be successful in her role. A sales manager once told Diane to “be the solution for your clients” and she has taken that mantra to heart by applying it to her patients. Her goal is to create a level of trust with her patients so they are comfortable connecting if they have an issue.

Goals are very important to Diane, as she completed a lifelong ambition in completing the New York City Marathon. She defines success as the ability to surpass her goals and benchmarks while simultaneously loving what she is doing.

One of Diane’s proudest accomplishments was being hired as the first Health Care Concierge in the Saint Barnabas system. Not only was Diane a trailblazer in the role, she also helped to define and shape that position. As the role evolved, and the title changed, Diane continued to make inroads with many physician practices assisting thousands of patients. She has now segued into the role of Physician Account Manager but is still heavily involved with assisting patients, which she finds so rewarding.

In her spare time, Diane continues to set goals – goals of completing her Barre, boot camp, and yoga classes. She is also an avid chef for family and friends with a passion for healthy cooking.

Contact Information:
Diane Sirna Miller
Physician Account Manager
Saint Barnabas
Ambulatory Care Center
200 South Orange Avenue
Physician Relations Suite 217
Livingston, NJ 07039
Diane.Sirna.Miller@rwjbh.org
973-322-7540
Meet

Erich Altherr
Physician Account Manager
Saint Barnabas Medical Center

While it may not have been directed to him specifically, Erich Altherr’s greatest advice came from poet Maya Angelou as she expressed, “People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”

It is this sentiment that initially drew Erich to pursue a role with RWJBarnabas Health, whose mission statement of providing compassionate care and superior service to its patients resonated with him. Putting patients first and the sense of community he felt throughout the interview process for his current position of Physician Account Manager at Saint Barnabas Medical Center are what sold him on the organization.

Erich’s observations come from experience having spent time in various other healthcare facilities in Westchester (NY) and New York City. He is proud to now work for the preeminent hospital system in New Jersey, which allows him to help people, and give back to the community while working with the best physicians in the world who provide the highest level of care and success rates.

It is not often you can see the immediate positive impact you are making in someone’s life, but that has not been the case for Erich. Early one morning just after he began at Saint Barnabas Medical Center, a patient’s daughter reached out to him seeking solutions regarding her mother’s condition. Utilizing the extensive training provided to him, he was able to schedule the patient with the needed surgeon that very day. He then reconfirmed the appointment for them and provided directional assistance to the office. The family was extremely grateful for Erich’s assistance in finding the appropriate resources that they feel ultimately saved their mother’s life. He was proud that he could make such a positive and lasting impact on this family.

When he is not helping patients in the early morning hours, Erich tries to live a healthy lifestyle including 40-50 miles of cycling on the weekends. He is also an avid cook and boasts of making homemade tomato sauce, healthy of course, using locally sourced tomatoes.

Contact Information:
Erich Altherr
Physician Account Manager
Saint Barnabas Medical Center
94 Old Short Hills Road
5th Floor, East Wing
Livingston, NJ 07039
Erich.Altherr@rwjbh.org
862-241-5711
Retail therapy is a humorous phrase that refers to shopping in order to make oneself feel happier, but it is traditionally used as a medical solution. This is not the case for Jessica Alpert, the Community Outreach Coordinator for Barnabas Health Behavioral Health Center. Jessica credits her first job, which was in retail and heavily focused on customer satisfaction, in helping her to create and maintain meaningful relationships with people from various backgrounds—a skillset she uses regularly at RWJBarnabas Health.

Jessica’s favorite part of her role is the opportunity to meet and learn from people and discuss new and innovative ways to help her patients, clients, and staff succeed. She feels successful when she witnesses first-hand a patient getting the help they need and thrives as a result of the services being provided.

One of Jessica’s proudest accomplishments was leading the Barnabas Health Behavioral Health Center to two consecutive victories in the RWJBarnabas Health Running with the Devils 5K Run & Walk for having the most employee participants and raising the most money for the southern region. Another achievement was launching a BHBHC Facebook page, which provided even greater outreach to the community while also allowing her to showcase the Behavioral Health Center’s amazing staff and services.

When Jessica is not working, she is still in retail therapy mode participating in Jersey Cares Shopping for Seniors program. She also spends a lot of quality time with her family and dog, and enjoys relaxing on her deck, and watching too many episodes of Dateline.

Contact Information:
Jessica Alpert
Community Outreach Coordinator
RWJBarnabas Health Behavioral Health Center
Marketing/Administration
1691 Route 9
Toms River, NJ 08754
Jessica.Alpert@rwjbh.org
732-914-3851
Meet

Todd Miller
Director, Business Development
Clara Maass Medical Center

Every interaction is an opportunity to make a good impression. Todd Miller learned this early in his career as it was the great relationships with office managers and physicians that led him from his first job as an imaging service representative to his role as physician manager at a hospital in Westchester. He then transitioned to his current role as Director of Business Development.

Todd's favorite aspect of his job in business development is the ability to learn more each day and interact with a variety of people. He prides himself on being easily accessible either via call, text, or email with the assurance that he will respond promptly to all requests. In addition, Todd believes his role requires being a good listener and making every effort to understand what is being asked or said while maintaining a friendly demeanor.

First impressions are also important in another role Todd plays as a banquet manager for a catering hall. He is the person who not only schedules the parties, but is the first point of contact on the day of the event, is responsible for the overall set-up of the room, and ensures that the overall event runs smoothly. Todd’s mentor in the event management business gave him sound advice of “never forgetting where you came from.” This counsel holds true in the healthcare industry as well as Todd strives to strengthen the network among hospital administration, physicians, and patients.

Success means different things to different people. A successful day for Todd is when he is able to spend quality time with his family. Some of Todd’s favorite activities are mountain biking and playing catch in the backyard with his son, and trampolining and creating art on the driveway with his daughter. Todd feels most successful when he is making that positive and everlasting impression, both personally and professionally.

Contact Information:

Todd Miller
Director, Business Development
Clara Maass Medical Center
1 Clara Maass Drive
Belleville, NJ 07109
Todd.Miller@rwjbh.org
973-450-2979
Meet

Edwin Renderos
Director, Business Development
Clara Maass Medical Center

While working at a deli at the age of 15, Edwin Renderos found his calling. Assisting customers to complete their shopping or delivering groceries to their home, Edwin learned that he wanted a career in which he had constant interaction with people.

Now as the Director of Business Development, Edwin interacts with physicians and medical staff every day to ensure that patients are getting the best care possible. He feels that it is important to listen and understand the physicians’ needs as well as serve as their resource for news from the medical center and system as a whole. As Edwin tries to be out in the field as much as possible with physicians, it is imperative that he is organized and schedules his day accordingly.

Edwin is most proud that his work truly makes a difference for so many. He has taken his sister’s advice of being persistent but not aggressive to heart. As a result, several physicians that he has been courting are now joining the RWJBH network.

Edwin feels he achieves success when he completes his goal of recruiting physicians; however, he believes his true reward comes from his family. As the father of a three-year-old daughter, he is acutely aware of how fast she will grow and wants to cherish every moment with her, his wife, and their three dogs.

An avid music fan, Edwin can get lost in tunes for hours. In a past life, he thinks he must have been in a band or worked as a composer to have fostered such a love of music. With his headphones on, Edwin imagines himself on stage with whoever is providing the soundtrack. Edwin’s immersion into whatever role he is conducting on a given day – physician development, father, or musician – has set him down a path for success.

Contact Information:
Edwin Renderos
Director, Business Development
Clara Maass Medical Center
1 Clara Maass Drive
Belleville, NJ 07109
Edwin.Renderos@rwjbh.org
201-927-8066
Longevity has been the key to Cheryl Cilento's success in healthcare. Having been a fixture at Jersey City Medical Center for more than 30 years, Cheryl's role as a Physician Liaison allows her to help the providers that she works with find solutions to problems. It is especially gratifying to her to be able to make a difference, regardless of how big or small, in the life of someone else.

Cheryl entered the world of healthcare while simultaneously studying healthcare management at St. Peter’s College. She can actually be credited for helping to set up the very first Pediatric Faculty Practice at Jersey City Medical Center in the early 1990s when she served as an Administrative Assistant in the Department of Pediatrics/Neonatology. It was also during this role when she met her mentor who served as the Director of Pediatrics and shared valuable life lessons that Cheryl still uses today. She was told to always see the good in people. Cheryl believes each person brings something unique to the table and we should use this distinctive quality to empower the individual. This philosophy is something Cheryl continues to strive to do when managing people – finding their unique skill and helping them build upon it.

Good communication, the ability to listen, and a “can-do” attitude are important skills in Cheryl’s role as Physician Liaison. One of her proudest accomplishments while at Jersey City Medical Center is setting up and simultaneously managing the many different physician practices at the facility including the JCMC Family Health Center.

Cheryl’s passion for health extends into her personal life as she tries to employ a healthy lifestyle and is an avid fan of Pilates. She has even taken an instructor’s course and hopes to teach one day soon.
Meet

Angela Klizos
Director, Physician Relations & The Sleep Center
Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Hamilton

Angela Klizos believes people should be treated like fine jewels. This mindset comes easily to Angela as she not only serves as the Director of Physician Relations and The Sleep Center at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital in Hamilton, but is also a gemologist who has studied fine jewels at the Gemological Institute of America in New York City.

Angela currently oversees the Physician Outreach Department and the operations of the RWJUH Hamilton Sleep Lab. The physician outreach team serves as a conduit between hospital leadership and physicians. The team promotes all hospital services, provides educational programs, and meets regularly to gain valuable insights from the physicians who care for the community. Angela's primary goal is to facilitate the communications stream in an effort to improve services and best meet physicians' needs.

Angela joined RWJUH Hamilton in 2013 after many years as a District Business Manager for a large pharmaceutical company, where she learned the importance of strategy, persistence, and relationship building. Angela developed strong business skills while leading a sales team of up to 12 people. She won many sales awards during her time in pharmaceuticals, and was very proud to consistently lead her team to success in a challenging market.

In her free time, Angela is happiest when active, participating in activities that include yoga, spin class, and swimming. Her father taught her that nothing worth having comes easy. As a result, Angela utilizes her interpersonal skills along with her business acumen to maximize time spent with her team so that they can collectively achieve their goals of providing top-notch care to the patients they serve. She is most proud of her growth within the organization and the ability to serve as a leader, as well as the contributions to growth that her service lines bring to the organization.

Contact Information:

Angela Klizos
Director, Physician Relations & The Sleep Center
RWJUH Hamilton
1 Hamilton Health Place
Hamilton, NJ 08690
Angela.Klizos@rwjbh.org
609-468-7000
Meet
Jennifer Sweeney
Physician Liaison
Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Hamilton

Jennifer Sweeney’s passion for helping others has driven her career choices. With an interest in the effects of global warming on the population, Jennifer interned and then worked as a contract employee of the Environmental Protection Agency in Washington, D.C., developing and building analytical and community outreach skills. These skills proved helpful to Jennifer as she transitioned to pharmaceutical sales, and then again in her current role as a Physician Liaison for the past two years at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital in Hamilton.

As a Physician Liaison, Jennifer serves as a direct communication link for physicians, their practices, and RWJUH’s administration. Her favorite part of her role is the ability to introduce patients to the vast network of providers she has cultivated so that they may receive the highest level of appropriate care. During regular visits to practices, Jennifer provides education and updates on new or enhanced service lines provided by the RWJBH network.

When Jennifer is not interacting with physicians and patients, she spends quality time with her family. A self-proclaimed dance and baseball mom, Jennifer sees her ideal times as her family trips to the Caribbean, where she and her family can snorkel, and to the Jersey Shore. She considers these trips her escapes in which she can reconnect and recharge. Jennifer also enjoys a healthy lifestyle achieved through exercise and nutrition, but does balance this with her love of chocolate.

Jennifer takes her father’s advice of maintaining the highest level of commitment in all of her pursuits to heart, especially when the going gets tough, and that hard work always pays off in the end. She feels that success comes in many forms so she is appreciative of all the incremental accomplishments that ultimately help her to achieve her goals.

Contact Information:
Jennifer Sweeney
Physician Liaison
RWJUH Hamilton
1 Hamilton Health Place
Hamilton, NJ 08690
Jennifer.Sweeney@rwjbh.org
609-256-1101
Meet

Matthew Joseph
Senior Physician Liaison
Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital New Brunswick

How many people can claim to hire their own boss? Sounds a bit suspect; however, this is exactly what happened to Matthew Joseph when he worked in the Human Resources Department at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital in New Brunswick. First an intern, and then promoted to a full-time role, Matthew was part of the team that hired the first director of the Physician Relations Department. He then transferred to a role within the department when the opportunity was presented.

Having an “in” with your boss is always good; however, it was Matthew’s approach to the position that ultimately elevated him to the role of managing the Physician Relations Department. He is most proud of his ascension through the ranks, starting as an intern and now leading the team. He is happy to have seen first-hand the progression of the department since its beginning almost seven years ago. With his tenure serving as a Physician Liaison, Matthew has a keen understanding of the time constraints of the physicians so he has learned to maximize their time together through succinct and effective dialogue. Whether it is the sharing of best administrative practices, customer care or issue resolution within the facilities, Matthew is efficient in his delivery and execution.

One of the most exciting aspects of Matthew’s role is that each day is unique so he is never bored. Each day he travels to different physicians’ offices where he encounters a variety of staff who have different priorities. This interpersonal connection that Matthew is privileged to make invigorates him for the next day.

Matthew is equally energized outside the office with his chosen pastime of golf, which is also often unpredictable. A 7-handicap, Matthew reluctantly boasts that he shot his best round ever, a 76, while playing at Pebble Beach, California.

Contact Information:
Matthew Joseph
Senior Physician Liaison
RWJUH New Brunswick
5 High Street
New Brunswick, NJ 08901
Matthew.Joseph@rwjbh.org
732-354-7859
Meet

Elizabeth Rancan
Physician Liaison
Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital New Brunswick

Who is Elizabeth (Lisa) Rancan? That was the question she was hoping to be asked when Lisa, a Physician Liaison at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital, auditioned to be a contestant on Jeopardy. While she may not have had the opportunity to meet Alex Trebek, Lisa has made a lasting impact on the patients and physicians who have benefited from her efforts.

While not originally planning this path in healthcare, Lisa began her career as a pharmaceutical sales representative. After several years in sales and interacting with various healthcare representatives, including physicians, Lisa decided to use her knowledge gained from this role and transition into physician relations. She looks fondly back on her career in pharmaceutical sales as she was the proud recipient of the prestigious President’s Club a few times and appreciates being recognized for her hard work.

Lisa’s favorite part of serving as a Physician Liaison are the occasions when she receives a text from a physician or practice manager thanking her for helping them provide their patients the care they needed. She feels her attention to detail and the ability to listen to others while responding to their needs in a timely fashion has allowed her to cultivate and maintain positive relationships.

Success, whether personal or professional, can be defined by Lisa incrementally. If she can leave work every day feeling like she learned something new or useful, then it was a successful day. When she does leave work each day, her favorite activities are traveling, especially to Europe, and playing with her two boys, Miles & Oliver. She hopes to instill in them her passions to never stop learning and growing as people.

Contact Information:
Elizabeth Rancan
Physician Liaison
RWJUH New Brunswick
181 Somerset Street
2nd Floor, Physician Relations
New Brunswick, NJ 08901
Elizabeth.Rancan@rwjbh.org
610-574-2666
Meet

Richard Schaller
Physician Liaison
Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital New Brunswick

A part-time job as a receptionist at an urgent care office while in high school transitioned into a career for Richard Schaller, now a physician liaison for RWJUH New Brunswick. After graduating from Coastal Carolina University, Richard began working full time at the urgent care office in an administrative role that allowed him to work closely with physician liaisons from RWJUH Rahway. When a position at RWJUH New Brunswick became available, Richard jumped at the chance to network and learn the many different aspects of the non-clinical side of medicine.

As someone who started their career at the front desk of a medical office, Richard has interacted with countless liaisons and representatives from all aspects of the healthcare field. He feels that patience and time management are critical skills needed for the role of a physician liaison. As the front desk is the gateway to the medical office, some patience, understanding, and willingness to adapt and work with a provider’s schedule is key for a long, successful relationship.

Richard’s favorite part of his physician liaison role is the opportunity to meet new people and learn from them. Getting out in the field and interacting with the community are key aspects of his job. He is able to have daily conversations with people from all different backgrounds, positions, and fields and hear directly best practices and areas that need improvement. This incredible wealth of information allows Richard to learn daily and utilize this knowledge to continually grow and better himself within the organization.

When Richard is not working, he prefers to spend time outdoors. At a cabin on a lake in the Catskills, he and his family relax with activities that include kayaking, fishing, hiking, biking and skiing. Skiing is a particular passion of Richard’s as he spent four years as a certified ski patroller which he credits as great way to combine his love of the sport and helping people and was his first real introduction to the medical field.

Contact Information:

Richard Schaller
Physician Liaison
RWJUH New Brunswick
1 Robert Wood Johnson Place
New Brunswick, NJ 08901
Richard.Schaller2@rwjbh.org
732.637-3772
Collaboration is the motivation that drives Beth Akkaway each day. As a Physician Liaison at Somerset’s Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital, she knows that the work she does to provide physicians with valuable resources to enhance their practice and patient’s lives matters.

Beth has spent the majority of her career in healthcare assisting others to become the best versions of themselves. Her first job was in corporate wellness, in which she helped to run the fitness center and health education programs for employees. She then moved to pharmaceutical sales, in which she spent 10 years serving as the bridge between physicians and suppliers. Her current role was an easy transition from pharmaceutical sales having already cultivated and maintained relationships with many of the physicians’ offices and their staff. Beth is most proud of the trust that she has garnered from the physicians as a result of her efforts.

A graduate of Purdue University with a bachelor’s degree in Health Promotion, Beth spends her off-hours with family and friends. The theme of wellness is ingrained throughout Beth’s life. In addition to her work for RWJBH, she previously spent time as a certified ACSM personal trainer, an AFAA aerobics instructor and a Johnny G spin instructor. In her personal life, running is Beth’s passion and brings her immense joy. Viewed as her “me” time, running serves as a daily motivation for Beth. In December of 2019, she began a running streak that she hopes to maintain for as long as possible.

Beth defines success as happiness with a profession that she knows is truly making a difference for so many others. She understands that the skillset she has obtained throughout her career, including the ability to listen to the needs of those she works with, analyzing and resolving issues, and providing valuable resources have allowed her to excel in her current role.
Meet
Robin Levine
Physician Liaison
Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Somerset

Being a fan of Boston sports can be difficult for someone who went to school in Syracuse and now lives in New Jersey; however, Robin Levine’s differing sports allegiances have proved to be an asset in her role as a Physician Liaison. For the past five years, Robin has loved working with all different types of people and coming together for a common cause to help patients improve their lives.

Robin’s path to her current role with RWJBarnabas Health began in pharmaceutical advertising. She then transitioned to sales, in which her networking skills in that position led her to move to Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital in Somerset. A former colleague of Robin’s would become a life-long friend and also make the move to Somerset. Twenty years later, these best friends have the great opportunity to continue to work together.

To be effective in her role as Physician Liaison, Robin believes it takes an entrepreneurial spirit with a keen attention to detail. She also believes success is obtained when one feels fulfilled with one’s actions. Robin’s mother provided her with the best professional advice that could also be applied to most personal situations. Her mother told her, “When life hands you lemons, make lemonade.”

Robin has become quite adept at making lemonade, both figuratively as well as literally, as the proud sports mom to three aspiring athletes. She finds the greatest level of joy on the sidelines of her children’s sporting events as their loudest cheerleader. Robin also stays active as a runner, enjoys shopping, and of course, spending time with family and friends.

Contact Information:
Robin Levine
Physician Liaison
RWJUH Somerset
110 Rehill Avenue
Somerville, NJ 08876
Robin.Levine@rwjbh.org
908-331-939
How does someone who is deathly afraid of needles pursue a career in healthcare? The desire to make a positive impact or difference definitely outweighs any fears, according to Christina Manata, Director of Physician Relations at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital in Rahway.

Christina’s passion for healthcare began during her tenure working for the New Jersey Organ and Tissue Sharing Network. In her current role, she values the strong relationships that she has been able to build with the physicians both within the organization as well as those located in the community. She also appreciates her direct ties to hospital leadership. Christina believes the ability to have difficult conversations with leadership, physicians, and the patients are very important.

The candid conversations with the physicians and office staff is Christina’s favorite part of her position. Christina believes that she, her hospital colleagues, physicians, and the office staff are all part of one team working together to meet goals and improve outcomes to the benefit of the community.

In her free time, Christina relishes the time she spends with family, including her two young daughters. Some of her favorite moments are spent watching her children’s activities of dance, piano and soccer. Christina stays active as well with her early morning runs and playing golf.

Early on in Christina’s career, she was given the sage advice to “have a thick skin.” These words continue to resonate with her whenever she finds herself taking things personally or when individual decisions hamper her enthusiasm. While probably not medically accurate, having thick skin is probably also helpful to someone who is deathly afraid of needles.
Forging new paths is familiar territory for Sherin Botros, the first dedicated Physician Liaison to the Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey, the state’s only National Cancer Institute-designated Comprehensive Cancer Center in partnership with RWJBarnabas Health.

As the first Physician Liaison at Rutgers Cancer Institute, there were no playbooks or marketing materials, so Sherin played an integral role in creating all collateral materials, including physician contact sheets, cards, program flyers, and referral pads. These resources, especially the physician contact directory, have become the oncology service line’s standard throughout the RWJBH system.

A graduate of Seton Hall, Sherin began her career in luxury goods marketing but was seeking more fulfillment and purpose, so she transitioned to a role that would help the greater good in some form. Her favorite part of being a Physician Liaison is serving as a resource to help patients receive the best oncology care when they are most vulnerable. Sherin plays an integral role in bridging vital communications between community providers and Rutgers Cancer Institute. This includes providing key information on the expertise, clinical trials, and comprehensive clinical services available at Rutgers Cancer Institute in collaboration with RWJBarnabas Health. She feels that her strong communications skills, responsiveness in customer service, out-of-the-box thinking, and collaborative approach have allowed her to succeed in this role.

Sherin received the best advice from a college friend who said, “life is 10% what happens to you and 90% how you handle it.” She keeps that thought in the back of her mind during challenging times and shares it with others who may be encountering their own trying moments.

As Sherin is so acutely aware of the preciousness of life, she prioritizes spending quality time with her husband, step-children, dog, family, and friends enjoying the outdoors, especially the beach. Sherin also tries to learn about other cultures through traveling and overall experiences that accentuate all the greatness that life offers.
Relationships are key, regardless of industry. While promoting musical artists for several major record labels, Jaime Guzman learned that regular dialogue is crucial to gain a greater understanding of clients’ needs and to identify your value to them. From music, Jaime transitioned to healthcare working in radiology with a focus on PET/CT. Now as the Physician Liaison for the Northern Region of RWJBarnabas Health, specializing in oncology services, he applies the same principles and values he utilized in the music business to work with patients, providers, and the community.

As Jaime oversees several sites throughout the northern region, he is fortunate to collaborate with a wide array of medical professionals. His favorite aspect of these interactions is continual learning from each other. Performing tasks that are challenging yet true to his character rewards Jaime mentally and emotionally. His motivation drives him to be impactful and make a difference each day. Jaime is acutely aware that actions speak louder than words, and sometimes it is more important to listen than speak.

Jaime is most proud of his ability to find creative ways to onboard new physicians and providers to the RWJBH system. He helped spearhead virtual orientations to bring awareness of new providers, which was an excellent complement to their traditional physical outreach and a quick way to introduce the new physicians to the community.

Music continues to be a passion of Jaime’s along with spending time with family, traveling, reading, and fishing. Jaime’s parents provided him with the best advice of not letting fear hold him back and granting permission to fail so he may learn from his mistakes and become better.
Meet

Sheryl Paton
Physician Liaison, Southern Region
RWJBarnabas Health

As a Physician Liaison, Sheryl Paton's role is to build awareness of RWJBarnabas Health's Oncology Services in the Southern Region, in partnership with Rutgers Cancer Institute, the state's only National Cancer Institute-designated Comprehensive Cancer Center. Sheryl dedicates most of her time cultivating relationships with oncology experts and referring physicians to the RWJBH system, ensuring patients have access to state-of-the-art treatments in New Jersey. By promoting cutting-edge treatments with access to the latest medicines and technology, physicians and their patients can seek treatment close to home.

Sheryl began her career in healthcare by recruiting nurses and home health aides to assist homebound patients. As a result, Sheryl gained valuable experience working with medical professionals, patients, and their families. Having a positive impact on patient care is the most rewarding aspect of Sheryl's work.

An integral aspect of Sheryl's position is to onboard new physicians within the oncology service line and grow referrals into the system by cultivating key relationships with physicians in the community. Strong communications skills, organizational prowess, and time management acumen are essential qualities for a Physician Liaison and ones that Sheryl is most proud of possessing. She also prides herself on her ability to follow-up with physicians and their practices as the primary component in establishing a good working relationship.

When Sheryl is not working, she can most often be found at the beach – locally in New Jersey and vacationing in the Caribbean. She also enjoys spending time with her family and taking long bike rides.

Sheryl’s parents provided her with the best advice to always do her best. As a result, she is always proud of her work as long as she gave it her all, making her role as a Physician Liaison a great match.

Contact Information:
Sheryl Paton
Physician Liaison, Southern Region
RWJBarnabas Health
300 Second Avenue
Long Branch, NJ 07740
Sheryl.Paton@rwjbh.org
848-303-0637