

Now Published! Dr. Serna Shares Her Journey to Lifestyle-Focused Concierge Medicine in the *American Journal of Lifestyle Medicine*

The most recent edition of the prestigious *American Journal of Lifestyle Medicine* features a fascinating look at the origins of North Cypress Internal Medicine & Wellness (NCIMW) in an article penned by Dr. Dorothy Serna, titled [“Lifestyle Medicine in a Concierge Practice: My Journey.”](#) She relates her increasing frustration at the lack of time to both fully work with patients on incorporating healthy lifestyle behaviors and sustain her independent practice, and the solution she ultimately found by making a change to concierge medicine. As Dr. Serna explains, the models of care make a perfect match: “Both Lifestyle Medicine and Concierge Medicine strive to provide patients with improved, quantifiable outcomes, enhanced well-being and a deeply personalized experience. The concierge model established at NCIMW in 2017 has meshed seamlessly with the components of Lifestyle Medicine (LM) and the ability to provide exceptional patient care.”

She describes how North Cypress Internal Medicine & Wellness has grown, and continues to grow, by appealing to a diversity of patients, who “run the gamut from those enjoying excellent health to those dealing with multiple chronic conditions...from Baby Boomers who want to safeguard their quality of life as they age, to Millennials interested in preserving their long-term wellness.” The common bond, according to Dr. Serna: all view becoming a member of the practice as a valuable investment in health and disease prevention.

The concierge/LM-focused model has fulfilled its promise on every level, writes Dr. Serna, with patient satisfaction scores of 5/5 for quality of care and 4.9/5 for availability throughout the day, after hours and in emergencies. Most significant, is the impact on patient outcomes: “Many are doing and feeling better than they have in years, with significantly less medication needed.” She cites a number of compelling patient case studies in the Journal, including:

- A middle-aged man who successfully lost weight, improved his blood sugar levels, dramatically reduced his daily dose of insulin, and completely stopped an additional, expensive oral medication for diabetes as a result of his active participation in wellness coaching and LM visits. He says: “I’ve been dealing with diabetes for more than 20 years but no one had ever explained why or how to change my lifestyle to improve the condition. Understanding my trigger points with food, exercising four times a week, and learning to de-stress has literally saved my life.”
- A husband and wife, both older adults with diabetes and other issues, who were able to lose weight, improve their blood sugar levels and decrease the amount of insulin they needed by following the guidance of NCIMW’s wellness coaches. “We tried every diet

that has come along, from Nutrisystem to Weight Watchers, but nothing ever worked until this,” shared the couple.

- A 40-year-old female with a family history of diabetes and hypertension, and suffering from a swollen optic nerve, headaches and deteriorating vision, who worked with the NCIMW team to restore her health. Having lost over 50 pounds, vision and headache issues resolved, and officially considered in remission from pseudotumor cerebri, the patient says: “My quality of life is excellent, and I can focus on my job, not my health. Coming to NCIMW was life-changing for me. I’m one of the few in my family able to avoid the need for blood pressure or diabetes medications.”

Dr. Serna concludes by describing the change to lifestyle-focused concierge medicine at NCIMW as a tremendous privilege, providing her with “the opportunity to fulfill my own deeply felt mission of caring for patients in a way that they need and deserve.”