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The Florida Geriatrics Society (FGS) is unequivocally opposed to the proposed changes at Naples Community Hospital. FGS understands that the relationship between patients and providers is of utmost importance. The best outcome patients receive is when the person directly overseeing their care and the person directly selecting consultants is their primary care provider or the hospitalist the provider has chosen as the admitting physician.

Multiple national studies show that when the primary care physician admits patients, this yields better 30-day survival rates, increases the number of discharges to home rather than to a facility, and results in less cost to Medicare. It goes without saying that the primary care physician's personal knowledge of the patient is important in improving outcomes. The very nature of older patients makes them exceptionally vulnerable to iatrogenic illness, illness that is caused inadvertently when a patient is being treated during a hospital stay. Their primary care physician or his/her designee is the logical and best choice to supervise care.

The Florida Geriatric Society values the relationship between patients and providers and feels strongly that patients have a right to choose their own physician, not simply to be assigned randomly to a physician based on the unit to which they are admitted.

An affiliate of the 75-year-old American Geriatrics Society, the premiere professional society for geriatricians in the United States, the Florida Geriatrics Society and the national organization are dedicated to the goal of improving the health, independence, and quality of life for all older people.

Sincerely,

Ronald T. Garry, M.D., FACP, AGSF

President, The Florida Geriatrics Society

