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STOCKBYTE/NEWSCOM

# Limit the stress of tackling stress

Making time to care for their health can add stress to busy lawyers' loads

MICKEY GOODMAN | *Special to the Daily Report*

LIFE FOR MOST LAWYERS is a pressure cooker where stress can reach the boiling point.

Demanding clients, bottlenecked courtroom calendars and out-of-control caseloads coupled with more personal issues, such as child care, eldercare or the serious illness of a loved one can exacerbate the stress exponentially. Mix in scant time for family and friends and years without a restful vacation; you've got the perfect recipe for a health care disaster.

Heeding the advice of physicians that attorneys are at risk for high blood pressure, heart attacks, strokes, diabetes and more, some Atlanta firms are finding ways to help relieve the strain.

The first, and easiest way is to encourage employees to have semi-annual physicals before age 40 and annual physicals after that to head off dormant health problems. But where to find the time to wait around a doctor's office and then wait out the results?

Executive health care, a comprehensive fast-track physical exam, may be the perfect remedy. Fortunately, programs are offered at prime medical facilities like Emory University Hospital, Executive Health Center of Georgia in Atlanta and new this year, Cowles Clinic Executive Health located near Lake Oconee.

In a single appointment, a busy attorney can see a physician in a relaxed atmosphere for an extended examination that includes blood work, cardiograms, prostate or mammogram screening, chest X-rays and more, depending on his or her history and risk factors. Preliminary results are read while the patient is in the office. If indicated, the physician may suggest further testing such as treadmill, CT scan or MRI—which also can be completed the same day. The most significant element is the lengthy discussion that follows with the examining physician who has the

See *Executive Health* page 14



DAILY REPORT EXECUTIVE HEALTH CARE

**Executive** Healthcare, from **page 13** reports in hand.

Though executive health care programs differ in size and scope, none take insurance and all seem to be run by people who understand their clients' busy lives. Patients generally begin early in the morning with no waiting time. During the scant down time between tests, there is usually access to office space. An escort eases the transition from one area to another.

According to Dr. Thomas Jarrett at the Emory Executive Health Center, one of the biggest advantages to receiving annual physicals at the facility is having access to Emory's 900 doctors and resource partners. "If we find a problem, we can pick up the phone and get a patient in to see a specialist that same day," Jarrett says. The same holds true throughout the year.

Even though most lawyers are loathe to complain, they share a lifestyle—12-hour workdays, little down time, poor diet—the results of which show up in the test results. "If a patient says he can't schedule an hour a day for exercise, we might say, 'How about one hour of exercise versus 24 hours of being dead? Think how that would affect your schedule,'" Jarrett says.

Preventative care can be lifesaving. When a routine tread mill test revealed a major blockage in one patient's arteries, Jarrett referred him to a cardiologist who saw him that day. Within 48 hours the patient had bypass surgery. "We've also found lung tumors during routine X-rays and inherited liver disease—both asymptomatic in the patients," Jarrett says.

Where the stars go

The Cowles Clinic Executive Health Program located near the Ritz-Carlton Lodge at Reynolds Plantation in Greensboro opened in June and has quickly attracted people from around the globe. According to Cowles Clinic owner Dr. Robert Cowles and Medical Director Dr. John McCurley, the facility provides complete anonymity for high-profile athletes, actors and executives in a luxurious and relaxed setting.

Typically, patients spend one to three days undergoing necessary tests that may include "Star Wars" technology such as a 64-slide CT of the heart. "It's like having a cardiac catheterization in five minutes," Cowles says. "We can also do a virtual colonoscopy." In addition to the routine and atypical tests, patients see an audiologist, ophthalmologist and dermatologist.

According to Cowles, one of the aspects that set the clinic apart is the genetic testing that can predict what might happen in the future and prevent catastrophic illnesses. "In 50 per-



ZACHARY D. PORTER/DAILY REPORT

The moment Sandra Korosi heard her breast cancer diagnosis, she called fellow Kilpatrick partner and "go-to man" David Zacks.

cent of the patients we see, we find something that could be life threatening," he says.

"My grandfather moved to East Tennessee to take health care where there wasn't any," Cowles says. "It stuck with me." Four years ago, the urologist moved his Atlanta practice to the Lake Oconee area and opened a medical clinic. Today, there are 50 physicians with 25 specialties and a hospital in the works. "The executive health care clinic allows us to support our doctors and facilities to serve our neighbors," he says.

McCurley joined the Cowles Clinic after 24 years of service in the Navy where he served as a staff physician in the Office of the Attending Physician to U.S. Congress, caring for members of the House of Representatives, Senate and Supreme Court.

"I spend a lot of time talking with patients before they arrive," McCurley says. "We've designed a program that's a combination of technology, seasoned physicians and special consultants in an idyllic setting. When I met Bob (Cowles), I knew this had potential to do something extraordinary."

Barry S. Herrin, a partner with Smith Moore, met Cowles while doing some legal work for the clinic. "But we all shop does," Herrin says. "When time came for my physical, I knew Bob had an on-site lab and that I could have everything done in one place."

Because Herrin's blood pressure was dangerously high, Cowles immediately sent him to the clinic's hypertension specialist. "I couldn't be more pleased," Herrin says. "Bob gave me straight talk about what was wrong and what

I needed to do. In high-stress professions like ours, you need someone to tell you what you need to hear, not what you want—just like we tell our clients."

You're in; you're out

Located in the "Pill Hill" area at Peachtree Dunwoody Road and Interstate 285, Executive Health Center of Georgia, is a "small, intimate program for executives," says Richard Kaplan, its medical director.

Because the center is part of an internal medicine practice, only five to seven patients are seen per week. They arrive around 7 a.m. and can complete a head-to-toe exam and head back to work by 9:15 a.m. Patients spend at least an hour with the physician going over their medical and family histories. Extra testing is ordered if certain illnesses run in a family.

The well-trod joke, "Hospitals are no place if you're sick," doesn't apply at Piedmont Hospital's William C. Waters III MD Pavilion where luxurious accommodations and services complement excellent health care in a secure environment. The second floor wing is designed more like a five-star hotel than the normal hospital floor. Each two-room suite has a connecting family room with the same amenities as the patient's room, including a private bath and a separate entry. Afternoon tea is served daily.

Hamilton Jordan, former White House chief of staff in Jimmy Carter's administration, author of "No Such Thing as a Bad Day" and co-founder with his wife, Dorothy, of Camp

Sunshine for children with cancer, has survived eight surgeries for the disease over the past 20 years. Five of them were at Piedmont Hospital where he spent more than 100 nights in the Waters Pavilion.

"I've been treated at great places like Johns Hopkins, The Mayo Clinic, and the University of Maryland, but I've never received better care [than at Piedmont]," he says. "The nurses are exceptional, everyone is committed to keeping the patients happy and the food is wonderful."

While there, Jordan enjoyed use of the room's built-in computer with Wi-Fi access and the business center. He also took advantage of the on-site concierge services.

Like Jordan, Leigh L. Reeves, a partner at Drew Eckl & Farnham, chose Piedmont Hospital when she needed treatment for Stage 3 triple negative breast cancer, a very aggressive form of the disease. "It is rarely found in women under 45," she says. "I had three young children ages 11, 7 and 4, a husband and a busy practice. I was in shock."

Dr. Perry Ballard agreed to see her immediately and spent an hour and a half answering questions. Since the cancer was so advanced, he inserted the port needed for the chemotherapy the next day. "By the third day, I had begun receiving chemotherapy," she says.

Maintaining her appearance for her children and her professional life was important to Lewis who pre-empted the hair loss by having her head shaved and buying a wig identical in style and color to her own. She had chemotherapy prior to surgery and six weeks of radiation afterwards. "I usually went to work either before or after treatments," she says. "Everyone at the firm was very supportive. Because Dr. Ballard started treatment immediately, I'm in complete remission."

Programs that pay for themselves

Recognizing the high-stress, fast-paced nature of the profession, Alston & Bird takes extra steps to ensure employee health by offering a menu of related programs for every staff member.

Cathy Benton, chief human resources officer, says the "stress busters" offered on site have more than paid off. The firm's 20-year-old Weight Watchers program is one of the longest sustained in Weight Watcher history and the smoking cessation program has led to increased health for numerous employees. The firm offers a corporate discount for the gym in the building and on-site massage therapists.

Other stress-reducing programs include an on-site concierge service provided by 2 Places at 1 Time that will handle nagging chores,

THE SKINNY ON EXECUTIVE HEALTH CARE PROGRAMS

FACILITY	ADDRESS	PHONE	WEBSITE	COST
Cowles Clinic	1000 Cowles Clinic Way, Aspen Cottage Suite A-400, Greensboro, GA 30642	(706) 454-0111	www.cowlesclinic.com	\$12,000
Emory Executive Healthcare Center	1525 Clifton Road, Suite 403 Atlanta, GA 30322	(404) 778-5207	www.emoryhealthcare.org	Men: \$1,386; women, \$1,394 (averages \$1,500 to \$1,800 including all the tests.)
Executive Health Center of Georgia	5505 Peachtree Dunwoody Road Suite 650, Atlanta, GA 30342	(404) 252-0701	www.realpagesites.com/executivehealthcenter/index.html	\$750 plus additional testing as required.
Frenesa Hall, MD	N/A	(678) 623-3038	www.Mobile-Medicine.net	New patient consultation is \$250 for the first 30 minutes; \$75 for each 15-minute block afterward. Established patients: \$200 for the first 30 minutes; \$75 for each 15-minute block afterward.



**“Bob gave me straight talk about what was wrong and what I needed to do. In high-stress professions like ours, you need someone to tell you what you need to hear, not what you want — just like we tell our clients.”**

— *Barry S. Herrin*  
Partner, Smith Moore

whether dropping off a car for repair, picking up dry cleaning, planning a party, purchasing gifts or meeting the cable guy at the house. The cost to employees is \$10 per hour plus any expenses incurred. Alston pays a management fee on a per person basis. “It would be at least double if you needed to hire someone on your own,” Benton says.

According to Terry Stevens, Alston’s director of benefits and compensation, additional services include backup child care and elder-care programs that can be used up to 20 times a year and an employee assistance program that provides counseling for family members.

Betsy P. Collins, a partner in Alston’s securities litigation department, has used the eldercare services repeatedly for her 81-year-old mother, who lives in Dothan, Ala. “Her health is rapidly declining,” she says. “Because my sister lives nearby, she bears the brunt of caring for her and for aging aunts.”

Like many baby boomers, Collins and her husband find themselves caught between the needs of their three daughters and those of her mother and his parents. “When I’m in court or at a deposition but feel I should be with my mom or my husband’s parents, I have a lot of guilt,” she says. “Having access to qualified backup care for our parents and kids when they are sick has been an incredible help.”

#### ‘The support was stunning’

Employees at Kilpatrick Stockton enjoy many of the same benefits as those at Alston & Bird, including back-up child and elder care; in-house daycare within walking distance of the firm; coverage for approved weight loss programs; nutritional counseling, subsidized gym membership; a concierge service; and in-house yoga and massages.

In David M. Zacks, a partner in Kilpatrick’s litigation department, employees also have a staunch and knowledgeable supporter in times of serious illness—particularly cancer. Zacks, past national chair of the board of the American Cancer Society, is known as the “go-to” guy when the dreaded disease strikes.

Zacks is all too familiar with the effects of

cancer. He lost his father to lung cancer and both his sister and his mother are breast cancer survivors. He was also a close friend of football great Brian Piccolo when both attended Wake Forest and was stunned when the Chicago Bears star died at age 26. “I collected money for the American Cancer Society in his honor and wanted to see how it was spent,” he says. “The more I learned, the more impressed I became.”

After Zacks’ term as chair was up, he asked Dr. Harold Freeman, past president of the national organization, how he could best continue to serve. Freeman advised him to get involved in the startup of a new Patient Navigator program. “He said, ‘Cancer is an iceberg and the navigator program is like a sailboat. We are going to help patients navigate around the iceberg.’”

At Kilpatrick Stockton, Zacks has become a personal navigator to employees like Sandra Korosi, a coordinator and 22-year veteran of the firm. “The minute I heard the diagnosis of breast cancer, I called David,” she says. “He literally ran to my desk, his tie flying in the breeze,” she recalls. “He told me that whatever I needed, the firm would work on it. The support was stunning.”

The benefits director walked her through the insurance plan who assigned a nurse to call every week. Employees volunteered to take the single mother to chemotherapy and radiation treatments. A co-worker who lived nearby brought food and encouragement. “Out of eight months, rarely a day went by when I didn’t receive food or flowers,” Korosi says. “I felt I was carried on the wings of angels. They contributed to my recovery.”

#### House calls

The old adage, “What’s old is new,” applies to the comeback of old-fashioned house calls. It’s also a boon to busy professionals. Dr. Frenesa Hall, a Harvard-educated, Board Certified Internal Medicine physician and former traditional internist now owns a virtual medical practice offering on-site health care ([www.mobile-medicine.net](http://www.mobile-medicine.net)). Services

include on-site physicals, staff health fairs and flu shots.

In addition, Hall is regional director for InRoom MD ([www.inroommd.com](http://www.inroommd.com)), a national in-room medical concierge service for out-of-towners. Subscriptions are available for frequent travelers.

John C. Stivarius Jr., a partner at Elarbee, Thompson, Sapp & Wilson and his wife, Teresa “Terri” Butler Stivarius, an in-house attorney with Stiefel Laboratories, are both patients of Hall’s.

“Frenesa is so service-oriented and can see me at the office or at home,” he says. “It takes one-third less time and the medical care is as good or better than other physician’s services. She’s like ‘Marcus Welby, MD,’” he says.

D. Lynn Russell of Russell and Herrera is also a patient of Hall’s. “She was my traditional internist and I continued with her,” she says. “I’m a very healthy person but when I need something, I just e-mail or call Dr. Hall and get fast, satisfactory turnaround. She spends more time with me than in a traditional setting. She’s also very much about promoting preventive medicine and developing healthy habits.”

Regardless the quality of the health care, regardless the convenience, regardless the outcome of the testing, it is ultimately up to the patient to affect change. A physician’s best advice is useless if not heeded. The first step is an annual checkup—made more efficient and palatable through executive health care centers and in-house calls. The real work to achieve a healthy lifestyle is up to the individual. ☛

#### For your information



#### Stress Busters

According to World Health Organization (WHO) report, stress is a worldwide epidemic. To decrease stress:

- Exercise and/or practice meditation, yoga, etc.
- Take up a hobby whether it’s golf or cooking
- Set aside the Blackberry and practice time management techniques by devoting blocks of time to certain tasks
- Refocus work/life balance
- Invest more time in yourself
- Take breaks

Source: David J. Abeshouse, “Anxious and Depressed or Energized and Motivated,” *GPSolo Magazine* (ABA General Practice, Solo & Small Firm Division), October/November 2007

#### Resources:

The “Patient Resource: A Cancer Treatment and Facilities Guide for Patients and Their Families” is a comprehensive, informative, easy-to-use directory to locate the top cancer treatment facilities in the U.S. It is available at area cancer clinics or by ordering at [www.patientresource.net](http://www.patientresource.net) (\$6.95).



ROBIN NELSON/ZUMA PRESS

**Hamilton Jordan**, chief of staff for President Jimmy Carter, survived eight surgeries in his 20-year battle with cancer. Pictured from 2000 is Jordan, author of “No Such Thing as a Bad Day” with little-league team.

# Think of this as due diligence for your health.

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Schedule a comprehensive screening with Emory Executive Health today. We’ll make you comfortable with our attentive customer service. Most important, we’ll provide a thorough, detailed physical — with same-day results and ample face time with your physician.

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