

How Ochsner Health System moves medicine

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The AMA “Members Move Medicine” series profiles a wide variety of doctors, offering a glimpse into the passions of women and men navigating new courses in American medicine.

On the move with: Ochsner Health System in Jefferson, Louisiana.

AMA group member since: 2018

How our organization moves medicine: At Ochsner, we have a strong vision and a clear strategy. We have developed a health care model that delivers world class, comprehensive care while putting patients first—it’s about changing and saving lives. As a global medical and academic leader, we are shaping the future of health care through our integrated health system, fueled by the passion and strength of our diversified team of physicians and employees.

We stand behind our mission to serve, heal, lead, educate and innovate; to keep health care local; to maintain our legacy of giving as we work with like-minded organizations to improve quality; improve access to care and to make health care affordable for generations to come.

Over the past 14 years we have grown from a single hospital to a system that strategically aligns with other leading health care institutions in our region to create a clinically integrated network, encompassing 40 hospitals across Louisiana and Mississippi to create new and innovative health care delivery models.

We embody our core values of demonstrating compassion and modeling integrity and excellence while always putting our patients first. This can’t be done without the tremendous teamwork and support from our nurses, physicians and staff.

Last year, Ochsner treated patients from all 50 states in the U.S., and 72 countries from around the world. We’re a true national and global destination center that offers specialty care services, such as cancer care, neurologic, pediatric and cardiac care, and organ transplants.

We've created a culture of wellness, shifting away from the traditional way of delivering episodic care and toward managing populations as a whole—before, during and after a patient presents in a healthcare facility.

At Ochsner, we have made the decision to lead the way in improving the delivery of health care services because we believe that providing high quality, coordinated care at a lower cost is the right thing to do for patients and an integral part of our vision to change and save more lives.

For example:

- Our nationally recognized Multi-Organ Transplant Institute has outcomes that are consistently higher than national benchmarks and our wait times are shorter than the national average. We have a 97.14 percent one-year patient survival rate for kidney and 1.9-month median wait time for livers, compared to the 12-month national wait time.
- Our Pediatric Cardiology Program at Ochsner Hospital for Children boasts a 100 percent survival rate for all neonatal surgery, child heart surgery and Norwood Procedure (for hypoplastic left heart syndrome), and an overall mortality rate of 1.8 percent for congenital heart surgery for all ages, significantly below the national average of 2.9 percent.
- We've improved quality such as HCAHPS, EDCAHPS and Hospital Compare rankings in three of our managed hospitals—Ochsner Medical Center, Hancock, Leonard J. Chabert Medical Center and St. Charles Parish Hospital—who have been nationally recognized for these successes.
- We've implemented Epic, our electronic medical record software, across our system and at our partner hospitals to create true coordination of care. This not only allows patient to provider communication, but also offers the population health tools to help identify, engage and track patients at risk for chronic conditions that ultimately reduces hospitalizations and improves overall wellness.
- We've made significant investments in online appointment scheduling, communicating via text message and employing devices that patients already use every day, which has resulted in more than 400,000 online appointments.

How our organization stands out: Ochsner's core is its group practice. With more than 1,300 employed physicians, it is really part of the foundation that makes Ochsner different. We take a team-oriented, patient-centered approach that is built on our legacy. Another area that separates us from our competitors is our people. Over the past decade, we've made a significant investment in leadership development for our physicians and administrative leaders.

Additionally, we've embraced the role of our 725 Advanced Practice Providers, which include Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists, Nurse Practitioners, Midwives and Physician Assistants, so we can see more patients, provide coordinated, quality care, reduce patient wait times and free up physicians to treat patients who need specialized care for more complex issues. Our ability to innovate and take

risks in this ever-changing climate provides a competitive advantage. We are relentless about getting better and that's driven by the team here at Ochsner.

Lastly, we are fortunate to have an engaged community and physician boards. They helped guide the vision and strategy of the organization and have been supportive of our growth and development over the past decade-plus. They think big picture and challenge us to be the best that we can be. Having a strong board and governance is extremely important to the success of any organization.

Notable accomplishments and highlights:

- Only Louisiana hospital recognized by U.S. News & World Report as a 2018-19 "Best Hospital" across three specialty categories.
- Microsoft Corporation's 2018 Health Innovation Award recipient.
- 2018 Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS) Davies Award recipient.
- Top 50 children's hospitals in the country by U.S. News & World Report for pediatric gastroenterology and gastrointestinal surgery specialties.
- Forbes Best Employers for New Grads list.
- 2018 Innovator Award from Association of Community Cancer Centers.
- Glassdoor Employees' Choice Award honoring the Top CEOs in 2018.
- 2018 IBM Watson 15 Major Teaching Hospitals: Ochsner Medical Center – New Orleans and 20 Medium Community Hospitals: Ochsner Medical Center – Baton Rouge.
- Anti-Defamation League 2018 A.I. Botnick Torch of Liberty Award.
- 2018 Top-Rated Workplaces: Best Hospitals by Indeed (ranked number 11 in the country) by Indeed.
- Ranked first in Louisiana for 2018-19 by U.S. News & World Report.
- National Research Corporation Health 2017-2018 Top 100 Consumer Loyalty list.
- 2018 Top Hospital for Diversity by BlackDoctor.org.

How our organization gives back to the community: Ochsner Health System is committed to improving the health and wellness of the individuals, families, and communities in our state. We feel the responsibility to lead by example and set the standard for meaningful care and healthy living.

Driven by this, in 2013, Ochsner Fitness Center Registered Dietitian Molly Kimball created Eat Fit, a nonprofit initiative with a mission to minimize barriers to wellness, making the healthy choice an easy choice for consumers of all ages. The Ochsner Eat Fit team of registered dietitians works closely with local restaurants, markets, schools and other foodservice establishments to identify nutritious choices with the Ochsner Eat Fit seal of approval to help inform consumers of healthy options.

As a result of its success, Ochsner Eat Fit has expanded to more than 300 restaurants and foodservice establishments across Louisiana, catching the attention of Blue Cross Blue Shield

Foundation of Louisiana. Together, they formed a partnership promoting wellness and chronic disease prevention throughout the state, improving nutrition literacy and supporting positive lifestyle choices for a healthier Louisiana.

In 2018, Eat Fit expanded to 12 local schools in partnership with Pigeon Catering & Events to revamp classic school lunches into delicious options. As a result, more than 3,000 free and reduced meals and snacks are served daily that provide an Eat Fit option for students and other schools interested in participating in the program.

More recently, we partnered with Market Umbrella to introduce a weekly Crescent City Farmers Market at Ochsner. Fifteen local farmer and vendors provide fresh, locally grown food as an effort to provide accessible, healthier options to the community. The market also offers fresh food incentive programs, including:

- Market Match, a dollar for dollar match of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits spent at the market, with up to \$20 per market day.
- Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP). Many certified vendors will accept FMNP Senior and Women, Infants and Children coupons.
- Electronic Benefits Transfer, credit cards and checks will be accepted at the market's Welcome Tent.

Lastly, Ochsner has a rich history of investing in education and workforce development and are redefining what the future of health care looks like in our region through this commitment. We are extremely focused on workforce development to create a new generation of talent. This may be through our school-based initiatives like STAR (for scientifically inclined high school students) or training programs geared to providing opportunities for the un- or underemployed population who are looking to start a career in health care. We also provide leadership learning opportunities through our Ochsner Learning Institute. We offer new programs around financial health. We work with new vendors to enhance our benefits package to include more family-friendly options.

We support advanced education and provide significant educational resources, whether it's through our Continuing Nursing Education classes, our partnership with Chamberlain University College of Nursing, Continuing Medical Education for physicians or our Physician Assistant Program with Xavier University of Louisiana.

How our organization advocates for physicians and patients: Most recently, Ochsner took a stance to increase our minimum wage hourly rate by 48 percent. In 2017, we conducted a Human Resources assessment that helped focus our recommendations on programs and changes to improve the overall financial well-being of our employees. Although Ochsner was already well above the current Louisiana minimum wage, we wanted to do more.

In 2017, we made it a priority at Ochsner to understand burnout and the key issues behind it, along with its status in our system. Our physicians and Advanced Practice Providers participated in an industry-leading survey which indicated that 51 percent of Ochsner providers met the criteria for burnout. While still lower than the national average, we saw an opportunity to not only address this issue, but to create a best practice for potential solutions.

A Well-Being Task Force was assembled to understand these results along with ways to, very simply, bring some of the joy back to our providers' work. The task force spent more than 12 months analyzing data, conducting interviews and focus groups, and researching best-in-class health care institutions known for low levels of burnout.

As a direct result of these findings and recommendations, we developed an Office of Professional Well-Being, which will work closely with physicians and key organizational leaders in Human Resources, Nursing, Quality, Patient Experience and Service Excellence, Epic and more to build a strong foundation for change and the tools needed to impact the well-being of all Ochsner staff.

By initiating this program, we can:

- Drive a sustainable culture of wellness.
- Improve workflow efficiencies.
- Address system-level burnout risks and issues.
- Coach teams struggling with trust and connectedness.
- Ensure key organizational decisions consider the impact on our provider workforce.
- Connect teams and individuals with supportive resources.

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