

COMING ^{OF} AGE

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AGING...

Why it's
Misunderstood

10

Things The
GRANDKIDS

Will LOVE To Do
With You!

Palliative Care:
**Redefining
Hope**

**Dr Ken
Redcross**

Understanding The Who, What and
Why of CONCIERGE MEDICINE

Exploring Concierge Medicine

An interview with **Dr. Redcross**

By: Jen Graziano

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When we hear “concierge”, words such as “convenience”, “top class” and “efficient” are called to mind. In the modern world we find ourselves needing to be in multiple places at any given time, and thus any opportunity for convenience is quickly seized. There are concierge services to assist with daily household tasks such as picking up dry cleaning and walking the dog or even deliver groceries to our front door. Our minds are wired towards finding solutions to simplify everyday life. We are looking for convenience yet also, quality service.



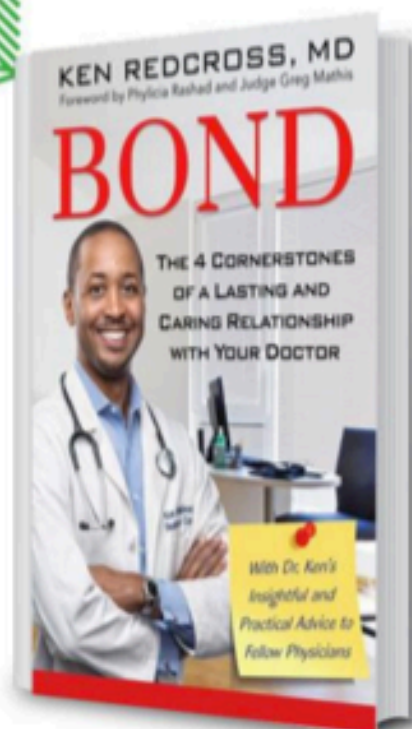
It is easy to understand, therefore, how the medical field has joined on to the “convenience craze”. Why spend hours sitting idle in a doctor’s waiting room, amidst handfuls of infirmed patients, when you can be readily seen by a doctor? Why visit a large medical practice and be uncertain as to which doctor will examine you, when you can have an established relationship with a particular physician? Why wait for “normal business hours” to have your medical situation addressed when your doctor is just a phone call away?

Welcome to the world of concierge medicine. Sometimes referred to a retainer medicine, concierge medicine is a relationship between a patient and a primary care physician in which the patient pays an annual fee or retainer. In exchange for the retainer, doctors provide enhanced care, including principally a commitment to limit patient loads to ensure adequate time and availability for each patient. The ultimate results of concierge medicine are convenience as well as more personalized, attentive medical care.

We recently sat down with Dr. Ken Redcross, a nationally renowned concierge physician with a practice right in Westchester County. Dr. Ken Redcross, MD, is author of “Bond: The 4 Cornerstones of a Lasting and Caring Relationship with Your Doctor,” and founder of Redcross Concierge, a personalized medical practice designed to enhance the patient-doctor relationship while providing convenient access to a full spectrum of health care services and holistic and wellness counseling. As one of the first full-service concierge, personalized medical practices in the United States, Redcross’ patient portfolio includes executives, athletes and entertainers, as well as individuals from all walks and stages of life. His focus on developing the patient-doctor bond is a unique characteristic of his concierge services that allows for a more strategic and customized approach to each patient’s healthcare plan. Redcross earned his medical degree from Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center in New York, specializing in internal medicine. Here is what Dr. Redcross had to offer on the subject of concierge medicine;

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Q. Dr. Redcross, what inspired you to adopt the concierge model for your medical practice?

A. I felt that patients deserved more from me, and from our healthcare system here in the United States. Patients deserve more than seven and a half minutes, which is the actual average time a doctor spends at each visit according to several studies. Patients also deserve to have an experience with a physician that is almost as closely knit as a family member. Most importantly, a bond in trust should be forged between doctor and patient to keep patients healthy physically, mentally and spiritually. This model has allowed me to provide all of the above and to be patient-focused.

Q. What is the greatest difference or change you have noticed since utilizing the concierge model?

A. The concierge medicine model has allowed me to merge both eastern and western medicine. I now recommend medicines and supplements that are closer to the earth. For example, as cold and flu season approaches, Oscillococcinum — one of my favorites — has been shown to decrease the severity and duration of flu-like symptoms when taken within the first 48 hours. This non-drowsy homeopathic medicine is backed by studies, has no known drug interactions,

and can be used in children 2 years of age and older. This sort of discussion and education for my patients is quite valuable. My concierge model allows me more time to discuss this and other remedies as an alternative or addition to prescription options.

Q. What is the most common change or feature your patients have shared with you about seeing a concierge physician?

A. They love the level of service and attention that they receive. Several patients like to discuss specific things that they typically would not have been able to in a conventional practice due to the time constraints during the visit.

Q. Does being a concierge physician place a greater strain of demand on your personal time?

A. I would never want to call it a strain or demanding, I prefer to think of it as what is sometimes required to make a difference. This sort of practice model is a choice, and I would go as far as to say it's a blessing to care for patients this way. Can I get calls a bit late at night? Sure. Or, maybe I have to meet at a few less-than-convenient locations? Absolutely. But I always end up with a good result -- a happy patient. I like to call it trying to create patient nirvana!

Q. What are 3 things you want our readers to know about concierge medicine?

A. If you want to have more access to healthcare and to your physician, concierge medicine is perfect for you.

If you want to have the amount of time required to get a clear understanding and description of your medical concerns, concierge medicine is for you.

If you want care when it's convenient for you or wherever you may be located, then concierge medicine is for you. I enjoy making house calls.

Q. Do you believe the concierge model will continue to grow? And if "yes", how do you see it changing or evolving?

Yes, it will continue to grow, especially as patients become more educated about the concierge model and the value it can bring them in terms of their happiness and improved health outcomes. You are already seeing the market starting to grow with concierge companies that have several physicians on staff with longer appointment times and a reduced workload so that the time can be put back into creating and solidifying the patient doctor-bond. I have written a book called "Bond: The Four Cornerstones of a Lasting and Caring Relationship with you Doctor," which emphasizes the significance of trust, communication, empathy and respect.



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