

The Doctor Will See You Now—**At Home**

For many frail elderly or homebound patients, a doctor who makes house calls can be the best medicine.

Doctors who make house calls deliver much-needed health care to an often overlooked population, says Jeffrey Brensilver, MD, Director of the Department of Medicine at Sound Shore Medical Center.

“Typically the homebound have limited access to care because it’s so difficult for them to travel to physicians’ offices,” Dr. Brensilver says. “Unfortunately, many connect with a doctor only when they wind up in the emergency room.”

Thankfully, that may be changing—with the help of a new Physician Home Visit Program begun by Sound Shore Health System and the Visiting Nurse Association (VNA) of Hudson Valley. Through this joint program, a physician makes home visits to qualified patients. The Physician Home Visit Program is the only one of its kind in Westchester County.

Though the practice harkens back to the house calls of decades past, today’s doctor arrives with an arsenal of sophisticated equipment to meet a patient’s needs. “We can do the equivalent of an office checkup in the comfort of the patient’s home,” says Norris Fox, MD, Chief of Geriatrics at Sound Shore

Medical Center. “This includes eye and ear exams, lab tests, EKGs, and radiology exams. We also can give injections, write prescriptions, and provide wound care.”

The physicians from Sound Shore Medical Center and Mount Vernon Hospital who make the home visits are board certified in internal medicine or family practice. Additionally, some are fellowship-trained in geriatrics. They make their house calls in collaboration with a VNA nurse, which ensures that a patient’s follow-up care will be well coordinated, Dr. Fox says.

“The Sound Shore Health System is a leader in geriatric care, and we’re continually looking for ways to enhance our services,” Dr. Fox says. “We have to recognize that many people can’t make it to a doctor’s office because of advanced illness. So we have to give them an alternative to ensure they get good medical care.” ■

Learn more about the Physician Home Visit Program by calling [914-637-1646](tel:914-637-1646).

