

Wait a minute — this doctor makes *house* calls and *only* house calls??

By John Addyman

WEBSTER, Jan. 27 — “The first question I get, almost always, is ‘Are you a real doctor?’”

Luis Postigo, MD does hear that a lot, because he is almost too good to be true. He has a very simple medical practice: he only treats people 65 or older, and he treats them in their homes.

He is a doctor who makes house calls, 24x7.

And if that isn't stunning enough, he is expanding his practice — at the request of the Wayne County Office of the Aging — from Rochester/Webster into Ontario, Williamson, Marion, Walworth and Macedon.

One more point — his services are covered by insurance (AARP, MVP, Medicare, Excellus, Cigna and many others).

“The next question they ask is, ‘Does he do home visits all the time?’

“Yes, I do.”

When you start a patient relationship with him, he becomes your primary care provider. Need blood work? He'll do the draw in your home. X-Rays? He'll set that up for you — in your home. Electrocardiogram? He'll do it, right there in your home. Need prescriptions? He'll write them and link you up with a pharmacy that delivers. Want a flu shot? He'll administer it. Need to go to the hospital? He will see you at Rochester General (if you go to another hospital, the doctors there will take care of you).

For family members, Dr. Postigo will do a geriatric assessment to determine what a loved one needs in the home. He will note mental and physical abilities in that assessment. He'll coordinate care for medical equipment needs and work with specialists who can come to the home and deliver services. And he'll do some things many doctors would assign to someone else — like cleaning ears and trimming toenails.

He goes to pains to make his patients comfortable right away.

“When I first started, I would go to the house with a white coat on,” he said. “The first house, a dog jumped on me. The second visit, little kids were crying when I opened the door. They thought someone was going to get a shot or something.”

So he wears a blue shirt with his name embroidered on it, under “Housecalls for Seniors.”

Dr. Postigo, 50, is board-certified in Internal Medicine, Geriatric Medicine, Hospice and Palliative Care, and he has been a medical director.

He and his wife moved here from Galveston, TX 10 years ago, right after a hurricane devastated the area. “I wanted to move as far north as I could,” he said “to get away from all that.”

They drove through Wayne County and found the area beautiful. “We love this area,” he said. “We came through

Wayne County in change of season. A bald eagle carried a salmon across the road in front of my vehicle. Where do you get that?

“It was a dream of mine to offer this service,” he said. “I'm not funded by the government: I created this program, it's a lonely path, I'm swimming against the current.”

His practice makes great sense to senior citizens, some of whom have great difficulty leaving their homes by themselves and can't — or won't — bother someone to help them get to a doctor's office. Some don't like doctor's offices, period.

“Treating seniors who are having difficulty getting out of their homes has been my passion,” Postigo said.

Technology helps. His laptop can bring up a patient's complete history, or an X-Ray, or recent blood work. He has a dependable all-wheel drive SUV that is comfortable and gets good gas mileage, and he's ready to roll.

“Almost all the people who call, their main goal is to stay at home. It makes sense financially. People can't afford to go into a nursing home. They can stay where they've been their whole adult lives, a place which they own. Sometimes they're taking care of somebody else and cannot leave their home. I provide a way they can expand the time they can live independently, maybe years, maybe longer than that.”

There are no illusions about his patients: they are a frail subset of the population and have special needs and attitudes. His geriatric training gives him a unique skillset beyond that of a family doctor, especially when dementia plays a role in the decisions on care.

He said his patients have three kinds of involvement — the family is close and involved, the family is somewhat involved, or the patient is facing things alone. He works with the county office of aging to make sure his patients have someone to speak for them if necessary, and he deals with adult protective services as well.

Dr. Postigo said he approaches his patients with a compassionate but frank honesty.

“Your relationship with your doctor is like a marriage sometimes,” he said. “It needs to be a good fit. I always give my opinion. Some people appreciate it; some not so much. I tell the truth. I explain, ‘This is where you are, this is where you will be, and these are your options. You need to know what's going on. I'll leave it up to you to decide.’”

“People know things are not right; sometimes they're afraid of what they think is happening. So me, confirming the situation, sometimes you shoot the messenger. But you need to tell the truth. Get the family involved, get everyone on the same page, do what the patient wants to do.

“My goal of care is comfort and quality of life,” Dr. Postigo said. “Improving the quality of life of my patient improves the quality of life for my patient's family.”



Dr. Luis Postigo is bringing his home-visit-only senior-citizens practice to western Wayne County, taking on new patients now at the request of Wayne County Office for Aging. Backed by laptop technology, he can assess and diagnose in a kitchen or living room, and coordinate all kinds of services that keep someone 65 and older independent and in their homes. His website is www.HousecallMDforSeniors.com



The Williamson Senior High Theatre Club

Presents **AIDA** (an Elton John and Tim Rice Production)

Senior Citizen Only Performance

February 8th, 2017

At 5:00 p.m. High School Auditorium

Refreshments during intermission

