



**Media contact:** Lisa Greene, USF Health Communications  
(813) 974-4312 or [lgreene@health.usf.edu](mailto:lgreene@health.usf.edu)

## **Groundbreaking begins for the USF Health Specialty Care Center in The Villages**

**THE VILLAGES, FL (March 11, 2013)** – Construction began this morning on the new USF Health Specialty Care Center in The Villages, setting the stage for a new era and range of health care available for residents in “America’s Healthiest Hometown.”

Once the center opens in October, residents of The Villages, the nation’s largest community of people over 55, will be able to receive high-level care from faculty physicians who operate at the forefront of medical knowledge. USF Health doctors who represent several specialties will be providing care at the 25,000 square foot facility.

The center is designed as a collaborative complement to The Villages Health primary care network, which is now expanding and will soon operate seven different offices in The Villages for residents to choose from, allowing them to receive the best health care without leaving their neighborhood.

The unique partnership provides a model for comprehensive care that is truly centered around the patient, said Stephen Klasko, MD, MBA, dean of the USF Health Morsani College of Medicine and CEO of USF Health.

“Working together, we will be able to provide better health for The Villagers over the entire spectrum of care,” Dr. Klasko said. “Villagers will have a medical home with a patient-centered primary network, access to the best academic specialists, and technology services that include shared electronic records and telehealth opportunities. The mission of USF Health is ‘making life better’ and this partnership will be an embodiment of that mission.”

The partnership between The Villages and USF Health is a great model for how academic medicine can improve health, said Elliot Sussman, MD, MBA, chair of The Villages Health.

“We are delighted to have our great primary care doctors working with the specialty physicians of USF Health,” Dr. Sussman said. “This partnership will give Villagers access to seamless care that starts with having a Villages Health doctor who knows them and their medical history and can provide top-notch regular care. When they need a specialist, that doctor can connect them to a network of specialists offering the most cutting-edge treatments right here in The Villages.”

Work on the Specialty Care Center project began after USF’s College of Public Health

conducted a record-setting survey of the Villagers, asking about their health needs and goals. More than 37,000 Villagers responded, making this the largest such survey of an aging population. The survey will yield national recommendations for healthy aging, and is already being used in planning the Specialty Care Center. Villagers surveyed showed a high level of interest in a model that provides coordinated care and gives them a medical home.

**-USF Health-**

*USF Health's mission is to envision and implement the future of health. It is the partnership of the USF Health Morsani College of Medicine, the College of Nursing, the College of Public Health, the College of Pharmacy, the School of Biomedical Sciences and the School of Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation Sciences; and the USF Physician's Group. The University of South Florida is a global research university ranked 50<sup>th</sup> in the nation by the National Science Foundation for both federal and total research expenditures among all U.S. universities.*