

NOV 6-12
2009

Volume 28
Number 38

215-238-1450

philadelphia
businessjournal
.com

\$3.50

PHILADELPHIA BUSINESS JOURNAL

**SIMPLY
SUPER**
Best Real
Estate
Deals
revealed.
B1

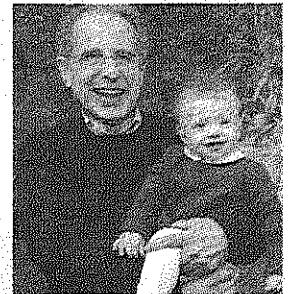


SEPTA strike
See philadelphiabusinessjournal.com for daily coverage. Opinion **P36**

Stimulus Listings
Find stimulus-funded projects at philadelphiabusinessjournal.com/stimulus. **P4**



Sixers slowdown
76ers try to gin up attendance for their basketball games. **P8**



Proud CEO
Dr. John M. Tedeschi of Continuum Health Alliance and Advocare. **P15**

Viridity aided by stimulus

ATHENA D. MERRITT
STAFF WRITER

Peco Energy Co.'s \$200 million federal stimulus grant award last week will translate into \$1.179 million for Viridity Energy as a project partner.



Zibelman

Viridity is also a partner on four other federal stimulus grant applications that, if awarded, could bring the total to about \$14 million for the firm, which was started last year by two former executives of PJM Interconnection.

Since July, the Conshohocken firm that provides large energy consumers with smart-grid technology to cut energy costs and increase efficiency has grown from 11 employees to 20. With the track Viridity's on it could see its first profit in 2011-12, said President and CEO Audrey Zibelman, who founded

SEE VIRIDITY, P35



BUSINESS JOURNAL

Dr. Madeleine Weiser of Weiser and Associates in Wynnewood administers H1N1 vaccine.

Health providers scramble

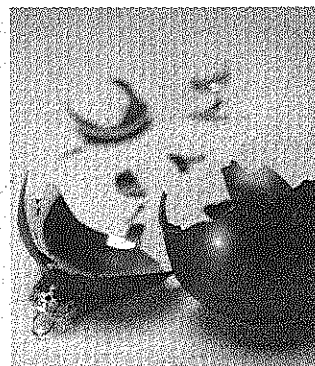
JOHN GEORGE
STAFF WRITER

Area health-care providers of all types — hospitals, pediatricians and primary-care practices, retail-based health clinics and urgent-care centers — are dealing with a deluge of patients who either have H1N1, think they may have the virus or want the vaccine to prevent it.

In response, the health-care providers are adding temporary staff, expanding hours, creating temporary treatment space, restricting visiting hours and posting vaccine availability updates on their Web sites.

"We're overwhelmed," said Dr. John M. Tedeschi, the founder and president of Advocare, a pediatric- and primary-care practice

SEE FLU, P34



Holiday parties to take a hit in hard times

PETER VAN ALLEN
STAFF WRITER

Like many economic indicators, this year's holiday party may be a shadow of its former self.

Companies are cutting back, planning events at the last minute and trading sit-down dinners for "food stations," open bars for coolers of beer and porterhouse steaks for mini-cheeseburgers. In some cases, modest affairs are

being cast as "doing the right thing."

"A lot of companies are giving it greater thought, but may be waiting to the last minute. We're getting calls we would have gotten two months ago last year right now," said Morgan Bedroe, a manager for Stephen Starr Events, a 2-year-old division of the restaurant company. "Because we're seeing more last minute planning, that's what we've

SEE HOLIDAY, P35

THE LIST

Private sector employers
Biggest ranked by county employees. **P20, 22, 24, 26, 28**

Economic development groups
Largest in the Delaware Valley according to number of employees. **P30**



SUBSCRIBE TODAY AND GET YOUR BOOK OF BUSINESS LISTS! CALL 215-238-1450

DailyUpdate Sign up @ philadelphia.bizjournals.com

Get the latest business news headlines emailed to you every weekday.

Sign up for our free Daily Update TODAY!



FEATURES INDEX

ENTERPRISE	12	BEST REAL ESTATE DEALS	B1
CEO FILE	15	LISTS 20, 22, 24, 26, 28, 30	
NETWORKING	16	BUSINESS LEADS	19
GOOD WORKS	17	MARKETPLACE	33
PEOPLE ON THE MOVE	18	VIEWPOINT/OP-ED	36, 37
OUT & ABOUT	18	PEOPLE/CO. INDEX	38

FLU: 'Double our volume on the worst days and a 50% increase most other days'

FROM PAGE 1

group with 66 office locations in the region. "Our phone system is overwhelmed. We have a triage staff that handles phone calls after office hours. We've doubled that staff. The other day they handled more than 300 calls. That was the highest in the history of our organization."



Tedeschi

Tedeschi said Advocare's practice sites have extended their hours and brought in temporary nurses to handle the influx of patients. Most doctors, who typically will see 25 patients in a day, are seeing nearly twice that number.

Additionally, he said, practices are canceling well-child checks-ups or coordinating those visits into specific time blocks to minimize the exposure of healthy children to kids with H1N1 or those suspected of having the virus.

"Most of our offices have separate sick and well patient waiting areas and some have a third for infants," Tedeschi said. "We're doing everything we can to reduce exposure."

Tedeschi said only three Advocare practice sites have received H1N1 vaccine supplies.

"One got a small order of the [injectable vaccine] and two got small orders of the [nasal spray vaccine]," he said. "With the number of patients we care for, that's not doing us much good."

Tedeschi said when more vaccine supplies are delivered, the practice will schedule weekend and evening hours devoted to administering the vaccine, just as they have done with the seasonal flu vaccine.

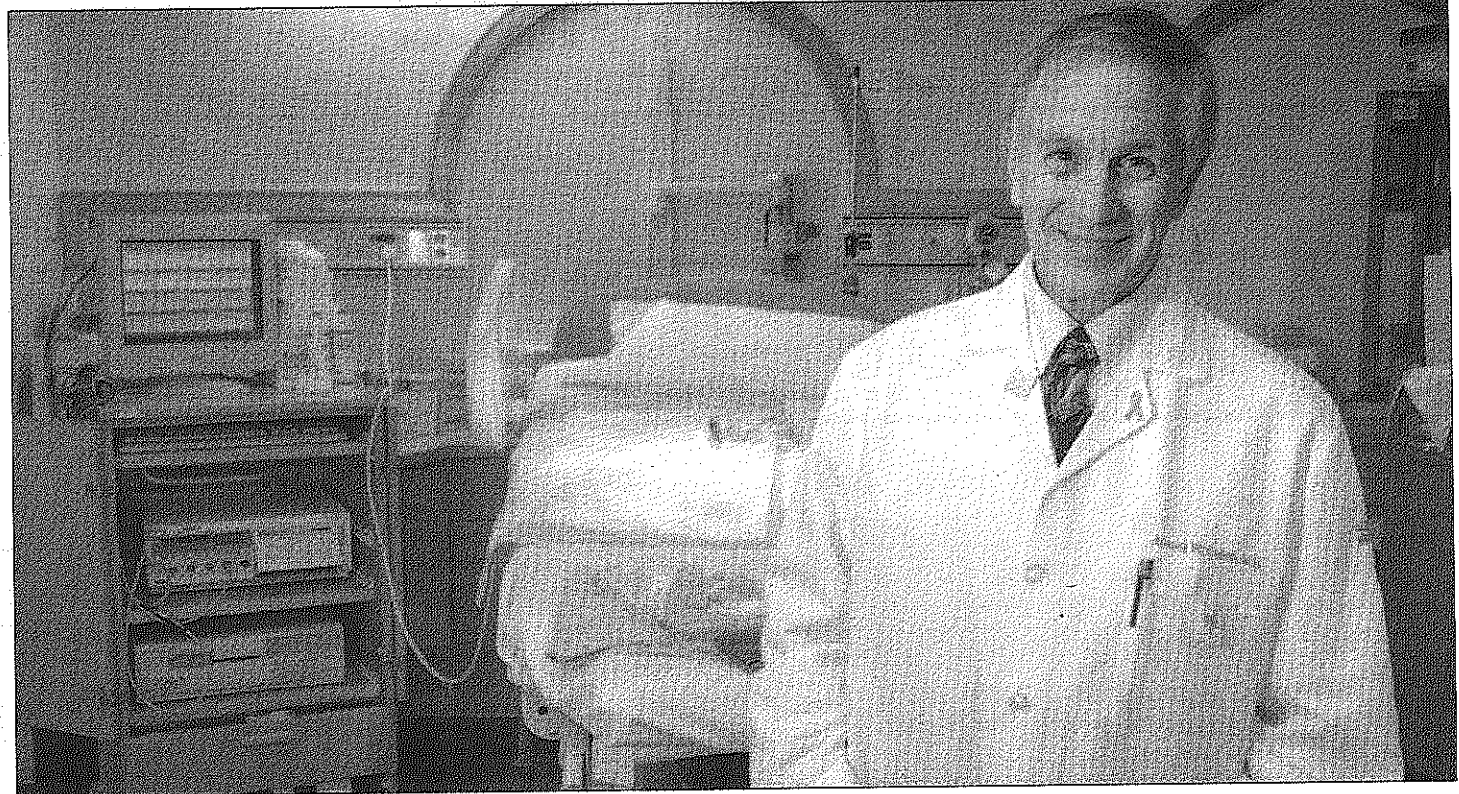
Hospitals throughout the region have responded to the spread of the H1N1 virus by implementing or enforcing existing age restrictions on hospital visitors.

Tom Grace, vice president of health services and emergency preparedness for the Delaware Valley Healthcare Council, said DVHC late last week issued guidelines to local hospitals suggesting they set age limitations for visitors and restrict visitors to immediate family members.

Grace said volume is up on average about 10 percent to 15 percent at hospital emergency rooms. Part of the reason, he said, is schools are requiring doctors' notes for students who miss class time. Some families are heading to the ERs to get a doctor's note even when their child is not in need of emergency care. He urged people not to go to ERs unless they, or their children, are truly ill. Additionally, Grace urged employers to relax policies and allow workers to use sick time to stay at home with children who are showing H1N1 virus symptoms so the virus is not spread to classmates.

The emergency departments at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia and St. Christopher's Hospital for Children have experienced the largest surges in patients.

CHOP had more than 500 emergency-room patients one day last week, a record



CURT HUDSON

Dr. Arnold Cohen said Albert Einstein Medical Center has high-tech help to deal with pregnant women with H1N1.

for the West Philadelphia pediatric hospital. CHOP is using space in its main lobby atrium to handle the overflow of ER patients.

Dr. Nicholas Tsarouhas, an emergency room physician at CHOP, said the West Philadelphia pediatric center's ER saw 400 patients for the first time in one 24-hour period last week — then a few days later shattered that record when the number topped 500.

"We're seeing double our volume on the worst days and a 50 percent increase most other days," Tsarouhas said.

CHOP has responded to the influx — preceded by six months of planning — by setting up satellite waiting rooms and treatment areas throughout the hospital, and borrowing staff from other departments to reduce wait times.

St. Christopher's in North Philadelphia said emergency room visits are up 25 percent compared to this time last year.

Marisa A. Sharkey, a hospital spokeswoman, said St. Christopher's is using space in its ambulatory pediatrics department to provide additional beds for the emergency department. During the busiest times in the evening hours, St. Christopher's is providing additional staffing for its ER using physicians from various pediatric subspecialties to reduce the wait times for patients.

Along with children, another at-risk group for the H1N1 virus is pregnant women.

Albert Einstein Medical Center, also in North Philadelphia, last month began using a new technology, developed by PeriGen of Princeton, for the care of women who are pregnant.

The PeriBirth products work by downloading a patient's medical history and monitoring what is happening in the delivery room. The data are collected and ana-

lyzed by the computer system, which then provides prompts and reminders to the doctors and nurses. If the system detects an irregularity, it immediately alerts doctors with a warning or instructions. The technology is wired specifically to look for H1N1 symptoms, according to PeriGen.

"It's a sophisticated electronic medical record system that provides clinical decision-making support," said Dr. Arnold Cohen, chairman of obstetrics and gynecology at Einstein.

Cohen said the system was developed to aid in the care of all patients, but PeriGen added features — such as providing reminders about immunizations and guidelines for antiviral medicines — when it became clear pregnant women had an increased risk for the virus.

"It really does help bring [H1N1] to the forefront if everybody's mind," said Cohen, noting the North Philadelphia hospital has cared for about 10 pregnant patients with the H1N1 virus over the past month.

The quest for patients wanting vaccine shots or spray has also brought patients to local retail health clinics and urgent-care centers.

One of the first sites in the region to get supplies of H1N1 vaccine was Premier Intermediate Medical — which has urgent-care centers in Oaks, Exton, and Cherry Hill and a fourth in Douglasville, Berks County.

"I don't know the exact reason why," said Dr. Dheeraj Taranath, Premier's medical director. "We had no clue we were going to get it until the shipment arrived. In order to get the vaccine you had to register with the state Health Department and we registered early, so that might have had something to do with it."

Taranath said he was told the state was initially sending the vaccine to provider sites with broad access, and not sites where it would only be available to certain patients.

"All of our centers are open 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.," he said.

The demand for the vaccine has caused Premier to increase staffing levels by 25 percent. "At our newest center [in Exton] we were seeing about 40 patients a day, and now it's up to almost 200," Taranath said.

Dr. Stuart Brilliant, co-founder of Pioneer Urgent Care in Chadds Ford, said his facility has tried — unsuccessfully so far — to get H1N1 vaccine shipments.

"As a small practice here, I wasn't able to procure any," Brilliant said. "Most of the vaccine is going to the large pharmacy chains and the Walmarts."

Brilliant said Pioneer has experienced a surge in flu patients this fall, with about 20 patients with flu symptoms coming into the urgent-care center a day as compared to 10 during the same period last year. Pioneer has added a physician assistant to its staff to handle the increase.

Gabriel Weissman, a spokesman for Take Care Health Systems in Conshohocken, said the company has registered its retail clinic at Walgreens pharmacies as H1N1 vaccine administration sites.

Take Care, a subsidiary of Walgreens, has only received limited quantities of the H1N1 from state and local health organizations — none for its Pennsylvania clinics that include about a dozen locally.

Weissman said the company is urging people to regularly visit its Web site where the availability of vaccines is updated at least three times a day. He also said the clinics' nurse practitioners are available to educate people about the virus and to prescribe antiviral medicines such as Tamiflu and Relenza when clinically appropriate.

The Take Care clinics have set new records for delivering season flu vaccines.

Weissman noted Take Care clinics have already administered more than 350,000 doses of seasonal flu vaccines compared with 220,000 for all of last year. ■

**'We're
doing
everything
we can
to reduce
exposure.'**

Dr. John Tedeschi
Advocare



Brilliant