

Nemours Children's Health Hires Pediatric Psychologist as Clinical Director for Integrated Behavioral Health in Primary Care

Orlando, Fla. (Dec. 19, 2022) – Nemours Children's Health has hired clinical psychologist Monica Barreto, Ph.D., as its Clinical Director for Behavioral Health for Primary Care in Central Florida.

Last year, Nemours Children's began to implement a pilot program that will provide equitable and increased access to pediatric mental health providers.

The Nemours Children's Health Integrated Behavioral Health Initiative, getting underway in primary care locations across Central Florida, and already in effect at Nemours Children's Health in Delaware Valley, enables dedicated pediatric psychologists, licensed professional counselors, and licensed clinical social workers to be embedded within a patient's medical home — the pediatric setting in which children receive their comprehensive care — to increase access to holistic mental health services while reducing the stigma of treatment.

"Dr. Barreto will help Nemours Children's Primary Care offices improve access for young patients to get behavioral support avoiding any stigma associated with mental health services," said Tom Lacy, MD, Medical Director for Primary Care for Nemours in Florida. "We know that poor access to mental health providers has resulted in patients either not receiving care or relying on emergency services for behavioral health issues."

Dr. Barreto earned a master's degree in applied developmental psychology from the University of Pittsburgh before she earned her doctorate in clinical psychology from Western Michigan University. She completed a predoctoral internship in clinical psychology and postdoctoral fellowship at Yale University, Yale Child Study Center.

Providing psychological care and assessment for pediatric patients who are experiencing cognitive or behavioral problems related to their chronic illness is Dr. Barreto's specialty. In this program, she is also treating patients who are experiencing emotional, behavioral and cognitive concerns including anxiety, depression, distress and sleep difficulties.

"As Clinical Director for the Integrated Behavioral Health initiative, our goal is to help children and families increase access to care by identifying emotional and behavioral difficulties early on and provide brief interventions in the safety of their primary care clinic. The integrated model also facilitates collaboration with care teams at Nemours Children's Hospital, Florida to provide families with early psychological services, including individual and family therapy, and psychological testing," said Dr. Barreto.

Born and raised in Miami, Dr. Barreto has relocated to the Orlando area to be closer with family and practice. She sees patients from referrals at Nemours Children's Health primary care offices and provides telehealth services to families not close to clinics. Her services are offered in English and Spanish.

Media contact: Margot Winick, Margot.Winick@Nemours.org (407) 785-5766

About Nemours Children's Health

Nemours Children's Health is one of the nation's largest multistate pediatric health systems, which includes two free-standing children's hospitals and a network of more than 70 primary and specialty care practices. Nemours Children's seeks to transform the health of children by adopting a holistic health model that utilizes innovative, safe, and high-quality care, while also caring for the health of the whole child beyond medicine. Nemours Children's also powers the world's most-visited website for information on the health of children and teens, [Nemours KidsHealth.org](http://NemoursKidsHealth.org).

The Nemours Foundation, established through the legacy and philanthropy of Alfred I. duPont, provides pediatric clinical care, research, education, advocacy, and prevention programs to the children, families and communities it serves. For more information, visit Nemours.org.

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For further information: Margot Winick, margot.winick@Nemours.org (407) 785-5766

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