

Bringing Care Closer To Home

An Interview with Nancy Batista-Rodriguez, Chief Executive Officer, Baptist Outpatient Services, Baptist Health South Florida

EDITORS' NOTE Nancy Batista-Rodriguez has served Baptist Health in various roles since 2002, and has held numerous progressive leadership roles in Baptist Health diagnostic imaging, sleep centers, endoscopy and surgery sites. Batista-Rodriguez leads the strategic growth initiative for Baptist Outpatient Services, working collaboratively with Baptist Health's hospitals and Centers of Excellence to provide integrated care services to the South Florida community. She held positions in a physician group practice and local hospital prior to joining Baptist Health. She serves as the executive lead for the Emergency Department Operations Council and the executive chair of the Hispanic Business Resource Group (BRG) for Baptist Health. Batista-Rodriguez earned a bachelor's degree in business administration and a master's degree in Health Services Administration from Florida International University.



Nancy Batista-Rodriguez

ORGANIZATION BRIEF Baptist Outpatient Services (baptisthealth.net) is an innovative and rapidly growing entity within Baptist Health South Florida that aims to bring care closer to home. Conveniently located throughout South Florida, Baptist Health's outpatient facilities provide cutting-edge diagnostic, surgical, endoscopy, and sleep services, as well as urgent care and emergency care in Miami-Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach counties. The organization's array of same-day care services includes Express Care and Urgent Care and immediate online doctor visits with Baptist Health Urgent Care Online. Baptist Outpatient Services also includes Baptist Health Hospital / Doral, a 15-bed facility in the heart of Doral.

How do you describe Baptist Health's culture and values?

At Baptist Health, we truly understand the importance of putting people first. From our providers to our employees, we are dedicated to providing an intimate service that focuses on caring for people. We recognize that it is not our buildings, equipment or technology that our patients remember; it's the service and the people who cared for them during a difficult moment.

Our values of people, belief, compassion, excellence, and integrity and transparency are

fundamental in all aspects of our work. As a nonprofit healthcare system, we prioritize giving back to the community and providing quality care to those in need. We establish relationships with our communities long before they need our services by emphasizing preventative care and wellness.

We strive for excellence at the highest level and always focus on quality and performance, challenging ourselves to improve. We continuously innovate and find new ways to bring care closer to home. This dedication to excellence is a core value that I share with our employees and the organization.

And lastly, we are a highly ethical organization that always does what's right. We proactively address areas of opportunity and work to continuously improve. This commitment to transparency and ethical behavior fosters a strong sense of trust and community between the organization, our employees, providers, and our patients.

Overall, Baptist Health's values align with our stakeholders and my own; they foster a strong sense of community and purpose. It is not just a workplace; it is a place where people come together to positively impact the lives of those in need. Over the past 22 years, I've seen the organization evolve and find that we remain anchored by our mission and values, which makes Baptist Health so special.

Will you provide an overview of your role and areas of focus?

Baptist Outpatient Services oversees Baptist Health's outpatient operations in three counties – Miami-Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach County. These services are provided outside of the traditional hospital setting and include diagnostic imaging, urgent and emergency care, ambulatory surgery and endoscopy, virtual urgent care, and diagnostic sleep services. We also have oversight of a 15-inpatient bed community hospital in Doral.

We are charged with the organization's continued growth from an outpatient perspective, identifying service gaps in our markets where Baptist Health can make a difference and provide convenience to our patients by bringing services closer to home. We ensure that our existing operations exceed performance standards and continue to provide the high-quality care that our communities have

come to expect. We analyze different markets to understand current services and explore new opportunities within our regions. We are continuously assessing current healthcare trends and the evolution of outpatient care to keep Baptist Health at the forefront of healthcare delivery.

As a provider, Baptist Health created and redefined the urgent care category in South Florida, expanding a network of convenient locations to fill a gap in primary care availability. Today, we are expanding the off-campus emergency model, providing patients with access to emergency care in a convenient setting. If and when patients need to be admitted, they are transferred from our facilities to an inpatient bed at one of our Baptist Health hospitals.

Will you highlight how Baptist Health's Outpatient Services is bringing care closer to home?

Baptist Health has always been forward-looking in delivering outpatient care. Early on, the executive leadership team believed in the potential of the outpatient service line. Recognizing the continued shift of care to the outpatient setting, a strategic decision was made to assign a separate CEO and board of directors to oversee the business' unique challenges and opportunities. This strategy has paved the way for the outpatient division to thrive, and over the past three decades, it has emerged as a market leader in the region.

Our outpatient services play a unique role in our health system. We often serve as the front door to Baptist Health, creating the first impression and an affinity to our brand. Patients are more likely to schedule a diagnostic imaging appointment or walk into an urgent care center than be admitted to a hospital. As such, our role in providing care closer to home and delivering an array of services is critical to our presence in the community.

The outpatient division has been designed to match every patient's needs, offering various services ranging from the least acute to the most convenient through our virtual, express, and urgent care models. Differing from other community urgent care centers, our facilities have robust offerings including CT scan capabilities, full lab services, medication dispensing, and referrals to our institutes. The expansion of off-campus emergency departments has succeeded in providing patients with a fully equipped emergency department whose goal is to treat our patients and discharge them home



Baptist Health wellness and medical complex - Plantation, Florida

in 160 minutes or less from registration through discharge. The goal is to continue innovating, growing, and changing to ensure patients are delighted with their care, making Baptist Health the healthcare provider of choice.

Where do you see continued opportunities for growth for Baptist Health's Outpatient Services?

We continue to see a trend of medical procedures shifting to the outpatient setting. We recently opened a free-standing cardiac ambulatory surgery center (ASC) fully dedicated to cardiac care. The evolution of technology has allowed us to safely perform diagnostic cardiac catheterizations and electrophysiology procedures in an outpatient setting, providing convenient, cost-effective, and high-quality care.

Additionally, the integrated care center model offers a complete range of services under one roof, including emergency or urgent care, diagnostic imaging, physical therapy, primary care, and specialists under one roof. Once a patient enters the Baptist Health network, we ensure all their follow-up care needs are met.

Outpatient infusion is another area that is evolving rapidly. We can now treat complex diseases at our outpatient infusion centers and provide at home infusion therapy, which is more convenient and accessible for patients. Technology remains a key driver. We have successfully introduced Baptist Health's specialty institutes – brain and spine, cancer, orthopedic, and cardiac and vascular care – to new markets such as Plantation. Our goal is to make state-of-the-art technology and renowned experts accessible to our patients so they can benefit from the best possible care without having to travel far.

How critical is it for Baptist Health to build a diverse and inclusive workforce?

An organization should reflect the diversity of the community it serves. At Baptist Health,

we understand the importance of adapting to better serve our patients, employees, and the community. Our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion department oversees structured business resource groups (BRGs) that focus on culture, career, company and community. They've been an integral part of our organizational strategy to foster inclusivity and raise awareness about the unique needs of our population.

As an executive sponsor for the Hispanic BRG, I am passionate about creating career connections and mentorship opportunities for our employees. As a Hispanic woman in leadership, I value the opportunity to connect and inspire those around me and show them it's possible to make a difference and achieve personal career goals. As a group, we are focused on educating our employees and bringing awareness about our unique culture, creating professional development opportunities, giving back to the community, and partnering with local Hispanic organizations whose mission and values align with those of Baptist Health.

We believe that educating our workforce is instrumental in providing personalized, compassionate care. For instance, we know the Doral community is predominantly Hispanic. We have adopted different processes to better serve our patients and their families in this market. As an organization, we strive to proactively identify these values and adapt our care model to provide better care and services.

What do you see as Baptist Health's responsibility to be engaged in the communities it serves?

It goes back to our nonprofit mission to give back. We conduct community needs assessments to evaluate health priorities in the areas we serve, committing resources to help reduce disparities and advance the health and

wellness of our communities. Our responsibility is to not only take care of people when they're sick, but also to show them the path to wellness and staying well. Through our Community Health department, we offer community exercise classes and programs about nutrition and healthy eating, stress reduction strategies, and chronic disease management, and address mental health among various populations. We seek to empower our patients to take better care of themselves. Engaging with patients long before they need our services ensures we build loyalty and trust for Baptist Health.

Do you feel there are strong opportunities for women in leadership roles in the industry?

Healthcare is an industry that does meaningful work, and if you put in the effort and demonstrate commitment, there are advancement opportunities. At Baptist Health, we support and encourage professional development through various resources, including tuition reimbursement, mentorship opportunities, our emerging leaders program, leadership development and talent management. For Baptist Outpatient Services, it's even more important to develop our teams to ensure we can foster our culture as we expand into new markets and open new facilities.

As a woman in leadership, I feel it's my responsibility to pay it forward. It takes time and energy to develop talent. Individuals who display the right core competencies have the capacity to advance with support. I think, at times, women must consider their circumstances. I often had to evaluate my family's needs to ensure it was the right time to push forward and pursue the next position or promotion. This takes communication with your partner and family and understanding that you can have it all, but perhaps not all at once.

Individuals seeking professional growth must always be open to feedback. Successful people know what they do well and where they have opportunities. Self-awareness is key to professional and personal growth. As women, we have the potential to achieve everything we desire; it takes perseverance and commitment.

My mission as a leader is to develop talent and encourage professional advancement. By doing so, we can grow our own employees and benefit from their loyalty and commitment towards Baptist Health's mission.

You have been with Baptist Health for over twenty years. What has made the experience so special for you?

I value the relationships I have built with physicians, employees, and patients throughout the years. They're at the core of everything I do. I have had the privilege of cultivating future leaders and collaborating with my peers to make a positive impact on people's lives. Our legacy can be seen in the numerous outpatient facilities that are now available throughout South Florida. We are continuously striving to innovate and enhance the way healthcare is delivered, making it more accessible and convenient for our patients. It is purposeful work that has made my 22-year journey at Baptist Health so fulfilling. ●