

# 10 QUESTIONS WITH DENO ADKINS

Steering the focus of health care away from hospitals and bringing wellness into communities

Cone Health MedCenter Greensboro at Drawbridge Parkway opens in February 2022. The 160,000-sq.-ft structure sits near Greensboro's urban loop, allowing Cone Health to partner with our communities on their health care and well-being journey, including outpatient and wellness services.

The existing Cone Health MedCenter concept of "one-stop shop" convenience is refreshed as Cone Health drives toward helping individuals make healthier choices... and want to!

**1. Cone Health is clearly looking to the future when it comes to better community health. Where does MedCenter Greensboro fit in that plan?**

Cone Health was founded on the ideal of creating a healthier community. It's been our long-term commitment to treat all people no matter their needs, and we've held true to that mission and goal. With Cone Health MedCenter Greensboro at Drawbridge Parkway, we're looking to take community health to the next level. The facility is designed to be the next generation of health and wellness – a 2.0 version. Overall, it's the embodiment of what community health can potentially be.

This new campus provides the ecosystem for community-wide health improvements to flourish. By bringing together multiple medical specialties, expert health care providers, and outstanding staff, we've created a friendlier, more comprehensive health care environment. With these combined clinical care resources, we can provide more targeted, individualized care for the whole person.

## THE EXPERT



### Deno Adkins

*Vice President, Ambulatory Network*

Deno Adkins, FACHE, leads strategy, development and operations of outpatient facilities and services throughout Cone Health in his role as vice president, ambulatory network. Facilities include Cone Health MedCenters, urgent care centers, and other sites that provide health care outside of a hospital.

Adkins joined Cone Health in 2005. He is a fellow of the Health Management Academy and the American College of Healthcare Executives. He is a certified management coach and an avid United Way supporter.



**2. You've referred to this new campus as a MedCenter 2.0 because what it offers goes beyond that of a traditional MedCenter. In what ways—and through what avenues (methods, strategies)—will MedCenter Greensboro impact the community and affect how people approach their own health?**

Next-level integration is what makes MedCenter Greensboro different. It's more than a hospital, and it's more than an outpatient clinic. It's a place where people who haven't really plugged into the health care system can come and be embraced by a coordinated care team that will get to know them and their individual needs. Constant communication between our providers means no person ever feels anonymous or forgotten.

Through educational efforts, we're re-inventing how people view their health care. A sizable portion of our patients live with chronic

conditions, such as cardiovascular disease and diabetes. We can give our patients valuable insights and knowledge about choosing and preparing healthier food options. Our medical fitness experts also offer guidance on lifestyle changes that can lead to better health and chronic condition management. It's all about leveraging the idea of whole wellness.

**3. Within the MedCenter 2.0 model, how has Cone Health made patient care more robust and convenient? What will the long-term impact be?**

In many ways, we've designed the MedCenter to be a one-stop-wellness-shop for our patients. We've brought together, in one facility, a wide array of health programs and medical services that promote a holistic, healthy lifestyle. In essence, we are merging emergency, outpatient and wellness

services under one roof, potentially reducing the time and resources required for health care consumers to get the care they need.

As well as housing Cone Health's second free-standing emergency department, MedCenter Greensboro includes primary and specialty services, including cardiology, pulmonology, sports medicine, OB/GYN, and cancer care. We've gone a step further, though, by locating pharmacy, lab, and imaging services on-site. If our patients need a prescription, a blood test, or an X-ray, they simply walk down the hall; they no longer need to worry about navigating multiple locations or taking additional time off work.

We were intentional with this design. Integrating these services means members of the community have easier, faster access to our knowledgeable physicians and our state-of-the-art services. Faster diagnosis leads to earlier treatment, and that, in turn, elevates the individual patient's health, as well as the community.

**4. COVID has reshaped the professional landscape with more people working from home. Shutdowns have removed two of the three pillars of daily life—the workplace and the social space. Can MedCenter Greensboro help fill that void?**

When we look back over the last two years, COVID-19 has changed our daily interactions. For many of us, remote work still lingers. Video calls replaced in-person meetings, and social distancing has complicated sports and outdoor events. Our options for daily face-to-face interactions have been limited. Through it all, we have

remained resilient in new ways to connect with each other and our communities.

We've created a space where people can re-engage personally and professionally. Whether it's through sharing healthy food options or working out together in a safe, clean place, Cone Health MedCenter Greensboro can help people rekindle those connections.

### **5. MedCenter Greensboro is located on the loop in Guilford County. Why choose this location?**

Selecting the right location was an enormous part of being able to fulfill MedCenter Greensboro's intended mission. We wanted a centrally positioned campus that could be accessible to the highest number of people. This is the first time Cone Health has opened a facility right off a major interstate, and the impact will be substantial.

We've found that people will travel within a 20- to 30-minute radius for high quality health care. If you look at the map, this location will serve not only Greensboro residents, but also residents in Forsyth and Rockingham counties. When the loop opens, our facility will be available to nearly 650,000 residents. It's going to change the access people have to expert medical care and better position us to meet their needs.

### **6. In designing MedCenter Greensboro, what community needs did Cone Health identify? How will MedCenter Greensboro meet them?**

When Cone Health set out to create the MedCenter, we knew it was critical to get first-hand input about what health and health care means to the communities we serve. Through hundreds of hours of in-home conversations with community members from diverse backgrounds, one theme recurred most often. Our patients want easier access to our services.

Many community members were putting themselves last, including rescheduling appointments because they couldn't get enough time off work or couldn't find childcare. Consequently, their own health took a back seat to other priorities. We listened. To take away those stresses, we made sure we included

multiple specialties in one facility, and we offer childcare solutions for parents during their appointments. That's how we're trying to move the needle toward improved health in our communities.

### **7. Value-based care has been a goal for Cone Health for several years. How does MedCenter Greensboro fulfill this promise to the community?**

Value-based health care is all about improving the quality of services and outcomes for patients. For years, Cone Health has invested in initiatives around chronic conditions and system-wide innovations designed to benefit our communities. MedCenter Greensboro is the next step in fulfilling this promise.

This campus is designed to reach across geographies to serve diverse groups through more coordinated care. Over time, the goal is to provide earlier diagnosis, detection and treatment – whether it's an acute condition like a fractured hip, or a chronic ailment like diabetes. That leads to better disease management and side-steps the need for more invasive, more expensive treatments. The value is there for patients not only in the cost savings, but also in improved quality of life. For Cone Health, as a health care system, your better wellbeing is our No. 1 priority.

### **8. Clearly, MedCenter Greensboro intends to invest significantly in the individual person and in the community. How will these efforts personalize the medical/health care experience?**

The MedCenter's integrated design has it poised to offer more personalized medicine and health care. Having several specialties in one location benefits more than just the health care consumer. That proximity also opens the door for providers to discuss shared patients and better coordinate care. Together, they can make decisions based on that individual's specific needs. Our physical therapy and medical fitness experts can now also be part of these conversations. With input from doctors, they can design rehabilitation and fitness regimens that can help people further improve their health.

### **9. How will MedCenter change how people view their responsibility for their own health?**

Cone Health is changing the way individuals in our communities understand their health. Rather than our doctors sharing with patients what to do during their appointments, we are partnering with our patients on their journey to becoming healthier. We're teaching them about healthy eating and giving them cooking skills to put it into action. Our fitness experts demonstrate equipment and exercises patients can repeat on their own.

People no longer get a lengthy list of instructions. They receive context around their care, and they internalize what it means to be healthy at home. They're empowered to make choices for greater wellness. We're more than their health care provider – we're their health care partner.

### **10. With a goal of better community health, what can MedCenter Greensboro offer individuals who never come to its campus?**

Improving community health starts one person at a time. Our patients are our connection points. They're our conduit to their families. It's through those personal, familial relationships that we'll affect change over time. That's particularly important during a pandemic when fewer people seek the care they might need.

Our focus at MedCenter Greensboro is to make health care sensible, pragmatic, practical, and (most of all) approachable. When health care becomes approachable, people will invest in it. Whether it's a new diet or a lifestyle change, people share what they learn to bring others along their wellness journey. By demystifying good health and making it more accessible, we're laying the foundation for a stronger community.

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