

Dr. John A. Schmidt Jr., M.D., a primary care physician who offers patients highly personalized treatment and the convenience of a state-of-the-art electronic health records system, is now practicing in a new location at 709 7th Ave., Belmar. A grand opening was held on Oct. 21.

Dr. Schmidt, drawing on his 25 years of experience in pharmaceutical research and development and information technology, offers patients personalized approaches to wellness, prevention, and treatment of diseases.

After graduating from the School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia in 1976, Dr. Schmidt completed his clinical training at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania and became a board-certified Internist in 1979. He then trained for five years in the research laboratories of the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, MD. He worked in research and development for Merck Research Laboratories for 16 years. After that, he worked for Aventis (later becoming Sanofi-Aventis) and then as chief scientific officer of Alnylam Pharmaceuticals in Cambridge, MA.

Dr. Schmidt, a member of the American College of Physicians, left Alnylam in 2009 to return to his roots in internal medicine and practice as a primary care physician dedicated to delivering evidence-based care to his patients. Evidence-based means using tests and treatments that proved effective in multiple clinical trials.

Dr. Schmidt's rigorous background in pharmaceutical research and therapeutics gives him unique insight into the strengths and weaknesses of medications and how to best use them in specific treatment plans for each patient.

During his years in the pharmaceutical industry, Dr. Schmidt focused on new treatments for a broad range of diseases including rheumatoid and osteoarthritis, asthma, allergic rhinitis, emphysema, inflammatory bowel disease, multiple sclerosis, and liver cancers.

In addition to using his pharmaceutical expertise to better serve his patients, Dr. Schmidt also provides patients access to an electronic health records systems, which many predict will dramatically streamline healthcare delivery over the next four years. These secure systems, called Medical Homes, store information such as a patient's illnesses, prescriptions, providers and appointments while increasing portability and safe-guarding patient privacy.

"With the system we're using, patients will have direct access to their laboratory results, make and cancel appointments, and send summaries to other providers within their Medical Homes," Schmidt said. "All of their healthcare providers can visit one centralized data bank once patients have granted access to their Personal Health Information (PHI)."

Patients can also get valuable information on how to prevent illness through Dr. Schmidt's web site, (www.schmidtmd.org), which includes tips and links about healthy eating, exercise, smoking cessation and the importance of age-appropriate screening tests, such as colonoscopies and bone density tests.

Dr. Schmidt's new practice cares for well patients and patients with one or more illnesses including illnesses of the joints and internal organs, such as ulcers, high blood pressure, elevated cholesterol, diabetes, renal insufficiency, urinary tract infections, asthma and other illnesses of the heart and lungs.

Dr. Schmidt is a member of the staff of the Jersey Shore University Medical Center and will continue to follow his convalescent patients in rehabilitation and nursing home facilities.

In addition to serving patients in his new location, Dr. Schmidt also volunteers on Fridays at The Parker Family Health Center, 211 Shrewsbury Ave., Red Bank. The center provides healthcare to Monmouth County families lacking health insurance.

Dr. Schmidt is sharing office space with Dr. Miguel A. Maseda, also an internist with a large, established practice. Dr. Schmidt, who plans to expand into other health insurance networks in the future, is in network with Aetna, United Healthcare, Oxford, Horizon Blue Cross/Blue Shield, Qualcare and Medicare.

Dr. Schmidt's office hours are 1 to 5 p.m. Mondays; 8 to 11 a.m. Wednesdays; 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Thursdays, and 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturdays. For more information, call the office at (732) 282-8166 or visit www.schmidtmd.org.