

## Pain clinic leaves hospital

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Two physicians who run the pain management clinic at Cape Cod Hospital are leaving to start a private practice in West Yarmouth.

Dr. Steven Barna and Dr. Milan Stojanovic are linking up with a couple other physicians in running the Spine and Pain Institute of New England, which already has offices in Duxbury, Dedham and Framingham.

The West Yarmouth office opens Oct. 1, after Barna and Stojanovic's contracts with Cape Cod Healthcare Inc. expire.

"The decision was not an impulsive one," Barna said. He said Dr. Richard Salluzzo, the new CEO of Cape Cod Healthcare, and chief operating officer Michael Lauf "are doing a good job reaching out to the doctors."

But Barna and Stojanovic, who in the past were both affiliated with Massachusetts General Hospital, have decided the private practice model is the best way to serve their approximately 1,000 patients on Cape Cod, Barna said.

For the patients, many of whom receive non-surgical interventions for back pain, nothing will change except the doctors' office will be a few blocks away, on East Main Street in West Yarmouth instead of Park Street in Hyannis, Barna said.

The physicians plan to continue with staff privileges at Cape Cod Hospital, serve on committees at the hospital and refer to other physicians affiliated with the hospital, Barna said.

"We're going to work with Dr. Barna and his team," Lauf said in a conference call Friday with Barna and Cape Cod Healthcare spokesman David Reilly.

Patients will be notified by mail of the change in practice, Lauf said.

Cape Cod Healthcare's new CEO is trying to persuade local doctors to work with the local hospitals, not against them.


The recent opening of ambulatory surgical centers has been blamed for drawing revenue from both Cape Cod and Falmouth hospitals. Surgeons say it's less expensive to do some operations at outpatient centers than in a hospital, but hospitals depend on well-reimbursed surgeries to help pay such costly services as psychiatric care and medical care for the frail elderly, experts say.

Two months ago, Salluzzo announced the layoff of 169 employees to help make up a revenue shortfall costing the local health care system millions of dollars.

The pain management center at Cape Cod Hospital will remain open until the end of this month, Barna said.

However, Jean Bowden of Marstons Mills received a phone message from the pain center saying her Sept. 25 appointment was canceled because "our doctors have left the clinic and opened up their own practice."

The woman calling in the message apologized for the short notice but said they had only just been notified.

The phone message said to call  **508-790-7000**  for a new appointment.