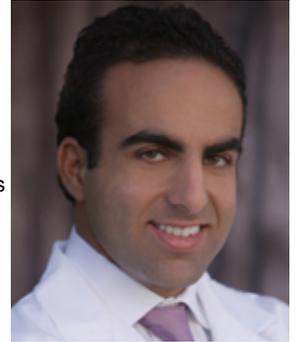


Concierge Medicine LA

Dr. Raphael Darvish ('04) is medical director of Concierge Medicine/LA, a VIP medical practice designed to offer patients "the best of the best" care without medical insurance hassles.



Darvish, a fourth-generation physician (his father is a partner in Concierge Medicine/LA), created the practice after receiving his MBA and completing his medical residency at the David Geffen School of Medicine. Touring the medical office is like visiting a spa. It's quiet, tastefully decorated, and there is an unhurried, relaxed atmosphere. The facility includes examination rooms equipped with flat screen TV's, an x-ray suite (including darkroom) and an array of the most advanced diagnostic and examination equipment.

The business model is simple: For a flat annual fee, patients receive comprehensive primary health care that includes (but is not limited to) unhurried appointments with no waiting, 24/7 physician cell phone access, complimentary valet parking and weekend/evening appointments. The centerpiece of the program is the "Presidential Physical." Darvish personally contacted the White House for details regarding the chief executive's annual check-up, and created the comprehensive exam to mirror that which the President receives. The practice also has established relationships with top specialists across the country and around the world – so that patients can benefit from access and appointments quickly and easily.

In forming Concierge Medicine/LA, Darvish's goals were many-fold. On one hand, he wanted to provide truly excellent care, free of the hassles of medical insurance (though patients are still required to carry insurance for medical needs not covered by his primary care practice). He also wanted a slower pace so that he could get to know his patients and listen to them.

"In a standard medical practice, an appointment lasts 10 or 15 minutes and many doctors limit their patients to 'one problem at a time,'" Darvish said. "Patients don't get a chance to talk about everything they need to talk about."

In his practice, patients get all the time they need. He sees eight or nine patients a day, with his father seeing even less than that. (The Darvishes also employ an associate physician to complete the team.) Though there is a focus on preventative medicine at Concierge Medicine/LA, the physicians manage all the medical issues of their patients.

For patients who can afford such service, it's convenient and easy. Once accepted into the program (there is an initial consultation to ensure that the practice is right for each potential patient), there are no deductibles or co-payments to pay, just the annual fee. There's no waiting around reading old magazines either, with appointments spaced throughout the day to eliminate overlap.

Affordable, though, is in the eye of the beholder.

For those under age 35, the cost of the program is \$1,750 per year. For those 35-49 it's \$2,400, and those over the age of 50 pay \$2,900. Darvish acknowledges that that's a small price to pay to have a doctor doing everything possible to keep you healthy. He admits that his practice is not only for the "healthy and the wealthy" but rather for anyone who values their well-being. Darvish also notes that those with means won't hesitate to spend a similar amount on a designer handbag or suit. He adds, with a touch of irony, "If you don't have your health, you can't enjoy those things money can buy."

Currently, Concierge Medicine/LA has about 450 patients, which Darvish estimates is half what the office can practically serve. He believes they can cap out the practice in one to two more years, at which time the partners will consider expanding to other business-intense neighborhoods like downtown Los Angeles or Century City (as many Concierge Medicine/LA clients are corporate executives). Darvish says his UCLA Anderson MBA experience is essential to the growth and expansion of the business.

"The marketing education, the emphasis on entrepreneurship: I reference these things all the time," Darvish said. "I keep the 'Flamholtz pyramid' nearby and continue to reference it. And the finance education was very helpful as well. "Building a medical practice takes patience and perseverance," he continued. "These are things you learn in business school. You learn that it takes a long time to build a business. I treasure my Anderson education for teaching me this and for giving me the tools to launch this practice and positively affect the lives of my patients."

To learn more about Concierge Medicine/LA, visit www.conciergeclinicla.com.