

# Spotlight Magellan Health: National Doctor's Day is March 30!

In celebration of National Doctors Day, we honor the unwavering commitment and exceptional dedication of our Magellan Health physicians. This annual observance on March 30, serves as a meaningful reminder of the invaluable contributions made by doctors worldwide in improving and safeguarding public health. We recognize the vital role our physicians play in providing compassionate care, fostering innovation, and driving positive outcomes for those we serve. We're spotlighting two of Magellan Health's doctors, who each explain why they chose to become physicians, and share some of the most rewarding and challenging aspects of working in this field:

- Andrew Sassani, M.D., Vice President, Magellan Health, Chief Medical Officer, California, Human Affairs International and Magellan Health Services of California
- Steven Pratt, M.D., Senior Medical Director, Magellan Healthcare



Continue reading to learn more from Drs. Sassani and Pratt:

## Why did you want to become a physician?

**Dr. Sassani:** Interestingly, I did not set out to be a physician at first. My career plan was to become an attorney all the way through the mid-point of my junior year in college. During the Christmas/Winter break of my junior year, I decided to change course. While studying with my friends at the college library (many of whom were "Pre-Med" students), I found myself being more interested in the subjects they were

studying. That led to a bit of self-reflection and questioning my career-path choices. It made me think about the impact I could (or not) have on peoples' lives and wellbeing depending on the career choices I was making. Eventually this resulted in me changing course towards the field of medicine. Although, truth be told, my mind is still triggered occasionally to take the LSAT and enroll in a part-time (nights/weekends) law program.

**Dr. Pratt:** I originally wanted to be a neurogenetic researcher. I was planning on graduate school in genetics. I had a friend who was a post-doctoral student in genetics making the switch to become a physician rather than continue to work as a genetics researcher. After many long, heart to heart discussions she talked me into applying for medical school. I planned to become a human neurogenetic researcher and did get involved in human neurogenetic research while in medical school. In the end, I found I liked clinical work more than research and higher brain function more than neurology, so I chose psychiatry and have loved my career.

### **What is the most rewarding aspect of working in this field?**

**Dr. Sassani:** Although I find the field of medicine rewarding, it carries a heavy burden of responsibility and expectations which can lead to burnout in the healthcare field for so many. This was never more evident than during the pandemic. However difficult, I think it reminded us all how important and crucial healthcare providers and medical sciences are to the lives and wellbeing of all people.

### **Is there anything you'd like to highlight about working in this field?**

**Dr. Pratt:** I have been told many times by my patients that I saved their lives. Before working with me, one individual made a serious suicide attempt, coded, and was resuscitated. After

I worked with them in a state hospital for about a year and they were being discharged, they gave me a card made with flowers on the cover and inside it said, "Thank you, Dr. Pratt, when I killed myself, everything went dark. There was no light I was moving toward. Now, for the first time in my life I see light thanks to you!"

## **What does National Doctor's Day mean to you?**

**Dr. Sassani:** As clinicians, we join the field because we truly care for others and have a true desire to help those in need. Putting others first is our number one priority and we don't focus on ourselves, much less celebrate a day of honor and recognition. I think that for many doctors we have a true calling to serve, and we share the sentiment that Doctor's Day is just another day on the calendar.

**Dr. Pratt:** I am appreciative that there is a National Doctor's Day. But the rewards that come day in and day out are more meaningful to me.