

# NAPLES

ILLUSTRATED®

+

## HIGH-TECH VIGOR

*Local firms lead  
longevity push*

## LONG WALKS & LAUGHTER

*One Neapolitan's take  
on boosting wellness*

*A bold approach to*

# HEALTHY LIVING

# VITAL STATISTICS

## NAPLES FIRMS TARGET VIGOR WITH HIGH TECH

BY ANDREA JONES  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOHN EDER

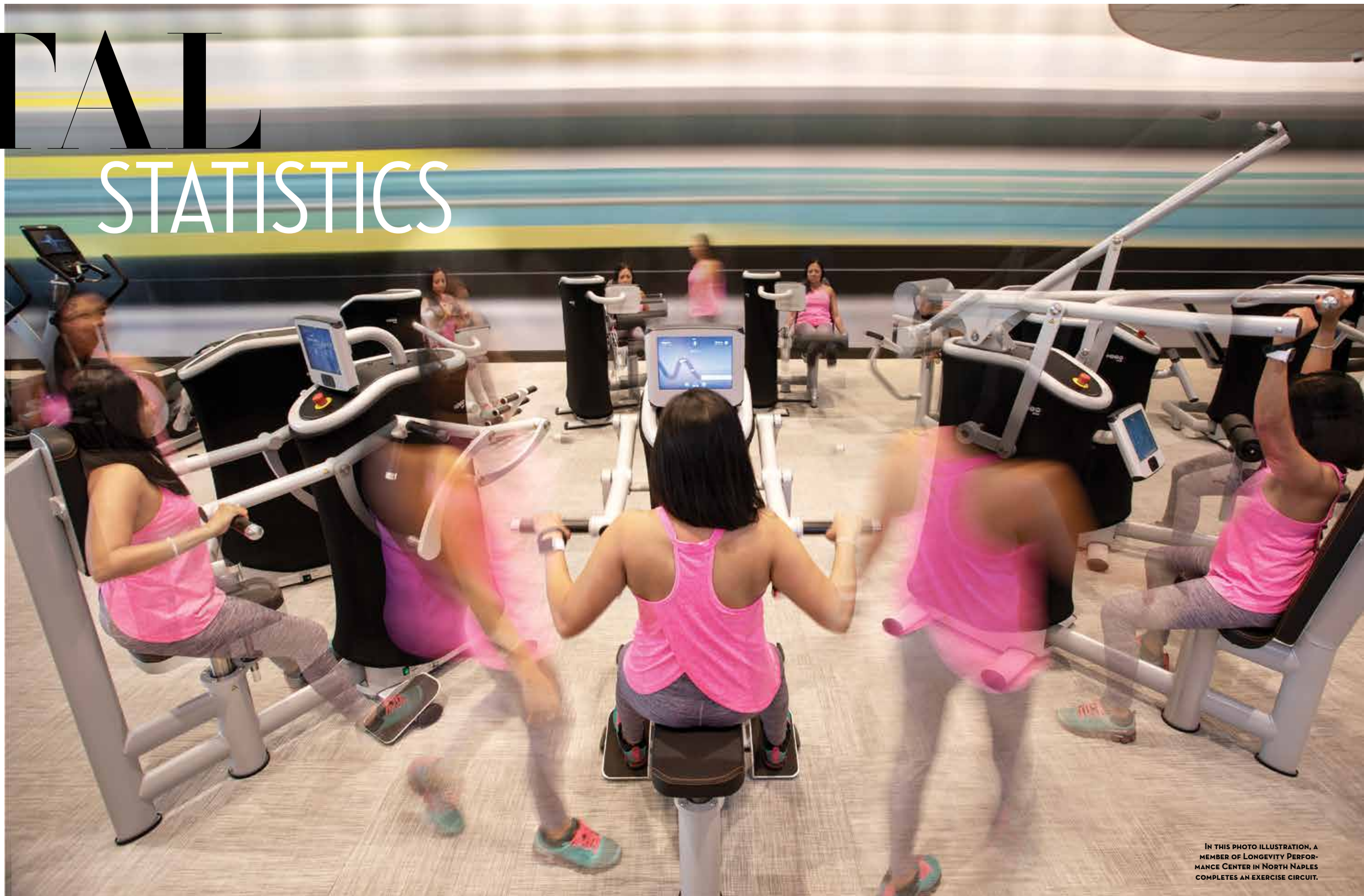
For most of us, a typical doctor's appointment plays out much like it did when we were kids—minus the promise of a lollipop for enduring our shots. But nowadays in Naples, high-tech health companies are challenging the status quo and targeting quality of life before the potential for illness.

"After spending \$4 trillion a year on health care in the United States, we don't have a great track record," says Dr. William Kapp, founder and CEO of Naples-based Longevity Solutions. "We have a great track record when you're sick, but as far as stopping you from getting sick or helping you to navigate or avoid things that may happen, we're not very good at it right now."

Kapp and Dr. Michael Dent, founder and CEO of HealthLynked, an online network that connects patients and their doctors, are seeking to make people more proactive in building and sustaining wellness by giving them interactive access to an astounding array of data.

Longevity Solutions, for example, provides in-depth bioimaging and advanced analysis (as in, a remarkably clear view of a patient's health today augmented by forecasts for what may lie ahead without lifestyle changes), complemented by revolutionary fitness centers that use smart machines, not just dumbbells. There are also customized nutrition plans and overall wellness strategies.

Kapp, an orthopedic surgeon, is also the founder of seven acute-care Landmark Hospitals around the country,



IN THIS PHOTO ILLUSTRATION, A MEMBER OF LONGEVITY PERFORMANCE CENTER IN NORTH NAPLES COMPLETES AN EXERCISE CIRCUIT.



including Naples, and health-care IT company Technomad in Bonita Springs.

The Atlanta native says that traditional health care has focused on “sick care” for too long instead of targeting root causes for illness. He wants to shift that focus so that prevention is at the forefront and doctors take on the roles of health coaches.

“Just making you live longer and managing your decline is not the answer,” he says. “The answer is optimizing your health up until the final day.”

To do that, Kapp and his team have designed a two-prong approach.

The first piece is a deep-dive assessment that involves whole-genome sequencing, advanced MRI imaging, a CT scan, and comprehensive blood tests. In addition to detecting early signs of disease, the team analyzes a patient’s results using artificial intelligence, revealing immediately relevant health information: a patient’s overall body composition; propensity for muscle building; susceptibility for about a hundred diseases; the relationship of genetics to food sensitivities; and the ability to metabolize specific drugs or vitamins, among other markers.

DNA and MRI analyses, by the way, are accomplished through a partnership with San Diego-based Human Longevity, which was founded by Craig Venter, the biotechnologist who sequenced the first human genome. (Long story short: That’s how experts use DNA to determine a patient’s hereditary risk for certain diseases.)

Longevity Solutions and Human Longevity are the only facilities in the world that offer the



**DR. WILLIAM KAPP (TOP LEFT) OPENED THE FIRST LONGEVITY PERFORMANCE CENTER IN THE COUNTRY IN NORTH NAPLES (TOP RIGHT) LAST YEAR. DR. MICHAEL DENT (ABOVE) LAUNCHED NAPLES-BASED HEALTHLYNKED IN 2016.**

deep-dive assessment.

“About 40 percent [of patients] have some issue that needs to be addressed,” Kapp says. “And 14 percent have something significant that needs to be addressed. The whole idea is to detect disease before it becomes a problem and show you how to mitigate it.”

And that’s where the second piece of Longevity Solutions’ approach comes in—Longevity Performance Centers. These state-of-the-art wellness facilities (the first is in North Naples with more U.S. locations to come) are filled with smart machines that are powered by cloud-based technology and calibrated to each member’s fitness status and goals. The centers also feature an in-house physician, nurse, and nutritionist.

When you enter the Longevity Performance Center on Immokalee Road, you immediately notice that it’s not your average gym. Members scan a wristband before using a piece

of equipment. The machine then pulls the member’s profile from the cloud to provide a customized, 30-minute workout. There are no clipboard-toting personal trainers. Instead, the equipment tells users how many repetitions they should perform and at what weight.

Members such as Geri Brown, who completed the deep-dive medical assessment before starting a fitness regimen, say they benefit from targeting specific issues identified by the test and enjoy continually improving their profile through lifestyle changes.

“Having this information only helps if we take what we have learned from the testing and work toward a healthier lifestyle with diet and exercise,” says Brown, a New York native who retired from a Wall Street career in the finance industry.

Adds Kapp: “We talk about the utility for exercise, but nobody has the data to show what the underlying genetic and epigenetic effects are with exercise ... and we have that data.”

Compiling that critical information, he says, shows that major health challenges—such as cognitive decline, heart disease, and more—can be reversed or slowed through customized training.

“It’s not just ‘Here’s your Mediterranean diet, and you need to do crossword puzzles,’” he says. “There’s so much more to be achieved through exercise.”

Brown says she feels empowered by using data as a benchmark and that she and her husband, who recently became full-time Neapolitans, are making great strides.

“We feel better, we look healthier, and we eat healthier,” she says. “More importantly, we



JUST MAKING YOU LIVE LONGER AND MANAGING YOUR DECLINE IS NOT THE ANSWER. THE ANSWER IS OPTIMIZING YOUR HEALTH UP UNTIL THE FINAL DAY.” —DR. WILLIAM KAPP



are now very proactive in keeping ourselves as healthy as possible in the coming years. I am 68, and my husband is 75. Our biological ages have dropped significantly since we started this whole process.”

Part of that process, wellness advocates say, is effective and efficient communication with health-care providers.

HealthLynked, for example, is behind an ever-growing online network that connects patients and their doctors, giving them the ability to share and store personal medical information, make appointments, and co-manage family members’ health care.

“We’re building systems within that network to provide personalized recommendations to patients,” says Dent, a former women’s medical practitioner who founded Fort Myers-based NeoGenomics, a cancer diagnostics lab company, in 2002.

“Traditionally, just two people are involved in your health care—you and your doctor,” he says. “HealthLynked would be a third figure that would optimize that relationship.”

HealthLynked members fill out just one profile, rather than a new stack of forms at every doctor’s appointment, and then their information goes with them when they switch health-care providers or travel.

On the provider side of things, HealthLynked has designed technology to improve

**A LONGEVITY PERFORMANCE CENTER STAFF MEMBER (ABOVE) DISCUSSES DATA WITH A CLIENT. TECHNOLOGY IS INCREASINGLY BEING USED TO BOOST VITALITY AND OVERALL WELLNESS, NOT JUST TREAT DISEASE. A COOL LASER (RIGHT) IS AMONG THE CUTTING-EDGE EQUIPMENT AT NAPLES-BASED LONGEVITY SOLUTIONS, WHICH SEEKS TO INTEGRATE DATA WITH RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LIFESTYLE CHANGES.**



patients’ in-office experience and analyze trends within a practice, including busiest days and wait times.

When providers become part of the HealthLynked Network, they deploy the company’s Patient Access Hub, which allows patients to check-in via a WiFi network on their smartphone. This means that nobody needs to call your name from across the room anymore.

“We’re expecting to deploy 1,000 devices by the end of the year,” Dent says. “The focus is fundamentally changing the way health care is delivered.”

HealthLynked, which has about 500,000 members in Florida, also is developing an artificial intelligence component that will pro-

vide diagnostic data based on factors such as a patient’s history, geography, environmental exposures, and symptoms, which are provided voluntarily through self-updated profiles.

Dent also envisions expanding HealthLynked’s social capabilities, which would allow patients to share information privately about health challenges and treatments.

Cutting-edge technology isn’t new to medicine, obviously, but goals and methods are shifting, especially where Naples-based businesses are concerned. Says Kapp: “In 10 to 15 years, we’ll be using precision diagnostics and therapies to extend the healthy human lifespan, not just treat diseases after they occur. It’s a paradigm shift whose time has come.” ◀