



News Release

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Medical College Trustees authorize exploration of statewide community-based medical education program

The Medical College of Wisconsin has begun to explore the development of a statewide community-based medical education program to address Wisconsin's pending physician shortage. The Medical College's Board of Trustees authorized the College's administration to conduct feasibility analyses of placing community-based medical school components in one or more regions throughout Wisconsin. The project will be staged over a multi-year period with a goal of launching the first program as early as 2014 and no later than 2015.

Regions under consideration are: Green Bay, Fox River Valley (Appleton, Oshkosh, Fond du Lac), North Central Wisconsin (Wausau, Stevens Point, Marshfield), Northwest Wisconsin, Eau Claire, La Crosse, Janesville/Beloit, and Racine/Kenosha.

"Wisconsin needs more doctors. We need to create opportunities for more students from Wisconsin to receive primary care medical education and residency training within our state," said Dr. John R. Raymond, President and CEO. "The Medical College of Wisconsin is committed to developing an expanded medical education program which addresses this need for primary care physicians in underserved communities across Wisconsin. The greatest need is in Wisconsin's rural and urban areas."

The Wisconsin Hospital Association's recent report, *100 New Physicians a Year: An Imperative for Wisconsin*, projected that Wisconsin will need to add 100 new physicians annually to avoid a projected shortfall of 2,000 physicians by 2030.

COMMUNITY-BASED MEDICAL EDUCATION – STATEWIDE/ADD ONE

The Medical College envisions an expanded multi-community medical education program centered on an interdisciplinary team approach that would prepare as many as 100 additional medical students per year. The program would focus on preparing students for practice as primary care physicians. It would be structured as an “immersive model” wherein students would live and learn in Wisconsin communities where they eventually might complete their residency training and begin their practice.

The community-based medical education program would be created on a partnership model engaging local health care systems, colleges and universities, technical colleges, government and the local business communities. The Medical College also will work closely with the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health to coordinate statewide medical education outreach programs.

The feasibility study will explore the use of telehealth education techniques and technologies for use at the community-based medical education locations. It also will explore whether science faculty members at local colleges and universities could teach medical school coursework and whether physicians in local health systems could become engaged in clinical teaching.

“The Medical College of Wisconsin has a proven track record of training outstanding physicians, received the highest accreditation possible for a medical school in 2011. It ranks among the leading medical education institutions in the country in numbers of students entering primary care residencies as well as in the development of quality primary care residency programs,” said Dr. Joseph E. Kerschner, Dean of the Medical School and Executive Vice President of the Medical College. Of the nation’s 136 medical schools, the Medical College of Wisconsin ranked 37th in the *U.S. News & World Report’s* 2012 rankings of the nation’s top primary care medical schools.

In 2011, the Liaison Committee on Medical Education, the nation’s accrediting body for medical education, awarded full, eight-year accreditation to the Medical College, the maximum period of accreditation.

COMMUNITY-BASED MEDICAL EDUCATION – STATEWIDE/ADD TWO

“Two important factors impact the success of the initiative,” said Dr. Raymond. “Local communities must be willing to work in partnership with the Medical College to support this program. Also, there must be the commitment of health care systems statewide to create new primary care residency training positions within their hospitals.” The feasibility study will determine the capacity for the creation of new primary care residency positions.

Since July, Dr. Raymond and Medical College leaders have met with local government officials and leaders of 13 health care systems statewide to discuss the project. As the project progresses, the Medical College’s leadership expects to meet with leaders of health care systems, colleges and universities, technical colleges, and local government officials in the regions under consideration.

The Medical College also will study the feasibility of conducting interdisciplinary education at the community-based sites in which courses offered to Medical College medical students would also include students in other health professions programs from other colleges and universities. This could include students preparing for careers in such fields as pharmacy, dentistry, physician assistants, nursing, etc.

The community-based planning process also includes consideration for the development of an accelerated MD program in primary care. The traditional medical education curriculum is offered over a four-year period. The lifetime debt burden of graduating medical students is approximately \$150,000; this is a factor that serves as an obstacle for medical students choosing a career in primary care, a field in which compensation is lower than other medical specialties. A key goal of an accelerated program is to help reduce student debt.

The Medical College has received a five-year, \$950,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Service’s Health Resources and Services Administration to address the primary care workforce shortage by increasing the number of medical students choosing a career in Family Medicine through the development of a novel curriculum.

COMMUNITY-BASED MEDICAL EDUCATION – STATEWIDE/ADD THREE

The Medical College has a substantial infrastructure to support the needs of students and faculty members at the proposed community-based medical education sites, including admissions, student affairs, financial aid, grant-writing and access to a full-service medical library. The Medical College’s preliminary feasibility analyses will include financial, logistical, and accreditation considerations as well as other aspects of such a project.

Founded in 1893, the Medical College of Wisconsin is the state’s only private medical school and the nation’s third largest private medical school in terms of enrollment. A total of 816 medical students and more than 450 graduate students are enrolled at the Medical College. Medical College faculty members supervise 650 physicians in residency training and 250 physicians in fellowship training.

The Medical College of Wisconsin has an annual operating budget of approximately \$950 million. Faculty members conduct more than \$160 million annually in funded research, including \$93 million in National Institutes of Health funding. Approximately 1,350 Medical College of Wisconsin physicians and more than 470 nurse practitioners, physician assistants and other health care practitioners care for more than 410,000 patients annually, representing over 1.7 million patient visits.

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