

School of Medicine Establishes a New Division

By Judi Engle

Wright State University School of Medicine has established a new Division of Health Systems Management through the generosity of local philanthropist Oscar Boonshoft. A retired engineer from Wright Patterson Air Force Base, he has supported several community efforts, including the Boonshoft Museum of Discovery and Wallace Kettering Neuroscience Institute. His \$2.5 million gift to the school was inspired by the desire to simplify the process and delivery of modern health care and to develop efficient and accessible health care for all.

The new division, under the leadership of Richard Schuster, M.D., M.M.M., will provide educational opportunities for medical students, residents, and community physicians; health systems consulting for organizations, physician practices, and businesses; and conduct research on health services, population based health care, and preventive medicine. Housed within the Department of Community Health, the division focuses upon the health care delivery system.

“This division,” notes Howard M. Part, M.D., dean of the school, “provides another vehicle for collaborating with our community. It is a unique arm of the medical school and will help us prepare our students for today’s practice environment.”

Educational Initiatives

Much of the division’s work will involve educational activities geared for several audiences: the general public, the health care community, practicing physicians, medical students, and residents. A Health Systems Management Educational Task Force has been formed to “develop avenues for education to enhance knowledge and develop skills in the general management of the health care enterprise.”

The division has developed a formal affiliation with the Ohio Northern University School of Pharmacy. This affiliation brings pharmacoeconomic expertise to the division. Plans for the affiliation includes shared faculty, student experiences, and special projects.

For more information about the Division of Health Systems Management, call 258-5555.

Public

This fall, the division organized a new community forum, the Shiloh Health Lectureship, held on October 22. Sponsored by the division, Shiloh Church, and Sinclair Community College, the free public forum featured John S. Santa, M.D., administrator for the Oregon Health Plan. The conference raised the issues of universal coverage for health care and examined the Oregon Health Plan as a model.

Robert Hittner, M.D., a retired radiologist who practiced in Dayton for many years, understands the importance of local discussions on the health care issues facing our community. He and wife Zoe have endowed the Hittner Community Health Endowment for the School of Medicine to be held at Shiloh Church. The annual event will relate to health care and social issues, faith and culture.

“Providing the community with information about health care is an important goal for us,” says Dr. Schuster, Boonshoft Chair and Director, Health Systems Management. “It is critical that both providers and patients understand the problems and help develop the solutions regarding health care in our community, in our nation.”

Health Care Providers Including Physicians

On November 19 and 20, the division hosts an international conference on Health Systems Management. The conference will highlight issues

such as outcomes analysis, quality improvement, health economics, international systems comparisons, and medical error reduction. Speakers will be coming from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, University of Pennsylvania, University of Michigan, General Motors Corporation, Wright State and Ohio Northern Universities as well as the Western Galilee Hospital in Israel, an affiliate of the Technion Medical School. The keynote speaker, Gregg Meyer, M.D., M.Sc., is the director of Quality Measurement and Improvement at the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. He is responsible for all aspects of analysis, including clinical performance measurement, customer surveys, and satisfaction with health care services and systems. Consistent with the division's educational mission, the conference offers 8.0 Category 1 AMA Physician's Recognition Award and .8 CEUs for pharmacists.

In addition to CME programs, the division also plans to develop advanced programs on management training and education for physicians.

Medical Students and Residents

The division is offering a fourth-year elective for medical students this fall and next spring. The course covers a wide range of topics, including preventive medicine, managed care, health law, quality in health care, physician leadership, and health economics. Students will observe an on-campus practice environment and examine clinical care from a systems perspective, following the flow of people, money, information, and processes. They will then formulate a study question and present their findings at the end of the course.

Future plans include resident education that will focus on issues, such as health economics, epidemiology, and preventive medicine, that are relevant to resident physicians.

Health Systems Consultations

The division provides consulting services and is currently working with a major employer to study the quality of pharmaceutical use, making sure that the right people are getting the right medicines. A team is also working with two physician group practices to study how effectively

they are meeting national guidelines in outpatient care of a certain disease process.

Research

The division also plans to perform research in related areas. Health care delivery, health economics, preventive health, a systems orientation to health care, outcomes analysis, and population based health care are all potential research areas.