

School of Medicine received RWJ award to increase generalist physician supply

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The University of Nevada School of Medicine is encouraging its students to consider careers as generalist physicians. To further this goal, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation recently awarded the school \$750,000 to help implement changes in the curriculum that will highlight primary care. The school is one of only 14 medical schools in the country to receive these awards.

Generalist physicians are family practitioners, internal medicine generalists, and pediatricians; and they make up only 30 percent of the U.S. physicians. In order to adequately serve the population, the country needs at least 50 percent of its physicians to practice in primary care. The generalist program is in consonance with the mission of the medical school to provide Nevada with these much needed primary care physicians.

Changes in the curriculum will give medical students early and repeated exposure to generalist physicians, will increase students' experiences in clinical settings and will assist students in developing their clinical problem-solving skills. The basic principles of primary care will be emphasized. These principles include

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the role of the generalist physician as the caregiver of first contact, who provides comprehensive care throughout the individual's lifetime. The generalist physician also coordinates care plans to assure that the patient receives all necessary care and treatment.

Robert M. Daugherty, Jr., M.D., Ph.D., dean of the School of Medicine, will serve as the project director. He has committed his faculty and resources of the school to address the needs the state and the nation for primary care physicians.

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation is the largest U.S. foundation devoted exclusively to health care, and was established as a national philanthropy in 1972.