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Care for the Uninsured

03.17.2010 | Health, Students

As Congress debates the future of health care in America, doctors and students closer to home will discuss the issue as it affects low-income and uninsured residents in the Miami Valley.

The University of Dayton premedical program and Miami Valley Hospital are sponsoring the inaugural Health Care Symposium noon to 6 p.m. Saturday, March 27, at the University of Dayton Science Center.

The event is open to all local physicians and University of Dayton students.

With two program tracks for students and physicians, the symposium is an opportunity both for medical professionals to improve their understanding of health care issues for the uninsured and for students to network with physicians and explore the career of health care.

"The University of Dayton is a very service-oriented campus," said senior Samantha McIntire, a premed major and one of the symposium's organizers. "But we live in a bubble, and it can be difficult to see the very real health care needs of people in this community. This will be great exposure for students to learn what's going on. It's also for students who have questions about their futures. They can talk to doctors, talk to medical students and see what the next four years of their lives are going to be like."

The organizers of the symposium chose the theme of health care for the poor and uninsured because of the current national focus on health care reform and access.

Dr. Mike Craig, a University of Dayton alum and retired Miami Valley Hospital physician, said the question of how to meet the medical needs for the uninsured is a mounting challenge.

"We don't have a county hospital in the area, so the private hospitals have to take care of the needs of the indigent, which often comes at a considerable amount of cost," he said.

Keynote speaker Dr. Scott Morris will share his insights on how to address the growing concern of health care access. Morris is founder and executive director of Church Health Center in Memphis, Tenn., the country's largest faith-based clinic serving working uninsured people and their families.

Local efforts to improve health care for the uninsured and discussions about health care rights will be the topics at four other sessions, led by local physicians and health care providers. Physicians can earn up to 4.0 continuing medical education credits for attending the event.

Organizers hope to make the symposium an annual event.

The student sessions will offer opportunities to hear panel presentations by medical physicians, dentists, physical therapists and current medical school students. Students can also attend a session that focuses on international medical mission trips.

The symposium is free to University of Dayton students. Physician registration is \$50. To register, visit <http://premed.udayton.edu/symposium.htm> or call 937-229-3545.

For more information, contact Cameron Fullam, assistant director of media relations, at 937-229-3256 or fullam@udayton.edu.