

I am chair of the Community Healthcare Solutions Committee in Roswell. Mayor Dennis Kintigh resurrected this committee that was formed by a previous mayor but was not utilized by the past mayor. The members are healthcare professionals, in private and group settings, office administrators, Staff of NM Department of Health, Roswell schools including ENMU-R, IPA, physician advocates and Mayor's liaison.

Our mission statement: Where community and healthcare entities join hands with the shared goal of continued quality health care services and the recruitment and retention of healthcare providers.

I feel that Roswell has made some progress in recruitment and retention and that our shortage is not as great, but our job does not end. Only a few years ago our primary care physicians were tasked with caring and treating 3,500 patients or more per doctor. It is a struggle to recruit physicians to rural health care.

Our committee is proactive – working to find solutions. We understand that **alone** we cannot “fix” this issue of a shortage of doctors in our community. What we can do is foster our city, assist our individual providers, our hospitals and other physician group in promoting the many positives that Roswell offers. We held a reception to thank the doctors and physician extenders that have called Roswell home for up to the past 3 years. We want them to know that we value their commitment.

We were made aware of the American Academy of Family Physicians seminar being held in Albuquerque last February. A local group provider was generous to pay the required fee for Roswell to be represented. Roswell was the only city that was represented. Greg Neal, Committee member, his wife Pam (who is a retired RN) and I attended the 1 day conference. Greg had the opportunity to talk with Dan Stulberg, MD who is the director of Preceptorship Programs at UNM School of Medicine. Greg expressed our desire to have students in Roswell and Dr. Stulberg said they have a 1st year student program. These students have just completed their 1st year in medical school and go to communities to work with preceptors for 6 weeks. Very shortly after that meeting, Dr. Stulberg did in fact contact Greg regarding the proposed Rural Track and we would be hosting 2-5

students. He also outlined 2 other models that were being considered for 3rd year students.

July 6, 3, 1st year medical students arrived in Roswell for 6 weeks. This committee was determined that the students would not only be welcomed but would be embraced in Roswell. We held a welcome reception that week and they were greeted by the mayor, committee members and several local physicians, two of the preceptors and Dr. Stulberg. They were given a welcome packet that included concert tickets, gift cards from a local restaurant, information on the City, passes to a local cross fit gym and the pool at NMMI. Of course they were here to observe and study but were charged with several other assignments from UNM. One event led to another and very soon they were attending functions in many venues. We feel that this was a huge success and have received kudo's from the students.

We attended another Family Practice Seminar in Ruidoso July 16-19. Again we were the only City represented and many remembered us from Albuquerque. That is the mark we can make.

This committee was instrumental in two separate bills that were passed in the past legislative session. The credentialing bill was introduced by Sen Cliff Pirtle. This bill ensures that the health plan follow the current law in NM which states that credentialing must be done within 45 days of application. This was crucial to new physicians having the ability to see patients and bill the insurance for that service. Previous to this bill, the process was taking 180 days. The 2nd bill, non-compete bill was originally introduced by Rep. Nora Espinoza, amended and did pass. This would prevent any group from including a non-compete clause in contracts with physicians.

We have been asked to participate by survey in the NM Alliance of Health Councils in conjunction with NM Department of Health. It is refreshing that they are seeking the opinions of those with "boots on the ground". The round 2 questions: 1. What are the major health-related needs in your community and potential barriers to meeting those needs. 2. What is currently working in your community? What resources are there? 3. What are the top health priorities in

your community? And 4. What steps can be taken to improve health in your community? We hope that our comments will impact the decisions that will be made by the State.

We are very close to bringing a residency center back to Roswell. A residency clinic brings additional providers to a community and in our case, fulfills a need in the rural setting. These residents work in the clinic and have the opportunity to train and work alongside local physicians. They take their knowledge from the classroom to office setting, into hospital rooms, ER's, and operating rooms. The rural residency clinics are a valuable tool to the physicians and our community.

We have discussed and will be exploring incentives to practice in rural NM. Can we assist with renting or purchasing a home? Is there partial financial forgiveness for student loans if the doctor stays in NM and especially a rural healthcare setting? How can we set Roswell apart?

We insure that we are available to any hospital practice, group practice or individual practice to meet with their candidate while interviewing in Roswell. The mayor, the school superintendent, Tom Burris, and I are 100% committed to having a presence to answer questions and at another level, welcome them to Roswell.

We know that we can't solve all issues and address every problem, but we know that we are doing great things for our community. We feel that retention and recruitment begin at the same time. We value the medical community as an industry, the physicians and their families and the contribution they make to our City.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today and thanks for allowing Roswell to host this legislative Council.