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Jefferson Health Care College

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Jefferson Health Care College

The Jefferson Health Care College (JHCC) was created in 1998 as a continuing medical education vehicle to improve the quality of care delivered by primary care clinicians in the Philadelphia region. The College has adopted several principles that guide development and implementation of the curriculum. First, all curricular elements are selected based on an assessment of need in the primary care community. Second, each program is developed under the guidance of a multidisciplinary team that consists of primary care clinicians from the Division of General Medicine and the Department of Family Medicine, and sub-specialists with expertise appropriate to the course offering. Third, educational methodology utilized in courses and other educational modalities is based on evidence from studies of continuing medical education effectiveness. Accordingly, each course includes a combination of didactic and interactive elements. These elements include lengthy panel question and answer discussion sessions, small group teaching and workgroups, and computerized audience response systems. Finally, the College Co-Directors, Geno Merli, MD, Ludwig A. Kind, Professor and Acting Chairman of the Department of Medicine, and Richard Wender, MD, Clinical Professor and Vice Chairman of the Department of Family Medicine, attend, facilitate, and help plan every program.

The College currently offers four types of educational products. The principal product consists of a series of live courses on the Jefferson campus. Courses offered in the past three years include Dermatology Parts I and II, Prevention, Gastrointestinal Diseases, Primary Care Approach to Headache, Disease State Management with a focus on diabetes, asthma, and CHF, Management of the Symptomatic Patient with emphasis on the primary care – specialist partnership, and Diagnostic Dilemmas – Choosing the Best Test. As was done for Parts 1 and 2, Diagnostic Dilemmas will utilize a computerized audience response system, a state of the art method to engage audience thought and participation.

The second educational product consists of a series of courses designed specifically to address the needs of ChristianaCare, a managed care contracting group of physicians in the Wilmington Area. Dave Stephens, MD, Medical Director of ChristianaCare, serves on the planning group for this curriculum. The courses are given in Wilmington, Delaware, and have included educational sessions on office gynecology, CHF, asthma, and prevention.

The third educational product consists of a series of training modules for pharmaceutical representatives. The JHCC agreed to develop a disease state management curriculum for Novartis Pharmaceuticals in the area of osteoporosis and has helped conduct education in onychomycosis and hypertension. Contracts for development of additional modules are underway.

The fourth product consists of computer-based continuing medical education. The JHCC recently received an unrestricted educational grant from Bayer pharmaceuticals to support a pilot project in computer-based CME in the area of infectious disease.

In addition, a panel of experts from around the country was convened by a team led by Ed Tawyea, MSLS, University Librarian and Director of Academic Information Services and Research, Dr. Wender, and Joseph Lieberman, MD, Chairman of the

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Department of Family Medicine at the Wilmington Medical Center to develop a CD ROM that will cover the entire American Academy of Family Physicians' cardiology curriculum. This CD ROM activity is endorsed by the JHCC and is supported by a grant from Bristol Myers Squibb.

Jeanne Cole, MS, the Managing Director of the Office of Continuing Medical Education, and Tim Brigham, PhD, Associate Dean for Continuing Medical Education, along with Drs. Merli and Wender, comprise the JHCC planning committee. A steering committee, headed by Tom Nasca, MD, Dean of Jefferson Medical College, provides long-term guidance. Support for JHCC activities comes from a variety of sources including pharmaceutical companies, tuition, contracts with educational partners, and, most importantly, the dedication and commitment of numerous faculty members and departments within Jefferson Medical College and Thomas Jefferson University Hospital.

Over 750 clinicians, most of them physicians, have participated in at least one aspect of the College. Of note, 114 clinicians have attended more than one course, and 19 clinicians have attended four or more. Although JHCC does not have the budget to do the types of evaluation that can prove that behavior changes as a result of participation in the College, participants report a high level of satisfaction with JHCC. Approximately 80% of participants report that they will change their behavior as a result of learning that occurred within the curriculum. The future of the JHCC will focus on widening its influence through improved marketing and use of technology, as well as improved participant tracking and evaluation.

About the Author

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