



**August 25, 1997**

**Volume 1, Number 7 • Indianapolis, Indiana**

---

## **Curriculum changes begin for class of 2001**

---

Students entering medical school this fall at IUSM will be the first to experience four years of the new competency-based, interdisciplinary approach to education.

Revamping of the curriculum was initiated in 1993 by Dean Emeritus Walter Daly, MD. A committee headed by Stephen Bogdewic, PhD, assistant dean of primary care education, spent two years assessing programs at some of the country's other leading medical schools, studying trends in health care delivery and the impact of discoveries in medical science on clinical medicine.

That committee made a recommendation for an enhanced curriculum which would stress competency-based, interdisciplinary education. Following the design phase, the current dean, Robert Holden, MD, established a curriculum council, chaired by Philip Breitfeld, MD, to implement the changes.

The new Curriculum Council is divided into subgroups which represent each year of instruction and subgroups of the nine core competencies. A chairman, along with the directors of each of the subgroups, acts as a steering committee.

And the work goes on. The first new class, beginning this semester, is called Concepts of Health and Disease, and will teach first-year students how to apply basic science concepts to clinical problems. This course will feature problem-based learning methods which help students become self-learners. A second new course, Cell and Molecular Biology, planned for 1998-99, will integrate aspects of traditional basic science and modern molecular biology.

Changes to the clinical curriculum are still in the planning stages. The redesign of the clinical years will stress coordination among clinical departments and enhance ambulatory experiences.

The approach adopted at IUSM reflects the national trend in education at top medical schools. There are nine core competencies and three levels of achievement for each. The competencies are: effective

communication; basic clinical skills; using science to guide medical intervention; life-long learning; self-awareness/self-care and personal growth; social and community context of health care; moral and ethical reasoning; problem solving, and professional role recognition.

It is anticipated that the competencies will be integrated throughout the curriculum so no single course is responsible for teaching any one competency.

As Dr. Breitfeld explained, the IUSM faculty was confident that students were acquiring the appropriate knowledge base to be good physicians. However, there was some concern that there was no established way to measure any of the other characteristics or skills which the faculty felt graduating students should possess such as sound moral and ethical reasoning.

Tools to assess achievement of the various competencies will be developed. The Clinical Assessment Advisory Group, lead by Stephen B. Leapman, MD, will aid in the development of these assessment tools for the clinical years.

---

## **White coats presented to IUSM entering class**

Members of the Class of 2001 began their medical school careers Aug. 18 by receiving their white coats and taking the Oath of Hippocrates at the White Coat Ceremony. IUSM is one of several medical schools across the country that has instituted the White Coat Ceremony to provide a meaningful entry for students into the medical community.

Dean Robert Holden, MD, charged the 280 students present with the responsibility of caring for their patients as well as curing them. Richard Gunderman, MD, PhD, radiology, illustrated the charge in a welcoming speech that included his own experience of providing care for a patient who could not be cured. The eight directors of the regional medical education centers and Katherine Gilkey, MD, director of the Introduction to Medicine course, then cloaked each student with his or her white coat, and Dean Holden led the students in reciting the Hippocratic Oath.

A new component of the White Coat Ceremony is the addition of sponsors/ mentors for first year students. IUSM alumni were contacted about sponsoring the purchase of a student's white coat and mentoring the student through at least his or her first year. More mentors are needed. If you are interested, please call the Office of Alumni Relations at 274-8828.

---

## **IU faculty presenters at nutrition conference**

The latest information on high-risk neonatal and infant nutrition will be presented in a continuing education course Sept. 14-16 at the University Place Conference Center. The course is sponsored by the IUSM Division of Continuing Medical Education, the Section of Neonatal-Perinatal Medicine, Pediatrics and Nutrition and Dietetics Programs at Riley.

Speakers at the High Risk Infant and Neonatal Nutrition Conference will address advances in medical and nutritional management of the newborn in intensive care and the high risk infant on the first two days of the conference. On the third day, speakers will focus on the benefits of breast feeding.

IUSM faculty speaking at the program include David Boyle, MD; Mary Sue Brady, DMSc, RD, CS, FADA; Anna Dusick, MD; William A. Engle, MD; Judith Ernst, DMSc, RD, CS; David E. Hertz, MD; Pamela Lemons, MSN, CNNP; James A. Lemons, MD; Karyl Rickard, PhD, RD, CS, FADA, and Mervin C. Yoder, MD.

---

## Major teaching hospitals get positive marks in report

Shorter hospital stays and a higher survival rate for critically ill patients are two benefits of receiving care at a major teaching hospital, according to a study published in the Aug. 13 issue of The Journal of the American Medical Association.

The adjusted odds of death were 19 percent lower for patients cared for in major teaching hospitals compared with nonteaching hospitals, according to the JAMA study. In addition, the risk-adjusted length of stay at major teaching hospitals was 9 percent shorter than in nonteaching institutions.

This study goes to the heart of issues faced by institutions such as the IU Medical Center, said Robert Holden, MD, dean of IUSM. Cuts in federal funding for teaching hospitals, medical schools or medical research could result in decreases in the quality of care provided by teaching hospitals. Then the next study of this kind may not have such positive things to report.

The study was led by Gary E. Rosenthal, MD, Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine. It looked at 30 hospitals in northeast Ohio, five of which were classified as major teaching hospitals. The criterion used to determine major teaching hospital status for this study was membership in the Association of American Medical College's Council of Teaching Hospitals and Health Systems.

Nearly 90,000 patients were involved in the study, which focused on six major illnesses: heart attacks, strokes, congestive heart failure, chronic lung disease, gastrointestinal bleeding and pneumonia.

The study noted that teaching hospitals tend to cost more than nonteaching community hospitals, in part due to the use of more technology.

The AAMC issued a news release stating that they agree with the study's primary observation that cost of care should not be the only, or even the primary, benchmark used to make delivery of care decisions.

---

## **Richards joins psychiatry**

Stephanie S. Richards, MD, has joined the faculty as a clinical assistant professor of psychiatry. She also has been selected as a Lilly-Indiana University Clinical Research Fellow in psychopharmacology. The two-year fellowship program will concentrate research in the general areas of affective disorders and schizophrenia.

Dr. Richards comes to IUSM from Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic in Pittsburgh, Pa., where she completed a fellowship in geriatric psychiatry.

She received her medical degree from Johns Hopkins and completed an internship in medicine and psychiatry, and a residency in adult psychiatry at Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic.

She will be seeing geriatric psychiatry patients at University Hospital Outpatient Center. Referrals may be made by calling 278-2546.

---

---

<http://www.medicine.indiana.edu>