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## Statewide initiative eyes patient issues, concerns

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Indiana's health care leaders are launching the nation's first statewide initiative to make its citizens full partners in the decisions affecting their health care.

The Indiana Hospital & Health Association, the Indiana State Medical Association, and IUSM are sponsoring the initiative, Indiana's Eye on Patients. It is designed to identify what health information consumers believe is most useful, to improve their access to that information, and to improve the care process through better communication.

Indiana's Eye on Patients initiative includes five projects that will begin to amass information to help patients determine what care is right for them.

It calls upon the sponsors to use the information generated to improve the delivery of care and services and to help Indiana residents make informed choices about treatments, providers and lifestyle options. The sponsors will lead a consortium that will disseminate publicly the data and information that patients find most useful.

Recognizing that consumers have already asked why practice patterns vary across the country, Indiana's Eye on Patients projects include clinical analysis of Indiana variations. The investigation will be conducted by IUSM.

"I strongly support the initiative taken by the Indiana State Medical Association and the Indiana Hospital and Health Association to develop a body of information on how medical care is being delivered in Indiana," Dean Robert Holden, MD, said.

"The School of Medicine will partner in this program to evaluate data from hospitals, physicians' practices, and other health care providers with the expectation that it will provide a guide for improvement of medical care to all Hoosiers. This effort embodies the highest ideals of all three

participating organizations," the Dean said.

Indiana's Eye on Patients is an action plan that begins with research, and then applies it. The sponsors want to convert health care databases, public opinion research, patient perceptions, clinical studies and educational materials into better, more cost-effective medical care in the state.

Through IHHA's quality partnership with the American Hospital Association, the sponsors will also have access to the expertise and resources of the AHA and The Picker Institute, a Boston-based firm specializing in patient survey research. Progress or final project reports will be made at a special Indiana's Eye on Patients symposium to be integrated into the joint annual meetings of IHHA and ISMA in September 1999.

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## BRIEFS

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### Award recipients

Five IUSM faculty members will be recognized at the World of Difference Awards ceremony at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 13, at the Hilbert Circle Theatre.

Lifetime achievement awards will be presented to **Harvey Feigenbaum, MD, Walter Daly, MD, and George Rapp, MD.**

**Richard Miyamoto, MD,** will be honored for his outstanding contributions to the health industry.

A rising star award will be presented to **David Williams, MD.**

Corporate sponsors of the event include the Indiana Health Industry Forum and the Indianapolis Economic Development Corp.

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### History lecture

The Oct. 12 presentation of the John Shaw Billings History of Medicine Society will be at 4 p.m. at the

Athenaeum, 401 E. Michigan St., the site of Walter Reed's announcement on the transmittal of Yellow Fever and the historic meeting place of the Indianapolis and Indiana Medical Societies.

**Robert McDougal, MD, and Dolores Hoyt, MLS, PhD,** will be the speakers.

A tour of the building also will be featured.

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## **Blast, red tape won't keep exchange students away**

It was a long haul for six Kenyan exchange students from Moi University who arrived a little later than expected to begin their rotations at IUSM.

The six students were among a dozen with John Sidle, MD, a clinical assistant professor at IUSM and team leader of the IU/Kenya program, seeking visas at the U.S. Embassy in Nairobi, Kenya, when it was bombed by terrorists. Dr. Sidle and the students escaped unharmed, but that was not the end of their problems.

In their quest to get visas, the students, along with Joyce Dobson, program manager, and Robert Einterz, MD, program director, got a lesson in red tape not easily forgotten.

As Dobson explains, it was initially thought that the students should travel to Uganda for visas, but there was no guarantee the U.S. Embassy there would remain open long enough for the three-day process to be completed. There also were other considerations, such as the long trip over treacherous roads.

Other European locations were considered, including Germany where transit visas are not required, but it was decided England was the most logical destination. However, it took the British High Commission in Kenya and assistance from Sen. Richard Lugar, R-Ind., and his Washington, D.C. staff, who enlisted the help of the U.S. State Department, to make it all come together.

A one-day transit visa was obtained for the students and their faculty advisor. Guarantees were made that the students would get their required appointment at the embassy in London for visas and passports and after nearly 48 hours of travel, they arrived safe and sound in Indianapolis on Sept. 15.

Four of the students - Maurine Mutua, Japheth Kipkulei, Joshua Ndiritu and Wycliffe Okumu are now absorbed with third-year medical student activities at IUSM, including rotations in internal medicine. Johnbosco Ilkul and Jeremiah Laktabai are completing their rotations at St. Vincent Hospital, and faculty member Christine Adhiambo is working in the Medical Sciences Program in Bloomington.

The six students are scheduled to return to Kenya by early November. Dr. Adhiambo will remain in Bloomington until mid-December.

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## Honors

**Deborah Allen, MD, was recognized as a Sagamore of the Wabash in August during the annual meeting of the Indiana Academy of Family Physicians. At the same meeting, Dr. Allen was presented the President's Award for outstanding services to the Department of Family Medicine, and she was recognized by the IUSM faculty, staff and students for her contributions, courage and dedication to the Department of Family Medicine.**

**Jay Grosfeld, MD, has been elected an Honorary Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons at an academic ceremony in Glasgow, Scotland. Dr. Grosfeld also was awarded the Denis Browne Gold Medal for outstanding contributions to the field of pediatric surgery by the British Association of Pediatric Surgeons at a recent meeting in Bristol, England.**

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## Riley celebrations planned

**The 150th birthday of James Whitcomb Riley and the 75th anniversary of the founding of James Whitcomb Riley Hospital for Children will be celebrated the first week of October with events at the hospital and the poet's Lockerbie Square home.**

**Jugglers, balloons and clowns will entertain Riley Hospital patients from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., Wednesday, Oct. 7, in the hospital atrium lobby.**

**A ceremony announcing the state proclamation designating Oct. 7, 1998 to Oct. 7, 1999, as The Year of Riley will take place at the Riley home at 528 Lockerbie St., at noon, Wednesday, Oct. 7.**

**On Friday, Oct. 9, parties are planned from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. in the hospital clinics and from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. on the units.**

**The events are sponsored by the Riley Newborn Parents Association and Riley Memorial Association.**

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