

A Roadmap for Medical Renewal and Economic Development in Northeastern Pennsylvania

Mission Statement:

“The proposed Medical College of Northeastern Pennsylvania will educate physicians committed to the advancement of medical knowledge, prepared to practice patient-centered care, and devoted to meeting the needs of a diverse community.”

Why a New Medical School in Scranton?

Powerful forces that have critical implications for the health of residents as well as the health of the economy of Northeastern Pennsylvania are in play throughout the Commonwealth and the country. Communities throughout the United States, particularly those in non-urban areas, are facing serious physician shortages. At the same time, regions such as Northeastern Pennsylvania are in need of economic development that brings high paying jobs and positive economic impact.

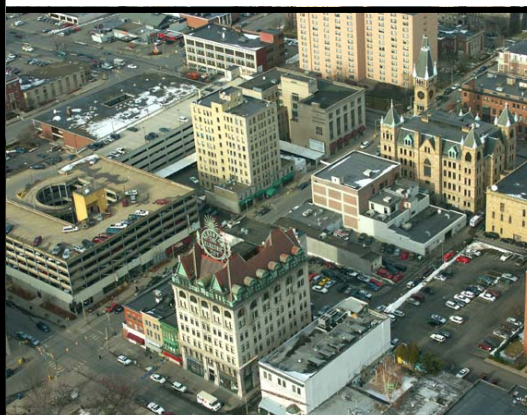
Community leaders in Northeastern Pennsylvania recognize the need to initiate both a renewal of medical care as well as the revitalization of the regional economy. During the past two years, community and physicians leaders have joined together to explore the possibility of opening a new medical college in Scranton to address both health care and economic development issues.

In December 2005, the Northeastern Pennsylvania Medical Education Development Consortium (MEDC) retained the services of Tripp Umbach, a nationally recognized health care consulting firm, to determine whether or not a new medical college is feasible in Scranton, what type of medical college should be created (teaching hospital or community-based, allopathic or osteopathic, independent or affiliated), and what resources are needed to start and operate the college.

What Kind of Medical School is Needed?

The MEDC Board concluded, with input provided by Tripp Umbach, that an independent community-based allopathic medical school will provide the maximum health care and economic development advantages to Northeastern Pennsylvania. The proposed Medical College of Northeastern Pennsylvania will not be owned by an existing allopathic school. This independence will allow for greater financial flexibility in providing a cost-effective education as well as enable administration and faculty to design a curriculum which best meets the needs of students and patients. The proposed Medical College of Northeastern Pennsylvania will

utilize technologically advanced techniques for teaching and providing care. Most importantly, the school will emphasize evidence-based care centered on the patient rather than the disease, the skills needed to work in teams of different types of health professionals, and the value of humanism in medicine.



Advantages of Community-Based Clinical Education**Include the Following:**

- Provides clinical training in settings that closely parallel the environment in which many physicians practice.
- Offers a greater focus on continuity of care, health improvement and disease prevention.
- Improves the recruitment of qualified physicians to participating communities.
- Strengthens the practices of local hospitals and physicians which interact with the college.
- Provides teaching and research opportunities to community physicians.
- Enhances the research of community and population-focused issues.



“For every type of physician specialty analyzed by Tripp Umbach, Northeastern Pennsylvania has fewer physicians per capita than the nation as a whole.”

The New Medical School Will Address:**The Physician Shortage**

Even before a national physician shortage was acknowledged by health care experts, Northeastern Pennsylvania was recognized as a physician shortage region due to its non-urban nature and lack of medical education options. For every type of physician specialty analyzed by Tripp Umbach, Northeastern Pennsylvania has fewer physicians per capita than the nation as a whole.

Studies have proven that the decision of where a physician will locate his or her practice is strongly connected to where he or she trained. The proposed Medical College of Northeastern Pennsylvania will increase the number of physicians practicing in Northeastern Pennsylvania not only through the education of students who are recruited for their increased probability of locating a practice in the region, but also through the hiring of faculty who will teach at the school as well as practice medicine in the community. Tripp Umbach estimates that Lackawanna County will need between 145 and 216 additional active physicians by 2025. The Northeastern Pennsylvania region as a whole will need between 1,070 and 1,587 additional active physicians by 2025.



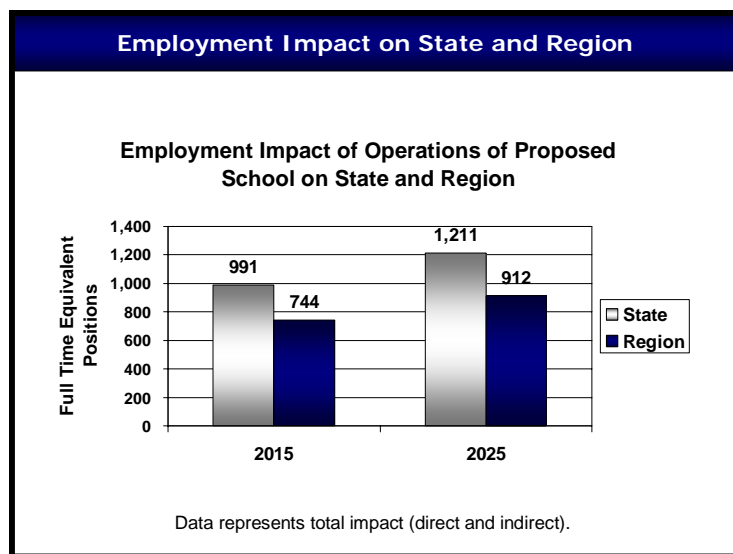


Photo accredit to: Carl Abraham

The Economic Impact of the Medical College of Northeastern Pennsylvania Will Be Significant

The creation of a new medical college will also bring substantial economic benefits to the Commonwealth and to Northeastern Pennsylvania. By 2015, almost 1,000 new Pennsylvania jobs will be created due to the operations of the school. In addition, through the spending by the college for capital, goods and services and the spending by the people employed at the college, the proposed Medical College of Northeastern Pennsylvania is expected to generate more than \$70 million for the Pennsylvania economy by 2015.

“By 2025 a total of 425 physicians will be added to Northeastern Pennsylvania as a result of the new medical school.”



A Truly Collaborative Effort



The ideal medical school model for Northeastern Pennsylvania mandates that the new entity build on the collective strengths of existing physicians, hospitals, colleges, and universities throughout the region. Instead of attaching itself to a single hospital or educational institution, the proposed Medical College of Northeastern Pennsylvania will partner with the “best of the best” in the region to provide true excellence from the very first day.

The proposed Medical College of Northeastern Pennsylvania plans to work collaboratively with local colleges and universities so that resources such as libraries and laboratories can be shared among educational institutions throughout the region. Likewise, centers for excellence at hospitals throughout the region will be incorporated into all aspects of medical education, clinical rotations, and research. Finally, a strategic planning process is currently underway at the Scranton-Temple Residency Program, the largest residency program in the area, to determine how best to integrate the proposed Medical College of Northeastern Pennsylvania into the medical education and clinical fabric of Northeastern Pennsylvania.

Conclusion

Determining the feasibility and economic impact of a new medical school in Scranton is only the first step. Ultimate success of this project requires that elements of excellence already present in the region are matched with the best leadership, faculty, facilities, and systems of learning available from the outside. The key is to build the school on excellence from the very first day -- allowing the school to truly drive the renewal of health care and the regional economy.

The proposed Medical College of Northeastern Pennsylvania will:

- Increase the number of practicing physicians in the region by 425 physicians in 2025, based upon the practice of medicine by faculty hired by the college. More significantly, the number of practicing physicians will be increased by students who decide to locate their practices in Northeastern Pennsylvania after completing their training.
- Improve access to medical education for Northeastern Pennsylvania students through the creation of the first medical college in the region.
- Educate 360 students, with the first students graduating in 2013.
- Partner with local hospitals, outpatient clinics, physician practices and public health organizations to ensure that students learn to provide care that is needed most in Northeastern Pennsylvania.
- Enhance the quality of health care delivered by residents, fellows, and existing physicians who interact with the college, as well as future physicians educated at the college, through a focus on patient-centered, evidence-based care.
- Contribute more than \$70 million to Pennsylvania's economy and nearly \$50 million to the region's economy annually by 2015.
- Create nearly 1,000 new Pennsylvania jobs and nearly 750 new jobs in Northeastern Pennsylvania by 2015.

***"It's the
right thing
to do, at the
right time, in
the right
place."***

***Richard "Buz"
Cooper, M.D.***



For more information about the findings please
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