



Michigan State University Department of Family Medicine earns national, state honors

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May 30, 2007, EAST LANSING, Mich. — Michigan State University Department of Family Medicine recently garnered a national award for ranking among the top 10 departments in the nation for the training of primary care physicians.

In addition, the department also earned a state of Michigan award honoring it for its commitment to quality patient care.

The national award, from the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP), is given to schools that graduate the greatest percentage of students who choose family medicine as a career.

The Department of Family Medicine, located within MSU's College of Human Medicine, ranked seventh nationally, with 16.5 percent of its students going into that field.

“As populations age and we need more access to health care, sustaining an investment in a career choice of primary care is particularly important today,” said William Wadland, department chairperson.

Wadland said one of the keys to the department's success is the quality of students it recruits.

“We look for students who have broad-based interests,” he said, “students who are not only strong in the biosciences and scholarship, but those who have a strong interest in volunteerism and outreach.”

In the AAFP rankings, the University of Kansas School of Medicine was No. 1 with 21.7 percent of its graduates seeking careers in family medicine.

The earning of the state award – the 2006 Governor's Award for Excellence for Improving Care in the Ambulatory Setting – marks the first time an MSU HealthTeam clinic has earned such an honor.

Presented by the Governor's Office and the Michigan Peer Review Organization, which serves as the state of Michigan's quality improvement organization, the award honors clinics that are developing initiatives to improve patient care.

The Family Medicine Clinic, located within MSU's Clinical Center, was honored for the strides it has made to improve care for patients with diabetes, preventive care and cancer screening.

“Our faculty and staff worked as a team to improve upon these strategies,” said David Walsworth, assistant professor and associate chair for clinical affairs in the Department of Family Medicine. “We are very proud of the tremendous efforts we have made to improve care of the diabetic patient.”

The Department of Family Medicine Clinic is part of the MSU HealthTeam, which is composed of approximately 190 physicians from 14 clinical departments, as well as many allied health professionals such as nurses, nurse practitioners, psychologists, social workers, therapists and nutritionists.

Effective July 1, the Department of Family Medicine Clinic will be renamed the MSU Family Health Center, to highlight the collaboration of physicians from the Department of Family Medicine and family nurse practitioners from the College of Nursing.

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