

Saint Peters/Drexel Announcement
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Acknowledgements

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Mr. Syad Hamad Mirzan (med student @ St. Peter's)

Good morning everyone

I'm delighted to be here.

Medical students are the future of health care.

Investing in our medical students is investing in the future of medicine.

The next generation of physicians--those who will be trained right here at St. Peter's as part of the Regional Medical Campus for Drexel University College of Medicine--are the future of medical innovation.

You are the vascular surgeons and neurologists and primary care physicians of the future. You will diagnose chronic diseases and treat cancer patients with medications and innovative technology that has yet to be discovered.

And we want you to know that New Jersey values its physicians and the role they play in excellence in health care around the state.

So I am very excited to be here today as we celebrate this academic partnership that will help us to nurture and cultivate our aspiring physicians. Saint Peter's University Hospital is ensuring that New Jersey medical students complete their academic and clinical training here and then can go on to practice in this state because of our thriving and exciting research, academic and patient care opportunities.

It is critical that New Jersey—and the rest of the nation—do everything possible to retain physicians who are already practicing here and increase the number of new physicians who are excited by the possibility of practicing here.

The physician workforce is aging, average hours worked are falling, and many physicians are nearing retirement just as the aging of the population and advances in technology will result in a growing demand for physician services.

Consider these facts:

- Nearly 40% of doctors in the nation are 55 & older. New physicians roughly equal the number of doctors retiring. Over the next decade, doctors licensed in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s will retire in large numbers that will outstrip the number of new physicians graduating from our medical schools.
- The number of new physicians licensed each year will not keep pace with the needs of a growing and aging population. It can take 14 years from the time a new doctor begins their education until they enter practice
- The Association of American Medical Colleges, Center for Workforce Studies has released new physician shortage estimates that, beginning in 2015, are 50 % worse than originally anticipated prior to health reform.
 - By 2015, the shortage of doctors across all specialties will quadruple.
 - Previous projections showed a shortage of 39,600 doctors in 2015;
 - Current estimates bring that number closer to 63,000, with a worsening of shortages through 2025.

New Jersey

In our state, by the year 2020, NJ will need 2,800 more physicians than are currently projected to be practicing (without health reform). Although each year 850 physicians complete their graduate medical education in NJ, 60% leave to practice in other states.

So it is critical that we cultivate our medical students by creating an environment that they find professionally gratifying so they will want to practice here.

As you know, we are all expecting increasing numbers of patients to seek medical care as a result of health reform. In addition, as baby boomers become senior citizens, their health care needs will rise.

So that is why this new regional medical campus is so exciting.

On behalf of Gov. Chris Christie and Lt. Gov. Kim Guadagno, I want to congratulate Saint Peter's Healthcare System and the Drexel University College of Medicine for establishing this academic partnership for New Jersey and for the surrounding Rutgers University campus, where students will also be able to take advantage of it.

I hope this Regional Medical Campus is replicated around the state so increasing numbers of medical students will remain in New Jersey for post-graduate training and ultimately to join the ranks of our practicing physicians.

Congratulations again.