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The USQA Managed Care Fellowship at Jefferson

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From the Editor

The USQA Managed Care Fellowship at Jefferson

In this space previously (Vol. 7, No. 2), I discussed the many challenges facing academic medicine in an era of managed care. Many readers may have seen the August 13, 1994, Philadelphia Inquirer headline demonstrating how one managed care company has risen to the challenge to support a unique concept-a fellowship training program to train future physician leaders in managed care.

I am very happy to outline for you the structure of this unique U.S. Quality Algorithms-sponsored managed care fellowship at Jefferson Medical College. USQA is a wholly-owned subsidiary of US Healthcare, one of the largest managed health care companies in the United States and a major force in our local market place. USQA provides health care quality measurement and improvement programs and data analysis systems for providers and purchasers of health care. USQA is widely regarded as one of the leaders in the development of health care report cards and other measurement tools nation-wide.

The fellowship training program is intended for physicians who seek additional training and experience relevant to the delivery of high quality cost-effective medical care. Typical candidates will have completed a residency program in fields such as, internal medicine, family practice, or pediatrics. However, the fellowship is not restricted to these primary care specialties, and we welcome applicants from other disciplines. Indeed, the program will consider physicians with other backgrounds and levels of training depending on their overall qualifications and career goals.

This unique program is aimed to train physicians in the theory and practice of quality management measurement. We anticipate that individuals completing the program will be prepared for leadership positions in academic medicine, government, or in developing and managing health care delivery systems in a variety of public and private settings. We believe these individuals will be instrumental in contributing to the formation, conduct, and evaluation of health care related policy both in academic medicine and in the clinical arena.

A strong cohort of Jefferson Medical College faculty and faculty from other components of the University are currently working to create a program of practical experience, course work, and research which will be designed on an individual basis with each fellow. Mr. Dan Louis, the Managing Director of the Center for Research in Medical Education and Health Care, is the program co-director along with Dr. Neil Schlackman from USQA, who also serves as a program co-director. We expect that many faculty will lend their expertise to the program.

The curriculum planning is going on now. It is likely that the one-year experience will be divided into a series of content modules including such topics as, Quality Assessment and Improvement, Utilization Management, Clinical Practice Parameters, Biostatistics and Applied Epidemiology, Medical Informatics, Integrated Health Care Systems, Measurement and Decision Making. The fellows are expected to complete a

graduate level research project in an area related to their primary interest and course work with an emphasis on quality management.

In closing, I want to recognize several key leaders both at Jefferson and at U.S. Healthcare without whose help this program never would have been established. At Jefferson, Ms. Janet Bumham, Associate Director for Planning in the Health Services Division, was a key leader in organizing our proposal. She had the unwavering support of Mr. Tom Lewis, the Chief Executive Officer of Thomas Jefferson University Hospital. Of course, on the Medical College side, Dean Joseph S. Gonnella had the vision to recognize the importance of creating a program such as this. And finally, we all owe a collective debt of gratitude for the generous support given to the program by Mr. Leonard Abramson, the President and founder of U.S. Healthcare.

As always, I am interested in your feedback on these issues. The faculty involved in this program strongly believe it will serve as a link to managed care and add to the luster of the medical school and its continued recognition as a leader among comprehensive medical colleges nation-wide.

- David B. Nash