



Wisconsin Medical Society

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Contact:

Lisa Hildebrand

608.442.3765 or 866.442.3800

lisa.hildebrand@wismed.org

Wisconsin Medical Society Foundation receives \$200,000 grant to study health care cost variation

Center for Medical Practice Research and Education focuses on improving value

Madison— The Wisconsin Medical Society Foundation (Foundation) has received a \$200,000 grant for the Wisconsin Medical Society (Society) Center for Medical Practice Research and Education (Center). The Foundation will serve as the fiscal sponsor for the grant.

The grant from the Physicians Foundation provides funding to develop physician, employer and other partnerships that work to evolve health services through the study of health care cost variation in relation to appropriate-use criteria and cost-sensitive best practice care.

“This grant will support the Society’s efforts to help fund the Center’s work by creating an infrastructure to identify strategies for making medical care more affordable and accessible,” said Foundation Executive Director Rebecca Thompson, CPA.

The Center’s efforts to reduce health care costs without compromising quality address variation in the way physicians diagnose and treat some health conditions. “Physicians understand that health care is increasingly difficult to afford for many families, and we are committed to improving the value of health care in Wisconsin,” said Susan Turney, MD, the Society’s Chief Executive Officer and Executive Vice President.

The Center was created by the Society in June 2010 to identify sources of treatment variation; determine what variation is acceptable based on quality, patient population, and cultural and geographic differences; and establish strategies for reducing variation. Using data from the Wisconsin Health Information Organization (WHIO), the Center has brought together physicians, business leaders and community members from throughout Wisconsin to identify targets for enhancing the value of care.

The first three groups are addressing variation in orthopedics, cardiology and behavioral health care costs and resource use. “Where we identify unintended variation, we challenge

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doctors to work with their communities, local employers and schools to set the expectation for not only the highest quality, but the most consistent, affordable care possible,” said Tim Bartholow, MD, the Center’s Medical Director. “While reduction in health care variation will improve the value of care through performance improvement, it does not diminish the obligation citizens have to keep themselves well through exercise and proper nutrition – work that will come through the Foundation.”

The Physicians Foundation seeks to advance the work of physicians nationwide to create a more efficient and equitable health care system. A nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization, the Physicians Foundation was founded in 2003. More information is available at www.physiciansfoundation.org.

With more than 12,000 members dedicated to the best interests of their patients, the Wisconsin Medical Society is the largest association of medical doctors in the state and a trusted source for health policy leadership since 1841. The Society and Wisconsin Medical Society Foundation (a nonprofit organization founded in 1955) work together to improve the health of all Wisconsin residents. To learn more, visit www.wisconsinmedicalsociety.org.