CHALLENGES IN IMPROVING HEALTHCARE DELIVERY IN THE MEDICALLY UNDERSERVED AREAS IN THE UNITED STATES

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Objectives

- To understand the challenges facing our health care delivery system with an emphasis on access to health care in the underserved areas
- To discuss the role of current and future government programs to improve access to health care in the underserved areas
- To outline solution strategies that will improve access to health care in underserved areas
The U.S. Healthcare system is facing a major dilemma with issues related to:

- Affordability of health care
- Quality limitations
- Limited Access
Medically Underserved Areas

“White Follows Green”
Government Programs that address access, cost and quality

- Medicare
- Medicaid
- The National Health Service Corps
- Indian Health Services
- Health Professional Shortage Area
Goal: To alleviate Disparity between well served and underserved areas

- Better recruitment and retention
- Better reimbursement
- HPSA revision
- Technological Advancement
- NHSC Expansion
- Tort reform
- Medical school and residency training
Access Related Issues

- Access is driven by the market place
- Underserved areas will most likely remain underserved
- Only 1 out of 5 physicians will practice in an underserved area
Government response to Access:
HPSA

- Establishments of community Medical Centers
- Provision of medical providers through the NHSC
- IHS provisions/USPHS
Problems with HPSA

- Some areas cannot attract physicians
- Some areas do not know how to apply for designations
- Designations may be lost
The Health Center Renewal Act of 2007

- The Inverse Care Law
- Low supply/ High Mortality
- Multi-factorial issues in improving health care delivery in underserved areas
Stakeholders For

- The Federal and State Government
- Primary care physicians
- Hospitals
- Community clinics and municipalities
- Insurance Carriers
- Pharmaceutical companies
- Trial lawyers
- Small and large businesses
Stakeholders Against

- Pre-existing private practitioners
- Medical liability insurance carriers
- Medical sub-specialists
- Pharmacies
Future Recommendations

- Use of a primary care model
- Use of NHSC to recruit physicians to underserved areas
- Health Centers Renewal Act of 2007
- American Recovery and Reinvestment Act/Expansion of NHSC
Future Recommendations

- Improving Quality of Life/Decreased paper trails
- Adjusted Medicare and insurance pay scale
- Better training in residencies
- Mandatory 1-2 year service for all graduating residents, nurse practitioners and PA’s
- Improved micro-systems of interactions between various members of the healthcare delivery team
- Patient centered medical home
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