

**Rural Health Science Institute  
Community Forum Meeting  
Tuesday, March 28, 2006  
6:00 p.m., Board Room**

In Attendance:

Janet Dahlke, Siskiyou County Human Services  
George Bliss, Siskiyou Family Healthcare  
Deborra Clayton, Weed Press  
Jonathon Andrus, Fairchild Medical Center  
Dwayne Jones, Fairchild Medical Center  
Doug Langford, DDS  
Chuck Gersdorf, Mercy Medical Center  
Becky Power, Yreka Union High School District  
Audrey Flower, Madrone Hospice  
Michelle Weston, LVN Tutor  
Joe Champagne, Mt. Shasta Physical Therapy  
Gita Bhushan, Siskiyou County Office of Education  
Karen Copsey, Nichols, Melburg & Rossetto

Loretta Healy, SunBridge Care & Rehabilitation  
Diane Norcio, community member  
Robin Richards, COS  
Barry Russell, COS  
Dennis DeRoss, COS  
Rose Applewhite, COS  
Dave Clarke, COS  
Gerri Fedora, COS  
Virginia Ramshaw, COS  
Lori Cleveland, COS  
Renata Funke, COS  
Mark Healy, COS  
Eden Dahlstrom, COS

**I. Welcome and Introductions**

Barry Russell welcomed everyone. All those in attendance then introduced themselves. Barry further thanked community members for the passing of Bond Measure A. There are four major areas that will be addressed with this bond: the building of a fire science/paramedic facility; expanding the distance learning network; the renovation of the dorms; and the building of a Rural Health Science Institute in Yreka.

**II. Purpose of the Focus Group**

The outline that will be followed this evening was reviewed. There are four areas for discussion: identify instructional programs for the RHSI; identify facility needs for the RHSI; identify funding opportunities for the RHSI; and identify other considerations for the RHSI.

**III. Ground Rules**

Barry asked that all participants be candid and creative with their ideas – think outside the box. The programs that will be offered in the future will not only affect Siskiyou County, but surrounding areas as well. All participants will be invited back together to provide additional feedback once a plan has been established. Barry then introduced Eden Dahlstrom who will conduct the rest of the forum.

**IV. Index Card Exercise**

Index cards were distributed. Eden asked that everyone write one idea that comes to mind when thinking of a RHSI in Siskiyou County. Responses included:

- Programs to support the local health care needs.
- Increased opportunity for local high school graduates. Help them stay in area long term with meaningful employment.
- Opportunity for drawing students from Oregon.
- Facility providing practical training and a location for “practicing” wellness.
- Allied health professions introduction and training programs
- Training for all areas of Health Science.
- Veterinary Assistant – helping to keep large and small animals healthy helps keep our humans healthy.
- Vision of the current and future health needs of county residents; providing job opportunities.

- I would like to see instructional programs related to clinical laboratory science and respiratory therapy. Ancillary staff are critical for healthcare providers. I would support any program related to the preparation of healthcare workers which will replace our aging workforce.
- Flagship facility; high tech utility that attracts teaching.
- Rural Health Research connected with OHSU, Chico, UC Davis, UCSF, Humboldt State. Students will do residencies here; have visiting professors and lecturers.
- Education for a variety of technical and professional careers needed in Siskiyou County and surrounding area.
- Medical Assisting program.
- Concern: Enough “action” to give student a good clinical experience in order to develop expertise in their field; Opportunity: for our community to benefit from experts in rural health and for better care for the underserved population.
- The educational components needed both within the county and from outside the county for community health education, technical health certifications, gerontology, and the other health sciences.
- Account for the growing senior population while training and retaining local health care workers.
- Expand our nursing programs; other allied health programs together addressing rural needs. (Focus on rural health care.)
- Resources – references to facilities in area; books; journals; access to larger sources of reference material; research material. Consider the need (which is increasing) for transcultural care and language barriers. Need interpreters also.
- Validate the importance of providing professional medical training to residents of Siskiyou County. Keep young people at home with good jobs.

## V. Instructional Programs

What are the current health science training needs in our area?

Dwayne Jones noted that we need to have a vision of current and future needs, as well as a consideration for the demographic changes that will take place in the County. It’s also important that the college offer programs where students can receive local employment or go someplace else and gain employment. Chuck Gersdorf added that new programs will draw students from other areas – there is an absolute need around the state and country for these types of programs. It was also suggested that COS take the career ladder approach to any new programs.

Suggestions for new instructional programs included:

- Medical technologist
- Phlebotomist
- Medical coding
- Medical transcriptionist
- X-Ray technician
- Continuing education training (videoconferenced opportunities)
- In-home therapy (physical therapist, occupational therapist, speech therapist, caregivers, social services workers)
- Surgery technician
- Pharmacy technician
- Mental health
- Wellness (aging, children, prevention; health educator)
- Physical therapy aides
- Health information technician (electronic medical records/health info dept.)

- Medical billing/clerical (business office, continuing education opportunity)
- Activity coordinator for long term care
- Gerontology
- Articulated social services
- Sports medicine/athletic trainer

A discussion was held regarding the process that must take place before a new program can be offered which includes a needs assessment. Barry noted that Shasta College has already been contacted, and discussions will begin with Rogue Valley Community College and OIT. We don't want to compete with the programs they offer. COS will also look at different ways of delivery for new programs.

## **VI. Facility**

New facilities will be tied to the new programs COS plans to offer. Eden asked participants to give some ideas about what a new facility should look like. Chuck Gersdorf noted that there will be a need for more dormitories, since the plan is to draw new students from outside the community. Other ideas included:

- Coordinate/partner with hospitals for clinicals
- Learning resource center (computers, tutoring, academic help) which can be used for videoconferencing and a variety of purposes for multiple professions
- Think for the future (wiring, lead-lined walls)
- Student services (food, bookstore, student center, kitchen facility/café)
- Medical library (research, journals, online research, textbooks)
- Distance learning facility (videoconferencing)
- Classrooms (for lecture)
- Labs for science prerequisites
- Parking
- Need for equipment
- Storage
- Maintenance
- Offices
- Conference rooms
- SMART classrooms
- WIFI
- Restrooms (needed for caregiver training)
- Locker room and "real world" training
- Indoor pool/Jacuzzi
- Mock hospital-like settings
- Cafeteria/kitchen facility

Dave Clarke noted that we need to have "build-out ability" since everything listed can't be supported initially.

## **VII. Funding**

Measure A bond money will be used for most of the new programs and facilities. Eden asked participants to think of other funding sources. Ideas included:

- Look at statewide initiatives for training of medical technicians
- Foundations (McConnell, Ford, COS, Mercy)
- Lobby for federal match for RHSI.
- Office of Statewide Planning & Development

- CA Wellness Foundation
- CA Endowment
- Native American Tribal money
- STEP/WIA
- Local business (ex: water bottling companies)

### **VIII. Closing**

Eden asked participants to pick one instructional program they would like to see offered, write it on their index card, then circle it. These included:

- Medical records
- Variety of “assistant” programs
- Rehabilitation/therapy
- CNA/LVN/RN
- Continuing education
- Nursing/direct patient care
- Clinical laboratory science
- Pharmacy tech
- Wellness program – geriatrics
- Medical tech
- Wellness
- Medical technology

Everyone was thanked for their participation.