Eisenhower: Becoming a Teaching Hospital

Eisenhower's Richard Loftus, MD Internal Medicine (Left) instructs Loma Linda University School of Medicine third year student Edward perry (Center).

It is arguably the greatest milestone in Eisenhower's evolution — becoming a teaching hospital.

Through an affiliation with the renowned Keck School of Medicine at the University of Southern California (USC),medical students began Family Medicine clerkships, or rotations, at Eisenhower in July 2010. Eisenhower also has affiliations with other medical schools, such as Loma Linda University and the new medical school planned for the University of California, Riverside, scheduled to open in 2012.

That is just the beginning….

By July 2013, Eisenhower will welcome eight Internal Medicine residents and eight Family Medicine residents as part of its Graduate Medical Education Program, which is anticipated to receive national accreditation later this year. There will also be six additional first year residents in what is called a "transitional" year before pursuing another specialty. By 2016, the Medical Center will have a total of 54 residents undertaking their three-year training in these vital primary care specialties. In addition, Eisenhower plans to offer two oneyear fellowship positions in geriatrics starting in 2014.

BENEFITS FOR THE COMMUNITY

The benefits for Eisenhower patients as well as the entire Coachella Valley are numerous. "I think one of the strongest cases for becoming a teaching hospital is the annual ranking of the nation's top hospitals by U.S. News & World Report," shares Maureen Strohm,MD, Eisenhower's Family Medicine Residency Director."Of the nearly 5,000 hospitals analyzed, only 152 achieve even one of the specialty rankings — neuroscience, cardiovascular, cancer, orthopedics, geriatrics, rheumatology, rehabilitation, to name a few — and the vast majority are teaching hospitals.

"The 14 ultra-elite Honor Roll hospitals — with high scores in six or more specialties — are all teaching hospitals," adds Dr. Strohm. The Honor Roll includes the best of the best, such as Johns Hopkins,Mayo, Harvard's Massachusetts General, and the Cleveland Clinic."

"Another important benefit of being a teaching hospital is the emphasis on research and innovation," says Joseph Scherger,MD, MPH,Vice President, Primary Care."Our physicians are already involved in some important research to cure disease, improve quality of life and keep people healthy. Becoming a teaching hospital will strengthen our ties with various academic medical centers and increase the opportunities for cuttingedge research and collaborative work."

"Studies also show that patients treated at teaching hospitals have better outcomes," notes Dr. Scherger."That's because you really have to be at the top of your game — up-to-date on the latest treatments, techniques and technology — when you're teaching the next generation of physicians. It also means that there's a lot more time and consideration given to both routine and complex cases as part of the teaching process — and that translates into the best possible care for patients."

"Being a teaching hospital confers less obvious benefits as well," notes Dr. Strohm. "Evidence suggests that physicians who train at a teaching hospital are more likely to return there to practice.As the Valley — and the entire nation — faces a growing physician shortage, particularly in primary care, becoming a teaching hospital helps to ensure that Eisenhower can continue to attract and retain the highest caliber physicians to meet our community's needs. Some of the best doctors in America prefer to work in a teaching environment…and that's the company we want to keep."

"By becoming a teaching hospital, we're taking our commitment to providing 'health care as it should be' to the next level," says G. Aubrey Serfling, Eisenhower's President and Chief Executive Officer."Eisenhower built its reputation by putting patients first, and this transition is the latest embodiment of our commitment to do so."

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