

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BATON ROUGE - With approximately one-fourth of the state's residents uninsured and having limited access to public health, sixty percent of Louisiana adults considered overweight or obese, and one of the highest infant mortality rates in the nation it is as imperative as ever that innovative and collaborative efforts to improve the quality of and access to health care be considered—the LSU operated state public health care system intends to continue doing precisely that.

On January 19th, 2005 the LSU Health Sciences Center – Health Care Services Division, the administrative authority of the state's public hospitals, will host the Eighth Annual Forum on Health Care Effectiveness. The broad goals of the forum will be to communicate ideas and examples of health care effectiveness, demonstrating improved patient care and improved access to the public system of care. The forum will also serve to provide a structured environment to enhance innovation, creative skills and insights, and collaboration appropriate for public hospitals and clinics as well as their partners and constituencies.

Dr. Michael K. Butler, the public hospital system's Chief Medical Officer, will discuss how successfully improving the quality of patient care and access to preventive services is now, more than ever, vital to the system's sustainability. "The health systems of the future will be built around the clinical enterprise," he said. "It is in this domain that the measurements of performance and improvement data will originate and, consequently, assure the effectiveness of efforts to improve the health and access to care of the population served; In short, you get what you measure."

Dr. Andy Kosseff, the forum's key note speaker, certainly echoes Dr. Butler's opinion to the extent that he has successfully overseen the establishment of clinical collaboratives at the system-wide level at SSM Health Care in St. Louis, Missouri. As the Medical Director of System Clinical Improvement, Dr. Kosseff attributes quality of care improvements via the collaboratives to, among other things, the importance of tracking outcomes and sharing results, learning, and innovative practices across facilities. He will elaborate on these and other factors which contributed to the success of the collaboratives which were instrumental in garnering SSM Healthcare the distinction of being the first health care system to receive the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award in 2002.

Continuing the annual Merv Trail Lectureship, Dr. Fred Cerise, Secretary of Health of the State of Louisiana and head of the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals, will also discuss how collaboration and innovation in access to quality patient care as well as preventative initiatives are fundamental to improving the health of the population at risk. Dr. Cerise, who, along with Senator John Breaux, has been at the helm of efforts to identify problems and opportunities for reform in the state's health care system, will address methods aimed at creating a balance between the often confusing missions of state agencies, private & public providers, other patient care service organizations, and health science centers.

Concurrent facilitated workshops, practical tools, skills, and best practice techniques will be illustrated through select reports from the Health Care Services Division's institutions and the faculty of the LSU Health Sciences Center. Moderated discussions will provide opportunities for additional collaboration and networking.

The Forum will take place at Pennington Biomedical Research Center's auditorium on 6400 Perkins Rd. from 9:00am to 5:00pm. Recognition awards and a reception will be held at 5:00pm. Media are encouraged to attend and share this event with the public which it is ultimately intended to serve.

For further information contact Diane Angelico at 504.903.7145 or Shawn Taylor at 225.922.0488.