

# NYS AHEC System Advisory Board Addresses Primary Care

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The September meeting of the New York State AHEC System Advisory Board featured an overview of the Primary Care Coalition by Elizabeth Swain, CEO, Community Health Care Association of New York State (CHCANYS) and Ronda Kotelchuck, Executive Director, Primary Care Development Corporation (PCDC). Thomas Rosenthal, MD, Director, New York State AHEC System provided the context for AHEC's role in primary care and the Primary Care Coalition.

John Rugge, MD, CEO, Hudson Headwaters Health Network provided his perspective of the issues outlined in "Laying the Foundation: Health System Reform in NYS and the Primary Care Imperative," a paper written earlier by Sara Rosenbaum, Peter Shin, and Trevino Whittington of George Washington University, at the request of CHCANYS, PCDC and the New York State AHEC System. According to Dr. Rugge, the paper was commissioned to "provide an authoritative, national perspective on the opportunity—and the need—for New York to develop a world-class primary care system, one that would match the excellence and the reach of this state's academic medical centers." Dr. Rugge provided his perspective of the three main areas in the "Laying the Foundation" report, 1) the importance of primary care, 2) status in New York State and 3) what needs to be done to improve the state's health care system.

A panel presentation regarding training and finance issues of physician, nurse practitioner and physician assistant providers featured Thomas C. Rosenthal, MD, Chair, Department of Family Medicine, School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, University at Buffalo; Elvira Szigeti, PhD, RN, Dean, College of Nursing, Upstate Medical University; and David Irvine, DHSc, RPA-C, Director, Physician Assistant Program, Albany Medical College. Panelists focused on factors that affect student interest in primary care careers and trends as well as the administrative and finance issues related to training and practice of primary care providers.

Work groups that discussed policy recommendations regarding system redesign/rightsizing, establishing referral linkages, system models; financial support for capital and operational maintenance and improvement; and workforce development. The meeting concluded with a general session on the New York State AHEC System role and contributions to primary care.



John Rugge, MD, CEO, Hudson Headwaters Health Network, Elizabeth Swain, CEO, CHCANYS, Ronda Kotelchuck, Executive Director, PCDC, and Neil Calman, MD, Medical Director, New York Metropolitan Region, NYS AHEC System



Panelists David Irvine, DHSc, RPA-C, Thomas Rosenthal, MD and Elvira Szigeti, PhD, provided insight into the factors that included student interest in primary care careers.