

## ***Nebraskans Remaking American Medicine***

### The Issue

Each year Americans spend more than one trillion dollars on healthcare. We waste as much as one-third of those dollars, either not helping patients or, worse, harming them. No individual, rich or poor, is immune from the shortcomings of American medicine. Spiraling healthcare expenditures provide absolutely no assurance of quality outcomes. While good people are doing the best they can, research has underscored the enormous human and financial toll exacted by a system that makes it difficult to provide safe and effective care for its patients.

### The Series

*Remaking American Medicine*<sup>TM</sup>, a four-part PBS series, tells the stories of individuals and institutions struggling to address the often life-threatening problems Americans routinely encounter when dealing with the healthcare system and reveal what is being done to provide safer, more effective care. The series focuses on the advances being made in improving the quality of patient care and will feature profiles of providers and patients who are working together to change the way healthcare is delivered in this country.

### Local Efforts

CIMRO of Nebraska (the Nebraska Medicare Quality Improvement Organization) with Nebraska Educational Telecommunications (NET) and a coalition of Nebraska healthcare stakeholders are working together to support the *Remaking American Medicine* series.

A local *Nebraska Connects* program will air Thursday, October 26, 2006 on NET, Nebraska's PBS station (8 p.m. CT) and will highlight key Nebraska healthcare issues as part of the *Remaking American Medicine* effort. The *Nebraska Connects* program will cover the topics of patient safety and alternative methods of healthcare. Nebraska expert panel members will provide responses to questions raised on the issues identified. The goal of the program is to motivate community members to become advocates for improving care for themselves and their families.

NET Radio, Nebraska's NPR station will air three news features and a call-in program. The radio program will feature healthcare professionals and patient activists who have had to take a more active role in the care provided. Each news feature will be approximately five minutes long and will air during *Morning Edition* between 6:30 and 8:30 am (CT) on October 23, 24 and 25. The one-hour radio call-in program will be broadcast live Wednesday, October 25, at 6:30 pm (CT).

### My Health...My Responsibility

An effective healthcare system is within grasp. Support and participation help ensure healthcare providers and patients across the nation are united in a single voice and with a single goal in mind – to demand a change in the quality of American healthcare that is nothing short of revolutionary. It is up to you to take responsibility for your health and the healthcare you receive.

A brief description of each of the four Remaking American Medicine national programs are included below.

### The National Broadcast

The national series will air each Thursday on NET1 in October at 9 p.m. (CT) beginning October 5, 2006.

The national series will also be shown on NET2 each Sunday afternoon in October at 4 p.m. beginning October 8, with the *Nebraska Connects* program airing Sunday, October 29 at 3 p.m. on NET2.

The national series will also run on NET2 every Friday in October at 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. beginning October 6, with the local *Nebraska Connects* program repeating on Friday, October 27 at 10 a.m. and 3 p.m.

### *Program One - Silent Killer*

Every year at least 98,000 Americans die, and countless more are injured, as a result of medical errors. This program begins by profiling the efforts of Sorrel King, whose 18-month-old daughter, Josie, was killed at one of the most respected hospitals in the world, Johns Hopkins. King has gone from grieving victim to engaged activist, partnering with Johns Hopkins to make safety a top priority at the institution. She has since joined forces with Dr. Donald Berwick, a nationally recognized patient safety advocate to save 100,000 lives in American hospitals.

### *Program Two - First Do No Harm*

This program focuses on the impact of medical errors in two hospitals and follows the efforts of physicians who are challenging their colleagues to live up to their oath to First Do No Harm. In Pittsburgh, Penn., Chief of Medicine Dr. Richard Shannon, is confronting an epidemic of hospital-acquired infections that are shattering the lives of their victims. Hackensack University Medical Center in New Jersey is engaged in an effort to totally transform the way the institution delivers care. The goal is to ensure the people trusted to provide safe and effective medical treatment do not harm patients.

### *Program Three - The Stealth Epidemic*

Chronic diseases, like diabetes and congestive heart failure, affect nearly 100 million Americans and treatment of these illnesses consumes nearly 70 percent of all healthcare resources. Yet doctors are often unable to prevent needless suffering or even death and these failures are threatening the viability of our entire healthcare system. This program looks at groundbreaking efforts in two very different communities - Los Angeles, Calif. and Whatcom County in the state of Washington - that are fundamentally transforming the physician-patient relationship and offers a glimmer of hope for patients across the country struggling with their chronic conditions.

### *Program Four - Hand in Hand*

As medicine continues to become more and more technologically sophisticated and the systems that deliver medical care become more complex, the relationship between providers, patients and families is more important than ever. This program tells the story of patients and families who have formed a unique bond in a teaching hospital in the small town of Augusta, Georgia, to transform the institution into a nationally-recognized facility where partnership is a guiding vision to the care it delivers.

### For More Information

Information about *Remaking American Medicine* and the national campaign are available at [www.RAMcampaign.org](http://www.RAMcampaign.org).

Information on local coalition efforts can be found at [www.cimronebraska.org](http://www.cimronebraska.org). To learn more about Nebraska's coalition and quality improvement efforts, contact Keri McDermott, CIMRO of Nebraska's Communications Director, at 402/476-1399 or via e-mail at [kmcdermott@neqio.sdps.org](mailto:kmcdermott@neqio.sdps.org).



**Resources for better healthcare**

