Plenary Session:
Panel Response from the Health Care Professionals

Monday, November 5, 2007
2.00-3.30 pm
Mount Elbert
Plenary Session: Panel Response from the Health Care Professionals

Moderated by Jere Mock, senior program director of WICHE’s Programs and Services unit, health care professionals Ned Calonge, Adam Darkins, Virgilio Licona, and Vickie Ybarra will respond to earlier sessions with their perspectives on the future of health care in the West and the future of health and allied health care training.

Biographical Information on the Moderator

Jere Mock is senior program director of Programs and Services at the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education and manages its three Student Exchange Programs – the Professional Student Exchange Program, the Western Regional Graduate Program, and the Western Undergraduate Exchange – which provide a broad range of higher education options for more than 22,000 students each year. Mock oversees the national State Scholars Initiative, funded by the U.S. Department of Education, along with several regional initiatives, including the Northwest Academic Forum, the WICHE Internet Course Exchange, and the Master Property Program. She also manages WICHE’s communications activities. Mock has developed and directed WICHE projects that foster resource sharing and collaboration in higher education with funding from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, Ford Foundation, William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education, and other organizations. Prior to joining the WICHE staff, she was the executive director of a corporate foundation which funded a variety of nonprofit organizations in a seven-state region.

Biographical Information on the Speakers

Ned Calonge is the chief medical officer of the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, where he supervises health-related divisions, including the Disease Control and Environmental Epidemiology Division (overseeing disease outbreak investigation and bioterrorism preparedness and response), the Health Facilities Division (responsible for licensing and regulatory oversight for long-term care facilities, hospitals, and other facilities), the Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Division (providing community-based disease prevention services and policy support for emergency, trauma, and prehospital programs); and the Prevention and Intervention Services for Children and Youth Division (addressing community programs for disease prevention and health promotion). He is also the state epidemiologist and the executive director of state bioterrorism preparedness, as well as an associate professor of family medicine and of preventive medicine and biometrics at the University of
Colorado Health Sciences Center (UCHSC). Calonge is a member of the Governor’s Expert Emergency Epidemic Response Committee, chairs the state Bioterrorism Advisory Committee, and is a member the state Hospital Preparedness Advisory Committee, as well as president of the Colorado Board of Medical Examiners. He serves on the boards of directors for the Colorado Academy of Family Practice (president-elect), the Colorado Foundation for Medical Care (chair), and the Colorado Prevention Center; and chairs the Health Affairs Committee of the Colorado Medical Society. Previously, he was the chief of preventive medicine and research for Kaiser Permanente of Colorado. He received his B.A. in chemistry from the Colorado College, his M.D. from the University of Colorado, and his M.P.H. from the University of Washington.

Adam Darkins is the chief consultant for care coordination at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA); the new Office of Care Coordination is responsible for a major disease management program deployment that incorporates home telehealth. Darkins previously led the Veterans Health Administration’s national telemedicine/telehealth program, which is now incorporated into the Office of Care Coordination. Darkins trained as a neurosurgeon in the U.K. and undertook research for his doctoral thesis at UCLA. He established and directed an early telehealth program in the U.K., based at the King’s Fund in London, which had links with Dartmouth Medical School and the Massachusetts General Hospital. As the medical director of Riverside Community Health Care, a provider of health care to 300,000 people in central London, he helped pioneer several major clinical developments involving new models of care, including telehealth. Since August 1997 he has lived and worked in the U.S. Darkins has spoken widely on telehealth in the U.S., U.K., and continental Europe and has published on telehealth topics, including clinical risk management in telemedicine, developing a viable business case for telemedicine, contracting for telemedicine services, and the physician/patient relationship in telemedicine. He was a founding member of the Royal Society of Medicine’s Telemedicine Forum and an elected member of the Council of the Patient’s Association, both in the U.K.

Virgilio Licona is a family physician and the associate medical director of Plan de Salud del Valle in Fort Lupton, CO, as well as an assistant clinical professor of family medicine at the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center, Denver, where he lectures on cross-cultural medicine. He is a member of the board of directors of the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) and has served as a delegate representing Colorado to the AAFP Congress of Delegates and as a delegate for the Minority Constituency. He has also served as chair of the board of directors, president, and vice president of the Colorado Academy of Family Physicians (CAFP). Licona earned his bachelor’s degree and his physician’s assistant in pediatrics degree from the University of Colorado School of Medicine, Denver; and his medical
degree from the Autonomous University of the State of Hidalgo, Mexico. He completed his family medicine residency at the University of North Dakota, Fargo; a public health miniresidency at Johns Hopkins University; and a year of postgraduate studies in health administration at the University of Colorado, Denver. Licona is a community board member of the Latino/Latina Policy and Research Center of Colorado and a member of the Farmworker, Health Policy, and Program Planning and Evaluation committees of the National Association of Community Health Centers. He served an internship with the Robert Graham Center: Policy Studies in Family Medicine and Primary Care in Washington, D.C., and had appointments to the National Advisory Committee on Rural Health and the National Advisory Council of the National Health Service Corps. Licona received the 2000 Colorado Minority Health Forum’s “Outstanding Contributor to Minority Health Care in Colorado” award (now called the “Dr. Virgilio Licona Award”) and was named one of the “50 Super Heroes of Family Medicine” in Colorado during the first 50 years of the CAFP’s history.

Vickie Ybarra is the director of planning and development for the Yakima Valley Farm Workers Clinic, one of the largest community/migrant health care systems in the country, with clinics in Washington and Oregon. She has extensive experience in development, oversight, and evaluation of community programs targeting Hispanic and Spanish-speaking populations. She earned her undergraduate degree in nursing from the University of Washington School of Nursing and in 1996 completed her master’s in public health at the University of Washington. As an appointed member of the Washington State Board of Health from 1998 to 2004, she provided leadership for the board’s health disparities efforts. She coauthored the board’s report on health disparities, focusing on diversifying the state health care workforce; she also served on the Institute of Medicine committee that produced the 2004 report “In the Nation’s Compelling Interest: Ensuring Diversity in the Health Care Workforce.” She is active in her community and statewide with health care workforce development, particularly working to increase the number Hispanics entering health care professions. Ybarra is also president of the school board in Yakima, the state’s largest Hispanic-majority district, and has a particular focus on closing the K-12 achievement gap. Most recently, she was appointed by Governor Chris Gregoire to chair the new Governor’s Interagency Council on Health Disparities.