



BILL LAX/FSU PHOTO LAB

Caring for a child at the College of Medicine's pediatric residency program at Sacred Heart Hospital in Pensacola.

Supporting residents

The College of Medicine is actively pursuing every opportunity to help increase the number of available residency positions in Florida. It's the best way to try to keep as many graduates of Florida medical schools as possible in the state.

On Aug. 8, the college announced its latest effort, a family medicine program at Lee Memorial Hospital in Fort Myers. The College of Medicine will serve as the program's sponsor and, as the top producer of family medicine residents in the state, hopes to be sending a supply of future physicians to the area.

The College of Medicine already sponsors residency programs in pediatrics and obstetrics-gynecology at Sacred Heart

Hospital in Pensacola. The pediatrics program recently received a new four-year accreditation from the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education.

The college also is working with Tallahassee Memorial Hospital to open a program in internal medicine that could begin accepting residents in 2012.

In 2011, nearly two-thirds of the 114-person graduating class at the College of Medicine accepted residency positions outside Florida. That's a problem Dean John Fogarty hopes to reverse by working with Florida's leaders to create more residency programs in the state.

Florida currently ranks 44th nationally in the ratio of residency positions to population.

The power of in-state residencies was well illustrated recently when TMH graduated its latest class of family medicine residents. Though the College of Medicine is not that program's sponsor, it has been the top supplier of medical school graduates in recent years.

Seven of the 10 graduating residents were College of Medicine alumni, including Chief Resident Randa Perkins. All but one of the graduates will be practicing in Florida.

As Fogarty told the Tallahassee Democrat for an article about the residents: "It really demonstrates from my perspective that if you train locally, you stay locally."