

## **FSU Residents to Meet the Area's Needs**

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The shortage of primary care doctors, it's a national trend hitting close to home. Three million Floridians have inadequate access to basic health care. Training doctors locally is a step in the right direction.

"The statistics nationally would suggest that the majority of students who do residencies will stay within 50 to 75 miles of their program," says Dr. John Fogarty, dean of FSU College of Medicine.

Half the state's medical school graduate who entered residency programs, left the state. Leaving Floridians holding the short end of the stick.

"There's 19 million people in the state all the time and so we have to find a way to take care of all the patients that are here," says Dr. Fogarty.

In August, Lee Memorial Health System partnered with the FSU College of Medicine, forming a family medicine residency program.

The plan is to roll out six new family practice physicians a year. The program gets them here, and hopefully gets them hooked on southwest Florida.

"They start to develop a relationship and a network within the community and they get comfortable with that so a lot of times they'll be recruited or retained within the local community," says Dr. Scott Nygaard, Chief Medical Officer of Lee Memorial Health System.

Adding doctors increases access to medical care, in particular with the elderly who require more frequent visits.

"We're excited we think that if we start small, that will kind of build upon itself and we'll have future development opportunities over the next several years with other programs as well," says Dr. Nygaard.

Encouraging primary care physicians to lay down roots can only help the health of the community.

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Lee Memorial Health System in Fort Myers, FL is the largest network of medical care facilities in Southwest Florida and is highly respected for its expertise, innovation and quality of care. For nearly a century, we've been providing our community with everything from primary care treatment to highly specialized care services and robotic assisted surgeries.

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