



THE FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

**LEE MEMORIAL
HEALTH SYSTEM**

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New Florida State and Lee Memorial family medicine residency program in Fort Myers names first director

FORT MYERS – Gary Goforth, M.D., has been named director of the Florida State University College of Medicine and Lee Memorial Health System Family Medicine Residency Program. He is the program's first director and will oversee a team of physicians and medical residents providing patient care at Lee Memorial Hospital.

Goforth currently is the program director for a 30-resident, 19-faculty family medicine program in Greenwood, S.C. He also is a professor of family medicine for the South Carolina Area Health Education Consortium through the Medical University of South Carolina.

“The need for more primary care physicians in our community is great. We are excited to have Dr. Goforth lead our medical residency program in creating a pipeline of physicians who will make southwest Florida their home,” said Richard Akin, chairman of the Lee Memorial Health System Board of Directors.

Goforth is expected to be on site full-time at Lee Memorial Hospital by May. Meantime, he plans to provide assistance as the program goes through the accreditation process with the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education.

Goforth earned a degree in physics and later an M.D. from Vanderbilt University. He completed a family medicine residency program with the Tripler Army Medical Center in Honolulu. In addition, he earned a master's in Tropical Medicine & Hygiene at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences in Bethesda, Md.

He recently helped establish a new family medicine residency program in Afghanistan to assist Afghani physicians in meeting their country's health-care needs.

“I have known Dr. Goforth as a colleague and friend since 1985 when we served in the Army together at Fort Benning, Ga. He is a man of great passion and principle and is the perfect founding director for this new residency program,” said FSU College of Medicine Dean John P. Fogarty.

“He has the knowledge to develop an outstanding program and the personality to recruit a strong faculty and committed residents. I am pleased to be working with him again to build a model family medicine residency program in Fort Myers.”

As many as eight family medicine residents (with two of those being second-year residents) could be in place to begin training in Fort Myers by July of 2013.

“Before then, I expect that we’ll have faculty providing care at Lee Memorial starting early this fall so that we can begin building a patient population for the new residency program,” Goforth said. “I’m excited about the opportunity to be part of building this program from the ground up and about bringing new medical school graduates to Southwest Florida for their family medicine training.”

Medical school graduates are required to complete residency training in their chosen specialty in order to gain board certification and become an independently practicing physician. Numerous studies have shown that most physicians end up practicing near where they completed residency training.

At present, Florida ranks 43rd nationally in the number of residents per 100,000 population, despite being the fourth-most-populous state in the country.

Contingent upon progress in the accreditation process, the family medicine residency is expected to begin interviewing applying fourth-year medical students in the fall. Graduating medical students are matched to residency programs through the National Resident Matching Program (NRMP).

Applicants and programs begin submitting their rank order list to the NRMP in January. In March, the NRMP matches medical students to residency programs according to the rank lists. The announcements are made simultaneously to graduating medical students nationwide as part of a process known as Match Day.

The family medicine residency program would grow over time to a maximum of 18 residents. Family medicine residency training ordinarily takes three years to complete.

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