

CASE STUDY: Residency Program Increases Patient Satisfaction

Local Hospital Provides Diverse Physician Staff



SITUATION

Ten years ago, the Cornell Scott–Hill Health Center was looking for a way to provide additional services and increase patient satisfaction at its Ansonia location. A residency program through a partnership with a local hospital seemed like a possible solution.

Residency programs are a mandatory step in becoming a licensed physician. Medical students enrolled in these post-graduate education programs experience hands-on training in real world environments in their chosen specialty. Depending on the specialty, residency programs can last between three and seven years; successful completion results in board certification.

At one time, Griffin Hospital, located just down the street in nearby Derby, had its own primary care clinic, but it eventually became financially unfeasible to keep the clinic running. Because of the necessity of residency programs, a new location had to be found.

SOLUTION

For over 10 years, the Ansonia location of the Cornell Scott-Hill Health Center has become the primary ambulatory site for several of Griffin's residency programs. Ambulatory rotations cover a wide range of outpatient medicine and are performed in either primary care or subspecialty clinics. Over the course of three years, residents spend a minimum of 130 distinct half-day sessions at the health center, or one-third of their residency in an outpatient setting.

One of Griffin Hospital's residency programs is a traditional three-year Internal Medicine residency program, consisting of rotations in general medicine, critical care, emergency room, cardiology, non-cardiac telemetry, women's health, geriatrics, electives and ambulatory medicine.

The other is a unique, four-year combined Internal Medicine/Preventive Medicine program. Started in 1995, it was the first in the country to offer extensive training in clinical, preventive, and public health skills, research methods, evidence-based and cost-effective healthcare and community-based health promotion. Residents in this program receive their Masters in Public Health from the Yale University School of Epidemiology and Public Health, leading to dual board eligibility.

All residents spend one half-day a week at the Cornell Scott-Hill Health Center Ansonia location. Residents are assigned patients whom they will follow throughout their training. The residents are supervised at all times by a clinic specialist. Subspecialties offered at the center include on-site Neurology, Behavioral Health, and Podiatry.

RESULTS

With almost 30 residents on-hand the Ansonia location has increased its physician staff by four a day. The addition of these residents allows for improved patient care due to the greater number of available staff.

Patients who see residents often receive more attention than they would otherwise get from a private doctor who will generally spend 15 minutes per encounter. It is not uncommon for residents to spend nearly twice as much time with patients.

Another benefit for patients is access to a diverse group of doctors, which is extremely beneficial for those who are seeking female or male-specific doctors or a provider fluent in a specific language.

The experience also benefits residents because, in addition to fulfilling the requirements needed to practice medicine, it gives them an opportunity to see the ways in which other healthcare facilities operate.

As a mandated experience, residents would have to perform their residency somewhere, and luckily for patients of Cornell Scott-Hill Health Center in Ansonia, these diverse, highly qualified residents are available to provide them with their services.

Cornell Scott-Hill Health Center's Ansonia branch is located on 121 Wakelee Avenue.