Rationale

In today’s health care environment of spiraling costs, confusion, criticism, litigation and misunderstanding, the Academy of Medicine of Cleveland & Northern Ohio feels health care professionals must respond to medical consumers’ concerns by establishing continuous and open communication. This communication must flow two ways if we are to make progress in the effort to resolve conflicts and devise constructive methods of containing costs without sacrificing the access to and quality of patient care.

Our Mini-Internship Program is an effort to achieve these ends by exposing the humane concerns of medical practitioners through first-hand experience for lay interns. It also provides physicians with input from a broad spectrum of the community.

Interns have been invited from the ranks of industry and business, politics, media, labor, clergy, education and health care coalitions.

Participating physicians represent a broad basic spectrum of medical care -- those specialties to which the majority of patients are routinely exposed. These include family practice, internal medicine, surgery, emergency medicine, pediatrics, obstetrics and gynecology, neurology and other specialty fields.

Interns will spend a half-day in each placement, rotating from one assignment to another during the project. They are encouraged to question and comment freely during the course of the internship.

Requirements

1. Participants taking part in this program will be required to attend a training program on patient confidentiality and the relevant HIPAA rules prior to visiting any hospital or physician’s office. Upon completion of that training and prior to visiting any health care facility or physician’s office, each participant will sign a written confidentiality agreement, reflecting the training and the participant’s understanding of the HIPAA confidentiality rules.
2. Maintain respect for patient confidentiality. This prohibits interns’ discussion of cases and protects the patient’s right to refuse an intern’s presence.
3. Adhere to the arranged schedule.
4. Wear identification at all times.
5. Ask whatever questions arise and comment freely as you accompany physicians through the course of their routines.
6. Withhold discussion of the internship amongst yourselves until the debriefing dinner.
7. Provide input and help evaluate the program during the debriefing dinner.