Dr. Lenarz’s Talk 11/15/12

Leading effectively is important in healthcare.

Affordable care act: MN on cutting edge of healthcare reform and policy. MN gets paid less by the federal government because better care is provided. The federal and local healthcare systems in place today cannot survive. For either party to admit that something needs to change is political suicide. Lots of babyboomers becoming eligible for medicare, many overweight.

American healthcare system has 2 unique factors:

1. Funded through employers

2. Historically focuses on rescuing people from dire medical conditions or events instead of prevention.

Healthcare reform isn’t about reforming the healthcare system or the payment system. It’s about reforming the social system. Other countries give women time off after giving birth and their job positions are held.

Affordable care act as been pared down substantially from what it started as. We *think* (don’t *know* at this point) that it means that everybody (including the 47 million people w/o healthcare insurance) will have some access to healthcare. It also means a shift at level of medical school and payment as far as what we put our attention and money to. General practitioners will no longer see people with sore throat, URI, ect. Pt no longer defined as doctor’s patient. Instead, a team-based model, a social network. The US spends WAY more per capita than any other nation on healthcare. If you look at infant mortality, infant birthweight, we’re ALWAYS below other countries, sometimes even third-world countries.

Dartmouth Atlas – work done by Dartmouth physicians – shows we do not have a demand driven system, instead a supply-driven health system. The more we have, the more we do. There’s an inverse relationship between the amount of work done compared to the quality of care provided.

High-end surgical procedures won’t be paid as much as they are now. This poses threat to doctors – asking them to give something up. Requires everyone to have health insurance or pay a tax penalty if they don’t. Concerned about system making hard decisions – we’ll do little or nothing to change the state of healthcare now. If we cannot respectfully debate differing views no headway will be made. All future physicians must be aware of this; cannot stick their heads in the sand. Answers are public health answers. As people are thinking about medical school, consider getting 2nd degree to improve understanding of healthcare and medical care.

Ways to get involved: MN medical association is a lobbying group. One way to get involved politically. Write a letter to legislature, request to discuss concerns with congressmen and senators (their job is to represent constituents).

Dr. Lenarz’s Career: Biggest challenges she faces: Balancing life separate from calling as physician with life as a physician. By being in relationship with them they can take hold of something that helps their health. Locus of control moves from doctor to patient. Never been a time where we can coast – constant change. As a leader, biggest challenge: helping groups of people manage change (i.e. transition from paper records to electronic).

Change in doctor/pt relationship with affordable healthcare act: Myth: all that doctor needs to do is impart wisdom about condition or what needs to be done. Learning ladder: We start off incompetent. Knowledge is only the first step in moving from unconsciously to consciously competent. Need to develop SKILL at doing something differently – have an EXPERIENCE that’s different. Teams designed: Doctors have clinical knowledge, nurse health coach checks in, discusses progress (pt. activation), focus on engaging pt. Seen results that show: pts are happier, less money spent, better quality of care. Put patients in position of authority. Takes enormous effort to learn how to not be unconsciously competent. About unlearning old behaviors and learning new behaviors.

Every state will be required to have online registry for insurance.

Being a physician and having a family: Both she and her husband are docs, neither has worked full time for the majority of careers. They’ve staggered schedules. She says it has been incredibly demanding. Her advice is to go into it with eyes wide open. She says she wouldn’t have done things differently except for the period of time when she was working full time.