AU project to test way to cut medical costs

Faculty and students in the James Harrison School of Pharmacy at AU are working with a state agency and pharmacists in four Alabama counties on a pilot project to contain the rising cost of health insurance for retired state education employees.

Teams of faculty and students from AU are helping administrators for the state’s Public Education Employee Health Insurance Program (PEEHIP) test a program to reduce medical costs through closer collaboration between physicians and pharmacists in the treatment of high-risk patients.

The program will be tested for one year, starting this spring, with participating patients in Jefferson, Shelby, Macon and Lee counties.

The Alabama program is based on a model program in Asheville, N.C., which resulted in improved health for patients and reductions in the city’s costs for medical insurance, said Lee Evans, dean of the Harrison School of Pharmacy. The city saved approximately $250,000 the first three years by providing individual counseling, therapy and monitoring to a small group of asthma patients.

Evans said Alabama could save much more by implementing a similar program on a larger scale.

Family Fun Day for AU employees set for May 13

Auburn will hold its eighth annual Family Fun Day for AU employees and their families on May 13 from 3 p.m.-5:30 p.m. on the lawn of the President’s Home.

About 4,000 people attend Family Fun Day each year. The event marks the end of spring semester with a community festival featuring games, prizes, food and music.

“More than 75 university offices and community businesses donated prizes for the event last year, and we expect to have that many participate again,” said Albert Snipes, director of employee relations in AU Human Resources and chair of the Family Fun Day organizing committee.

AU employees will receive a card through campus mail with information about the event. An attached mailing label will enable participants to enter a drawing for door prizes.
Evans said. “This program attempts to address that... professionals to develop and monitor a thorough, continuous course of therapy, including medications, diet, exercise and lifestyle changes. If this program is as successful as we expect, patients will see their medical conditions improve, and the rates of emergency treatment and hospitalization will go down.”

Medical care

(continued from page 1)

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Faculty and students from Auburn will help participating pharmacists establish and implement the program. Coordinating the effort is a planning committee consisting of Kem Kramer, Kimberly Braxton Lloyd, Pamela Stammt, Kristy Kelly and Jennifer Darnell from the departments of Pharmacy, Curriculum and Teaching, and Pharmacy Practice.

Kramer said participating pharmacists have demonstrated a commitment to their patients’ health beyond the pharmacy. When a patient enrolls in the program, the pharmacist will meet with the patient to chart the patient’s prescription history and all current medications, help the patient establish goals for managing his or her condition and adjust the physician’s findings. Then the pharmacist will work with the patient, physician and other medical professionals to develop a thorough, ongoing course of therapy, including medications, diet, exercise and lifestyle changes.

Upcoming Events

Continuing

• Works from the Noel and Kathryn Dickinson Wadsworth Collection: Degas, Toulouse-Lautrec, Picasso, Gilbert Stuart, Mary Cassatt, Andrew Wyeth, others, Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art. Hours 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Tuesday-Saturday; and 11 a.m.-5 p.m., Sunday, through May 21.

• Paintings by AU Architecture Professor Emeritus Richard Milliken, Pebble Hill, Tuesday, 8:30 a.m.-11 a.m. and 1 p.m.-4 p.m., daily through Friday.

Tuesday, April 27

• Littleton-Franklin Lecture: "Global Warming," Thursday, 7 p.m., Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art. Call 844-144 for reservations.

Friday, April 30

• Brown Bag Lunch Concert: AU Jazz Band, noon, Graves Amphitheater Free.

Monday, May 3

• Next AU Report.

• Spring Concert: AU Percussion Ensemble and Steel Drum Band, 7:30 p.m., Goodwin Music Hall, Free.

Wednesday, May 5

• Groundbreaking: Addition to W.W. Walker Building, Harrison School of Pharmacy, 10:30 a.m., Thach Avenue.

Officials cite Tiger Transit success for drop in parking-ticket revenue

Increased use of Auburn’s revamped Tiger Transit system is a key factor in a significant drop in campus parking tickets and ticket revenue, say AU transit officials.

Dave George, director of parking and transit services, said the university has issued 33,042 fewer parking tickets over the first half of the fiscal year than it did in fiscal 2003.

As a result, revenue from parking tickets has dropped from approximately $861,000 through the first six months of last year to $522,000 this year, or approximately $340,000.

“That more students are using Tiger Transit is definitely a significant factor in the decline in the numbers,” said George. "In the last couple of years, we’ve worked hard to revamp the system, to make it more attractive to the students. Most importantly, we’ve added routes and reconfigured existing routes. We wanted to make the students’ rides shorter and to be able to serve more students. I think we have made great improvements, but we would like to add some additional routes soon.”

Tiger Transit operates 30 buses over 15 routes.

AU program ranked among best in U.S. for faculty publications

An upcoming edition of a national journal ranks the community planning master’s degree program offered by Auburn’s College of Architecture, Design and Construction 15th in the U.S. in terms of publications per faculty member.

The ranking places the AU program ahead of Florida State University and former president of the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning. The data are from the Institute for Scientific Information.”

"The ranking reflects the dedication and hard work of the School of Architecture’s Community Planning faculty to increase their productivity and to ultimately bring the national standing of this graduate program,” said Sharon Gaber, associate dean of the College of Architecture, Design and Construction and interim chair of the community planning degree program.

Energy consumption

What’s behind the dip in ticket revenue

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Spirit of Excellence

Each month AU recognizes four employees for exceptional job performance with Spirit of Excellence awards.

Recipients for April are, from left, Carol Darcy, Office Maxine of Telecommu- enications and not, pictu- David Blonel of Housing and Residence Life.

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Professor’s work premieres in Prague

The Prague Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra in the Czech Republic recently presented the world premiere of “ICPC Fanfare” by Auburn Music Professor Robert Greenleaf.

The world-renowned orchestra performed Greenleaf’s work at one of Prague’s leading concert halls during the opening and closing ceremonies of a world-wide computer software-writing competition sponsored by IBM. The Prague orchestra also presented the European premiere of Greenleaf’s “Celebration,” turned to Greenleaf to compose a companion piece for the Prague event. Greenleaf gained national prominence in 1992 for his opera “Under the Arbor,” which premiered in Birmingham and was televised nationally over PBS. He is currently composing a song cycle based on poems by former AU faculty member Kenneth Wallace, and will premiere a song cycle in September at the National Symphony Orchestra in Las Vegas.

College to host summer enrichment program for children in June, July

Auburn’s Center for Governmental Services will host a conference Wednesday at Embassy Suites Hotel in Montgomery to explore legalization of gambling’s potential effect on local governments in Alabama.

The AU Outreach unit’s second annual Conference on Governmental Excellence and Best Practices will explore the topic “Perspectives on Gaming in Alabama.”

“We are facilitating an objective and comprehensive dialogue on gambling in the state of Alabama,” said Don-Terry Veal, conference chair and associate director of AU’s Center for Governmental Services.

“This conference is not in support of one side or the other with respect to Alabama’s decision on gaming,” added Veal. “However, we recognize that the issue of gaming has been a recurring topic whenever fiscal improvements are on the table.”

Speakers include Kay Ivey, Alabama’s state treasurer; Brian Dabson, executive director of the Corporation for Enterprise Development, Washington, D.C.; and Oscar Webb, executive director of the National Gaming Organization in Las Vegas.

State grant will help AU secure more U.S. funding for airport

AU will leverage a $100,000 state grant to help fund more than $4 million in improvements at the university-owned Auburn-Opelika Robert G. Pitts Airport.

Rep. Mike Hubbard helped AU secure the grant from the Public School and College Authority. The funds will help pay for paving projects associated with a total refurbishing of the airport facility, said Airport Director Bill Hutto. The work will include taxiway and ramp improvements, an access road and a parking lot for a new terminal on the east side of the airport.

Rep. Hubbard also charged AU to secure a funding match for grants from the Federal Aviation Administration, which will fund up to 95 percent of the project’s cost.

Electric vehicle

For Earth Day last Thursday, the Department of Industrial Design unveiled “Scuria.” The futuristic, energy-efficient commuter vehicle runs on electric power, reducing harmful emissions. Department Head Clark Lunden, left, and Instructor Doug Perkins discuss some of the features of the vehicle. The concept was introduced by 1949 Auburn alumnus Martin Beck.

Conference explores gambling, government

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“Prague has a fantastic tradition of classical music,” said Greenleaf, noting that the city shares a cultural heritage with its neighbor, Vienna, Austria, as one of the world’s most renowned centers of classical music. “To have my works premiere in Prague, performed by one of the finest metropolitan symphony orchestras in the world, is one of the highlights of my career,” he added.

Organizers familiar with his earlier work, “Celebration,” turned to Greenleaf to compose a companion piece for the Prague event. “Celebration” received its world premiere in 1997 in Birmingham as the signature music for the rebirth of the Alabama Symphony Orchestra. The National Symphony Orchestra later presented the piece in six performances.

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