

UR RECEIVES \$2.5 MILLION FOR PEDIATRIC HOME VISITS

By Rochester Democrat and Chronicle Staff Writer SUSAN J. SMITH

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The University of Rochester medical school has been given \$2.5 million to expand a program that sends pediatric residents into homes, schools and community agencies to visit under-served children.

The grant - \$500,000 each year for five years - is from the Dyson Foundation, a private philanthropy based in the mid-Hudson Valley. Five other medical schools also received grants for innovative pediatric training.

UR was chosen for the quality of its program and because Rochester is ranked among the 10 worst cities in the country in childhood poverty, said Dr. Anne Dyson, president of the Dyson Foundation.

Pediatric Links With the Community was created by UR's medical school and Children's Hospital at Strong. Since it began four years ago, the program has sent about 110 young doctors into the community to serve two-week rotations during their first year of training after graduation from medical school.

The grant will enable the program to offer projects and mentorships to second- and third-year residents who want to work longer in the community, said Dr. Laura Jean Shipley, co-director of the program.

The residents work at schools and about 30 community agencies, such as Head Start, doing screening tests and health education.

Up to 7 percent of Rochester children are believed to have no health insurance, and many live in single- parent families, said Dr. Jeffrey Kaczorowski, the other CO-director

"Some parents need guidance, and it is hard to get to a pediatrician because they have no transportation," he said "So offering children medical care and health education where they live or go to school makes sense."

Bonnie Hadden, director of development at the Salvation Army, one of the agencies the residents work with, said the program is important because it helps pediatricians understand the issues that affect children's health. Those issues include unemployed parents, overcrowded living conditions and lack of adequate food and shelter, she said.

"This program has tremendous potential to improve the well-being of children in Rochester," Hadden said. "We don't fare very well when it comes to children living in poverty." Dyson said the goal of the programs is to improve the health of all children in the community by getting pediatricians "to look outside the walls of their offices."