

UNMC med students to see practice at Chase County Clinic

Written by Wauneta Breeze
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By Carolyn Lee

The Imperial Republican

Three third-year University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC) students will be observing practice at Chase County Clinic and the adjacent Chase County Community Hospital (CCCH) this spring.

The rotations are part of the UNMC Rural Health Education Network (RHEN), an innovative program developed to help address the shortage of health professionals in rural Nebraska.

The three students who will be in Imperial are all in the College of Medicine program. Grant Turner of Omaha will observe Jan. 6-March 1. Kathryn Score of Omaha will be in town March 3-May 2, and Robert Szalewski of Omaha will observe from May 5-June 27.

CCCH Interim CEO Gary Bieganski said, "I'm really glad to see that we have students coming back in."

The last group of three visited two years ago, and included Imperial native Jason Burke, who is a pharmacist/owner at pharmacies in Grant and Holyoke, Colo.

Bieganski said the hospital has long and short-term recruitment goals concerning medical staff.

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“This is one of the steps in the recruiting process. It gives them a chance to know the community and medical staff, and gives us a chance to know them.”

Burke actually made up his mind to return to the Imperial area following his rotation here, according to his wife, Whitney.

The students chose where they want to make the rural rotation, Bieganski said. The hospital has to indicate a willingness to be on the Med Center’s list and to provide the medical staff who have the primary responsibility to oversee the students.

In the case of CCCH and Clinic, that’s Dr. Jon Richman, who will provide the leadership, Bieganski said.

The students will see patients in the clinic, Bieganski said. In addition, “We’ll give them a call when we have an emergency room visit or surgery, so they get to work with our specialists, too.”

The RHEN program was developed to expose students to a rural health setting with the idea that if students receive their training in a rural area, the chances are greater they may consider returning to a rural area once they complete their training.