Recruiting a Health Policy Expert

Efforts are underway to expand the public health curriculum to meet the needs of working health professionals.

**Description:** The Department of Population Health Sciences has gained new expertise in health policy, politics and system reform thanks to Startup Funding to Recruit Faculty Member Specializing in Health Policy, which led to the recruitment of Thomas Oliver, PhD, MHA.

**Results:** Oliver became the second director of the UW Master of Public Health (MPH) program shortly after joining the faculty. He has since helped integrate public health into the medical curriculum and established a number of interdisciplinary collaborations with UW colleagues in the area of health policy and health system reform. He is also the principal investigator on a $3.2 million five-year grant from the Health Resources Services Administration to establish the Wisconsin Public Health Education and Training Center. In addition, Oliver led the qualitative analysis of Wisconsin’s BadgerCare Plus health insurance expansions through a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

**Dissemination:** Oliver has published articles and book chapters on health policy topics such as national health care reform, the evolution of Medicare, using tools of new governance to strengthen systems of cancer care, shaping health policy through philanthropy and improving primary care through the development of teaching health centers.

**Next Steps:** Oliver and colleagues are now developing a proposal to expand public health curriculum to meet the needs of working health professionals, through a distance education track in the MPH program. He is leading a study of multi-sector partnerships for population health improvement and organizing an international conference on European and North American approaches to pursuing “health in all policies.”

**STARTUP FUNDING TO RECRUIT FACULTY MEMBER SPECIALIZING IN HEALTH POLICY**

- **Principal Investigator:** F. Javier Nieto, MD, PhD, MPH, Population Health Sciences, SMPH
- **Grant Program:** Targeted Education and Research
- **Award:** $261,706 for four years and 10 months