

Las Vegas oncology physician one of six awarded fellowship in Washington, D.C.

By PAUL HARASIM

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Dr. Ronald Kline, medical director of pediatric hematology and oncology for Comprehensive Cancer Centers of Nevada, is one of six doctors in the nation to be awarded the country's most prestigious fellowship at the nexus of health science, policy and politics.

Chosen by the Institute of Medicine and Robert Wood Johnson Foundation in a national competition for health professionals and behavioral and social scientists, the 52-year-old Kline will spend a year in Washington, D.C., working on health-related regulatory and legislative issues with members of Congress and the executive branch.

"Learning how to make better policies for health care can only help ensure that I deliver the best health care to kids," Kline said, stressing that both proper patient care and proper policy development are critical to solving the nation's health care needs.

Marie Michnich, director of the health policy fellows at the Institute of Medicine, said: "The year ahead promises to be a critical and challenging time in federal health policy. ... These exceptionally talented fellows will bring a level of expertise to the congressional or executive office assignments that will help policymakers shape the future of health and health care."

Established in 1970, the Institute of Medicine is the health arm of the National Academy of Sciences, which was chartered under President Abraham Lincoln in 1863. As the nation's largest philanthropy devoted exclusively to improving the health care of Americans, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation works with



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several organizations to achieve meaningful change.

That Kline was chosen should make the community proud, noted Dr. Dale Carrison, chief of staff at University Medical Center.

"It's a loss to the community for a year, because he's an

excellent pediatric oncologist, but what he will learn there in terms of policy can only help Nevada," Carrison said.

Kline said he will go to Washington in September and spend the first three months consulting with the top health policy experts in the nation. Then for the next nine months he'll work on policies for either the executive branch or legislators.

In his essay in the national competition, Kline expressed an interest in finding out how the Affordable Care Act's new state health insurance exchanges can best work on behalf of the citizenry.

How well those exchanges work will go a long way in determining how well the new health care legislation works, he said.

Kline served as president of the Clark County Medical Society from 2005-2006 and as president of the Nevada State Medical Association from 2010-2011.

He received his medical degree from the University of California, Los Angeles and did fellowships at the National Cancer Institute and the National Institutes of Health. His research has been published and presented through several scientific groups, including the Society for Pediatric Research and American Society of Clinical Oncology.