

# IMPulse

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11623 Lake Shore  
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**Post Register**

Idaho Falls, Idaho

**Tuesday June 26, 2018**

**by Marc Basham**

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## College to give \$500K to EIRMC's residency program

*Grant will help offset program's startup costs*

The Eastern Idaho Regional Medical Center is set to receive a grant for its internal medicine residency program from the soon-to-open Idaho College of Osteopathic Medicine.

In a joint news release on Monday, it was announced that the \$500,000 grant would help offset the cost of starting the program.

Dr. Robert Hasty and Dr. Tracy Farnsworth from ICOM will present the \$500,000 grant check to EIRMC CEO Jeff Sollis at 11 a.m. Thursday.

Coleen Niemann, EIRMC's director of marketing and community relations, said the money will go directly to the residency program, which has a startup cost of \$1 million.

"There's a significant investment to start (EIRMC's residency program)," Niemann said. "This does not fully cover, but helps to offset a significant portion of the cost of starting the residency program."

EIRMC also received funding from the Idaho State Legislature for the project, totaling \$455,000 for the upcoming fiscal year.

The grant is the first of its kind provided by ICOM for a residency program at an Idaho hospital. Stephanie Dillon, ICOM's director of marketing and communications, said the school has pledged \$5 million in grants over the next 10 years to hospitals across the state in an effort to boost residency programs.

Grants will be provided through private money and operations costs at ICOM.

Idaho currently ranks 49th per capita in the nation for both the number of physicians and resident physicians.

"We're pretty much at the bottom of the barrel in terms of available residency programs," Dillon said. "This is one way to increase our ranking and ensure Idaho has caring, competent and qualified physicians to care for Idahoans."

EIRMC's first class of residents arrives in Idaho Falls on Sunday, while ICOM will open to its first class of students in August. ICOM will welcome 162 students to its first class, with 42 of them coming from Idaho.

Upon graduation at ICOM, students will enter into a residency program to continue their medical education.

Niemann believes a strong relationship between the two entities can help lessen the doctor shortage and further student's medical education in eastern Idaho.

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“There is synergy between ICOM and EIRMC, because they need to be able to offer options for their students, and we view the residency program at EIRMC as a recruiting tool to bring physicians to southeast Idaho,” she said. “It’s a partnership that meets important needs for both organizations.

“We know it’s easier to recruit people who have roots in Idaho, and ICOM helps us do that.”

The \$500,000 grant will assist the EIRMC residency program in a number of projects, including obtaining office space for the continuity clinic for patients who have been discharged from the hospital but do not have follow-up care from a primary physician.

“There are physical, hard costs in association with building and renovating space to accommodate that,” Niemann said. “Additionally, there are costs in the residency program to do things like physician instructors or physician mentors who are working with the residents.”

Residents also will receive classroom-style instruction during the week, in addition to their work in the hospital. Part of the grant money from ICOM will go toward helping pay for these programs.

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