A "Collection of Dreams and Aspirations" Continues to Enrich Medical Students

Supplemental funds for distributing *On Doctoring* and the CD-ROM *Prime-Time Doctors*, 2008

**SUMMARY**

Since 1990, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) has supported the publication, updating and distribution to all first-year medical students of *On Doctoring*, a literature anthology including essays, short stories, poems, memoirs and commentary that emphasize the human dimension and the mission of medical care.

Since 2003, RWJF also has funded the distribution of a CD-ROM, *Prime-Time Doctors*, developed by Joseph Turow of the University of Pennsylvania, as a companion piece to the book.

**Key Results**

- *On Doctoring* is published by Simon & Schuster and is sold online and in bookstores. It is distributed annually to all first-year U.S. medical students. The 1991 first edition was revised and reissued as the second edition in 1995. The third edition was published in 2001 and expanded and revised in 2005.

- Selections for *On Doctoring*, which have included the works of Raymond Carver, Anton Chekhov, Dylan Thomas, and Eudora Welty, are made by editors Richard C. Reynolds, MD, former executive vice president of RWJF, and John Stone, MD, physician-poet and associate dean of Emory University School of Medicine, in consultation with a group of 60 physicians.

- Intended to serve as an introduction to the human side of medicine as students begin their training in the science of medicine, *On Doctoring* has been well received by medical schools and students. Comments from medical schools include:
  
  — "I think it [On Doctoring] encourages all the good things that we want to inculcate in our physicians." (Yale University School of Medicine)

  — "The students really appreciate receiving this wonderful book." (University of Pennsylvania)
— "It's a wonderful gift to our future doctors and patients!" (Medical College of Wisconsin)

— A student at Michigan State University College of Human Medicine called On Doctoring a "collection of dreams and thoughts and aspirations" that has made "the transition and the journey easier."

**Funding**

RWJF has supported the project with an authorization and eight grants totaling $2,096,894 between January 1990 and November 2008.

---

**Prepared by: Molly McKaughan**  
Reviewed by: Marian Bass  
Program Officers: Frank Karel, David J. Morse and Hope Woodhead  
Grant ID#s CP086, 29982, 36665, 41777, 52971, 57695, 62629, 64697  
Program area: Human Capital
BIBLIOGRAPHY

(Current as of date of the report; as provided by the grantee organization; not verified by RWJF; items not available from RWJF.)

Books


Audio-Visuals and Computer Software