

Medical school advice from an insider

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Dr. Larry Kaiser, dean and CEO of Temple University School of Medicine and Temple University Health System in Philadelphia, speaks to the Tulane Premedical Society on the uptown campus Dec. 5. (Photo by Ryan Rivet)

By the year 2025, the United States may face a shortage of more than 130,000 physicians.

"We've got a real problem," says Dr. Larry Kaiser, a 1974 Tulane University graduate and 1977 alumnus of the Tulane [School of Medicine](#). "There is a tremendous dichotomy between the demand and supply of physicians."

As dean and CEO of Temple University School of Medicine and Temple University Health System in Philadelphia, Kaiser knows from experience about the employment issues and trends facing the medical industry. The thoracic surgeon, researcher and author spoke to members of the Tulane Premedical Society on Dec. 5 about how they can contribute to solving these issues.

His message was to keep an open mind in choosing their healthcare careers.

“Increasing the number of spots in medical school is not the answer to the problem,” Kaiser told students. “But one answer might be increasing the number of nurse practitioners and physician assistants.”

Because of the cap on the number of residency spots paid for by Medicare, Kaiser explained that simply graduating more medical students doesn't solve the physician shortage. Instead, Kaiser pointed out that we will depend on physician extenders working in teams with physicians. Currently in many states both physician assistants and nurse practitioners work independently in providing primary care.

Kaiser also answered questions from the students about what medical specialties were the most popular (dermatology and emergency medicine) and what majors were the most attractive during the medical school admission process (all majors, but science grade point average is looked at separately).

The almost 50 students who attended the lecture left with a new perspective on the wide range of employment options in the medical field, and some valuable advice as they consider medical school application.

Kaiser appeared on campus as part of the ongoing [Career Wave](#) Healthcare Spotlight series.

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