

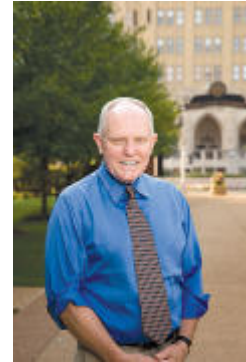
Friday, October 3, 2008

Physicians finalist • Dr. William Keenan
St. Louis Business Journal

Professor in Pediatrics at the Saint Louis University School of Medicine and the Director of Neonatal-Perinatal Medicine at Cardinal Glennon's Children's Medical Center

College: Medical degree, Loyola University Stritch School of Medicine in Chicago

A hero because... He is a pioneer in the field of neonatal resuscitation, helping to develop the Neonatal Resuscitation Program, which is now used in 106 countries.



How is the Neonatal Resuscitation Program different from the curriculum used before its development?

There was no standard before the NRP. Everyone did their own thing. We have been able to put together a curriculum that can be followed by the entire care team, including nurses, that outlines best practices for the highest survival rates.

How many people are trained using the NRP?

There are close to 2.4 million health-care professionals using the NRP standard of care. We have developed easy-to-follow tools to make its integration as natural as possible, including wall charts in delivery rooms and plan outlines. Having everyone following a consistent standard of care ensures higher success rates.

How many babies' lives have been saved as a result of following the NRP?

We estimate that the death rate has dropped 70 percent since the adoption of the NRP in the U.S. and 40 percent in China. In addition, low Apgar scores (the method used to quickly assess the health of newborn children in delivery rooms) have decreased 60 percent, as have incidences of brain damage and motor disabilities.

How has the program been funded during the 22 years since its inception?

The American Pediatrics Association publishes the curriculum used in U.S. medical schools and throughout the world. The proceeds from the sale of the books go right back into the program.

There are 106 countries currently using the NRP. Have you been to any of them?

I have been to many of them, including China 14 times. I work with them to establish their own program. It's rewarding to see the difference you can make to an entire health-care culture.

Do you have any children yourself?

Yes, seven, and nine grandchildren. I am proud of all of them.

Why have you devoted your entire career to neonatology?

Of the 4 million babies who have lost their lives as a consequence of poor resuscitation, 30 percent could have been saved using the NRP. It's my goal to close the gap. I believe healthy babies make for healthy families that, in turn, make healthy communities.