



Allan Peetz, M.D.

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Practicum Site:
Office of Congressman Jim Cooper
5th District, U.S. House of Representatives
Nashville, TN

Practicum Site Supervisors:
Jim Cooper, J.D. M.A.
Lisa Quigley

Healthcare Policy and Economics from a Congressional Perspective

Purpose: The office of Congressman Jim Cooper serves the 5th congressional district of Tennessee and the approximately 700,00 constituents who live in Davidson, Dickson, and parts of Cheatham counties. His staff assist constituents at individual and group levels including healthcare industries and healthcare legislation, most notably the expansion of Medicaid in the state of Tennessee and “Medicare for All” at the federal level.

Design: The overall goal of this practicum experience was to take an active role in constituent meetings with Congressman Cooper, especially when the meetings deal directly with large federal health policy questions (e.g. “Medicare For All”) or the expansion of Medicaid in Tennessee which involves both federal and state government. Congressman Cooper's office involves active review and research, as well as advisement, when appropriate, on legislative or congressional issues regarding healthcare-related questions. A secondary goal was to provide expertise through detailed cooperation with Congressman Cooper's Health Policy Fellow in Washington, D.C., researching the areas of health-policy and health-law.

Outcomes: The overall outcome of this practicum allowed for a deeper understanding of the stakeholders within a congressional district, the behavior of the healthcare industry, healthcare economics at a governmental level, and how these factors influence public discourse. The practicum allowed for opportunities to: (1)

present research on issues of transplantation and economic allocation, (2) assist in healthcare policy and ethics issues, including speeches and policy, and (3) facilitate the “Stop the Bleed” event with the VUMC Division of Trauma that educated Congressman Cooper and his Nashville office staff on proper tourniquet use in a mass casualty event.

Interpretation: The practicum in Congressman Cooper's office highlighted the economic and political forces that drive healthcare in the United States along with greater understanding of the numerous individual stakeholders involved.

