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Bad Medicine: Part I - 03/18/2008 5:20 PM

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**Bad Medicine: Part I**

The behind-the-scenes battle between Sanford Health and physician-owned hospitals--like the Avera Heart Hospital and the Sioux Falls Surgical Center--is hitting center stage in the national media.

All three facilities are mentioned in an article in Forbes magazine entitled "Bad Medicine." The article claims patients are being short-changed by the efforts of large community-based hospitals to stop the growth of what are referred to as "specialty hospitals."

Specialty hospitals are owned by doctors and focus on the care of a particular area of medicine--such as cardiac care, orthopedic or general surgery. There are currently eight such facilities in South Dakota and approximately 180 in the United States. And while both sides concede that these facilities deliver high quality care, the two sides split on whether that care is better, safer and cheaper than the care provided by larger, community hospitals. The two sides also don't agree on whether doctors owning hospitals represents a conflict of interest.

Sioux Falls orthopedic surgeon Dr. Blake Curd is featured in the article as one of 61 doctor-owners of the Sioux Falls Surgical Center. Also included in the article are interviews with Sanford Health's CEO Kelby Krabbenhoft and the company's Vice President of Public Policy, Cindy Morrison. Heart Hospital President, Jon Soderholm, is also quoted in the cover story. As for whether the magazine represents the dispute between the organizations fairly, that depends on whom you ask.

Curd says, "I think the article was extraordinarily fair. The reporter came and spent several hours with me during a day, he saw what we do, he asked me a lot questions. A lot of the data we supplied him wasn't included in the article."

Morrison says, "I don't think it's very balanced. As we worked with this reporter, and it was a long time in the making...the story was about six or seven months in the making, we provided a great deal of information to the reporter and he chose not to use that."

If you're hoping to see the article for yourself, you're not likely to find it on news stands anymore. However, the article is available [online](#).

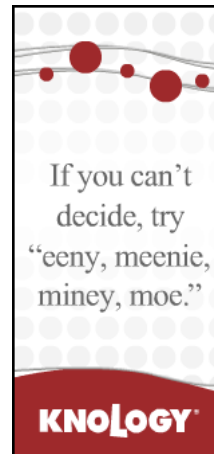
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