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# NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

(R.—Kans.)

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## PHYSICIAN SHORTAGE AREA SCHOLARSHIPS ANNOUNCED BY SENATOR DOLE

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Following a call for action last month by Senator Bob Dole, the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare has issued proposed regulations to implement the Physician Shortage Area Scholarship Program -- a part of the Public Health Service Act.

Under the program, the Secretary of HEW is authorized to award scholarship grants of up to \$5,000 per 9-month academic year to students of medicine and osteopathy who agree to engage in the practice of primary care for a prescribed period of time after completion of their professional training.

"First priority for such grants will be accorded to applicants who are from a low-income background, and who reside in and consent to return to a physician shortage area for the purpose of performing General or Family Practice, or that involving General Internal Medicine or General Pediatrics," Dole advised. "Moreover," the Senator added, "in certain cases an individual may receive as much as \$20,000 in assistance for four academic years and only be required to 'pay back' the amount by conducting his private practice in an established shortage area for 36 months.

"The whole idea of the program, of course, is to provide incentives for qualified students to return to their home areas after earning their Medical Degree, and hopefully decide to remain there beyond the stipulated period to help alleviate the physician distribution problem on a permanent basis."

"The shortage of doctors is particularly acute in the rural areas of Kansas," Dole continued, "and it is my feeling that this program will mark the beginning of a positive movement to overcome that situation. I have already received numerous inquiries from interested participants, and anticipate that an even greater response will be forthcoming with the promulgation of these regulations."

The Kansas Senator further expressed the hope that the University of Kansas Medical School might seize this opportunity to help solve the shortage problem in the State by giving special consideration in its acceptance procedures to those who would be eligible to benefit from the new program. A total of \$2,000,000 in funds have been appropriated for the scholarship grants during Fiscal Year 1974, and it is expected that a substantial portion of that sum will be made available by HEW for the coming 1974-75 school year.