

A similar argument for slack in the system comes with teaching. Teaching hospitals are pressing their faculties to take on greater loads of patients to bring in more money, said Dr. Daniel D. Federman, dean for medical education of Harvard Medical School. A doctor under pressure to spend time in a billable way, Federman said, has less time to spend teaching.

"Good teaching stops to ask the question 'Why?—Why is this patient anemic?'—and explore the science," Federman said. "That gets squeezed now.

"If you don't ask 'Why?,' nothing moves forward," he added.

The Boston teaching hospitals generally deny that the money squeeze is affecting patients' quality of care, students' quality of education or research. But they say that if the current losses swell as expected, deterioration in all three will inevitably follow.

The Boston hospitals' plight may be partly their fault for competing so hard with each other, driving down prices, some analysts say. Though some hospitals have merged in recent years, Boston is still seen as having an oversupply of beds, and virtually all hospitals are teaching hospitals here.

Whatever the causes, said Stuart Altman, professor of national health policy at Brandeis University and past chairman for 12 years of the committee that advised the government on Medicare prices, "the concern is very real."

"What's happened to them is that all of the cards have fallen the wrong way at the same time," Altman said. "I believe their screams of woe are legitimate."

Among the cards that fell wrong, begin with managed care. Massachusetts has an unusually large quotient of patients in managed-care plans. Managed-care companies, themselves strapped, have gotten increasingly tough about how much they will pay.

Boston had also gone through a spate of fat-trimming hospital mergers, closings and cost cutting in recent years. Add to the troubles some complaints that affect all hospitals: expenses to prepare their computers for 2000, problems getting insurance companies and the government to pay up, new efforts to defend against charges of billing fraud.

But the back-breaking straw, hospital chiefs say, came with Medicare cuts, enacted under the 1997 balanced-budget law, that will slash more each year through 2002. The Association of American Medical Colleges estimates that by then the losses for teaching hospitals could reach \$14.7 billion, and major teaching hospitals will lose something about \$150 million each. Nearly 100 teaching hospitals are expected to be running in the red by then, the association said last month.

For years, teaching hospitals have been more dependent than any others on Medicare. Unlike some other payers, Medicare has consistently compensated them for their special missions—training, sicker patients, indigent care—by paying them extra.

For reasons yet to be determined, Altman and others say the Medicare cuts seem to be taking an even greater toll on the teaching hospitals than had been expected. Much has changed since the 1996 numbers on which the cuts were based, hospital chiefs say; and the cuts particularly singled out teaching hospitals, whose profit margins used to look fat.

Frightening the hospitals still further, President Clinton's next budget proposes even more Medicare cuts.

Not everyone sympathizes, though. Complaints from hospitals that financial pinching hurts have become familiar refrains.

Critics say the Boston hospitals are whining for more money when the only real fix is broad health-care reform.

Some propose that the rational solution is to analyze which aspects of the teaching hospitals' work society is willing to pay for, and then abandon the Byzantine old Medicare cross-subsidies and pay for them straight out, perhaps through a new tax.

Others question the numbers. Whenever hospitals face cuts, said Alan Sager of Boston University, "they claim it will be teaching and research and free care of the uninsured that are cut first."

If the hospitals want more money, Sager argued, they should allow independent auditors to check their books rather than asking Congress to rely on a "scream test."

For many doctors at the teaching hospitals, the screaming is preventive medicine, meant to save their institutions from becoming ordinary.

Medical care is an applied science, said Dr. Allan Ropper, chief of neurology at St. Elizabeth's Hospital, and strong teaching hospitals, with their cadres of doctors willing to spend often-unreimbursed time on teaching and research, are essential to helping move it forward.

"There's no getting away from a patient and their illness," Ropper said, "but if all you do is fix the watch, nobody ever builds a better watch. It's a very subtle thing, but precisely because it's so subtle, it's very easy to disrupt."

#### A TRIBUTE TO MARCY VACURA SAUNDERS

**HON. TOM LANTOS**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 6, 1999*

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Marcy Vacura Saunders, the first woman to serve as Labor Commissioner in the State of California. Ms. Saunders' much deserved appointment to this position is an important milestone for working people and to Californians, and a tribute to her remarkable career and lifelong commitment to organized labor.

Ms. Saunders began her professional life as a flight attendant, and achieved the esteemed rank of Acting Chairperson of the Independent Federation of Flight Attendants. She led a successful National Boycott of Conscience against TWA's Carl Icahn. In 1987, Ms. Saunders joined the Building and Trades Council of San Mateo County. In 1993, she became the first and only woman in the United States to be elected Business Manager of a building trades council.

Mr. Speaker, Ms. Saunders' tireless and unwavering efforts on behalf of the Council membership have assured the gainful employment of countless Californians and improved the quality of life of many Bay Area families. In 1994, under Ms. Saunders' leadership, the Building and Trades Council stimulated a stagnant economy in the City of East Palo Alto through the formation of the East Palo Alto Building & Trades Alliance. In 1996, she helped to obtain resolutions from 12 cities and the County of San Mateo supporting California's prevailing wage laws.

Mr. Speaker, Ms. Saunders has demonstrated a tireless commitment to our com-

munity through her extraordinary volunteer service to organizations such as the United Way, the San Mateo County Convention & Visitors Bureau, the San Mateo County Exposition & Fair Association Board, the San Mateo County Commission on the Status of Women, the Redwood City Library Foundation, the San Mateo County/Redwood City Chamber of Commerce, the Soroptimist International, the San Mateo County Economic Vitality Partnership, the Shelter Network, LEADERSHIP San Mateo/Foster City/Burlingame/Hillsborough, START (San Mateo Recruitment and Training), and the Private Industry Council.

Ms. Saunders has been recognized for her selfless service as the recipient of the Soroptimist International's Women Helping Women Award, the Woman Of Economic and Social Development Award, the San Mateo County Labor Council C.O.P.E. Award, the United Way Labor Leadership Outstanding Volunteer Award, and the Mary Moshey Outstanding Community Volunteer Award. In 1994, Ms. Saunders was inducted into the San Mateo County Women's Hall of Fame as a tribute to her extraordinary achievements.

Mr. Speaker, in recognition of Marcy Vacura Saunderson's exemplary professional and personal accomplishments, Governor Gray Davis selected her as the Golden State's top advocate for working people. I commend and pledge my continued support to a most remarkable woman, whom I am honored to call my friend, and whom San Mateo County is proud to call its own—California State Labor Commissioner, Marcy Vacura Saunders.

#### TEACHER APPRECIATION WEEK

**HON. ROBERT A. UNDERWOOD**

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 6, 1999*

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I speak in honor of our nation's teachers, especially in appreciation for the teachers of our children in Guam. In addition to being our children's instructors, they are also our children's counselors, mentors, and friends.

Teachers run in my family's blood. My father was a teacher, and so is my mother. My wife and I are teachers, and my daughter is also a teacher.

It is a vocation with such truthful and honorable intent that it attracts a diverse following. We have teachers who are idealists and strive to continually engaging young minds in mental, social and cultural challenges to teachers who are realists secure in their knowledge that for our nation to progress, our children must be provided the best books and resources possible.

Teachers are a hardy lot. They experience setbacks such as budget cuts, increasing class sizes, decrepit school buildings and outdated textbooks, yet they persevere.

In a way, all of us are teachers. In our daily lives we are constantly showing our children or our colleagues how to accomplish certain tasks or how to view certain issues. But it takes a special person to make teaching their