



DR. LARRY HOLLIER

CHANCELLOR'S Notes



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Gee's expertise tapped

The Green Journal, the leading obstetrics and gynecology journal for the US, has selected Dr. Rebekah Gee,



Dr. Rebekah Gee

Assistant Professor at the LSUHSC Schools of Public Health and Medicine, to be the lead expert on health policy for a year's worth of columns. This is the first time the journal has devoted this much space for a single author "expert."

Her "Health Policy in Practice" series, debuting this month, is designed to help physicians clearly understand and anticipate changes to the practice of medicine through health care reform proposals in order to successfully navigate and guide them.

The journal says now is perhaps the most important moment for policy discussions regarding women's health in the history of the US health care system. ■

LSUHSC faculty played pivotal role in 759 response

Monday marked the 30th anniversary of the crash of Pan Am Flight 759. Early on, calls went out for medical personnel to head to the crash site. Among them were LSUHSC Emergency Medicine physicians Dr. Jorge Martinez and Dr. Keith Van Meter. Dr. Martinez recalls that his LSU ED colleagues remained at Charity preparing for the onslaught of patients that never materialized.

At the time the second worst aviation disaster in US history, the tragedy took the lives of all 146 on board as well as 8 residents of a Kenner subdivision on the ground.



What remained was the grim task of identifying the victims. The services of forensic dentists were greatly needed and calls went out to the dental community. About 20 faculty and residents from LSUHSC's School of Dentistry were on the dental identification team that was assembled and led by LSUHSC's Dr. Ronald Carr, who remains on the faculties of both LSUHSC's dental school and School of Medicine. The team also included current LSUHSC dental faculty member/administrator Dr. Robert Barsley.



LSUHSC's Dr. Robert Barsley, lower left & Dr. Ronny Carr, right, reviewing dental records

The dental identification team began working the next morning in a temporary morgue set up in a Delta hangar at the

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LSUHSC's Opelka advises Senate Finance Committee



Dr. Frank Opelka

Frank Opelka, MD, FACS, LSUHSC Vice Chancellor for Clinical Affairs, represented the American College of Surgeons at a Senate Finance Committee roundtable this week. He is also Associate Medical Director of the American College of Surgeons (ACS) Division of Advocacy and Health Policy. The meeting was about Medicare physician payments and it provided an opportunity for members of Congress to hear the physician community's suggestions on how best to reform the

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the airport. The LSUHSC School of Dentistry supplied dental x-ray films, mobile lights, and other equipment, as well as its leadership and expertise. Besides staging a dental identification area, the team also had to coordinate and train community dental volunteers, many of whom had no prior forensic experience, as they began their monumental task.



As first responders, they also attended the service held at the Flight 759 Memorial in Kenner Monday afternoon to honor the memory of the victims and the heroic efforts of those dealing with the aftermath.

The lessons learned after the crash of Pan Am Flight 759 contributed to improved forensic disaster response. But its larger legacy is much safer air travel in the United States. The National Transportation and Safety Board found that the probable cause was a microburst-induced windshear encountered during takeoff. This crash, and another one three years later, led to the development of windshear detection equipment and an FAA mandate for onboard installation of systems by 1993.

The dental team was responsible for 75% of the identifications, which they made, despite significant challenges, in nine days. Their efforts gave 116 families the solace of closure.

The contributions of both Drs. Carr and Barsley were recognized by media during the anniversary. Dr. Carr was interviewed on WWL-TV's Morning News, and Dr. Barsley was interviewed for *Pan Am Flight 759*, a documentary on the crash which has been shown throughout the state.



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Medicare physician payment system, while encouraging health care providers to deliver high-quality, high-value health care.

The American Medical Association, American Academy of Family Physicians, American College of Cardiology, and American Society of Clinical Oncology were also represented at the roundtable.

Dr. Opelka has emerged as a national health leader on physician, patient care, and quality issues. He has led initiatives on electronic health records as well as patient-centered health care quality measurements. He is frequently called upon to share his expertise. ■