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From the Milwaukee Business Journal:

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Medical College formulating downtown facility to address health disparities

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Medical College of Wisconsin leaders are planning to construct a facility in or near downtown Milwaukee where the private medical school's experts and other nonprofit groups will "address the socioeconomic determinants of health care," said president and CEO Dr. John Raymond.

"We're in the early phases of trying to build a building downtown that would be MCW's community front door," Raymond told the Milwaukee Business Journal.

Specifics on the project, including timing and location, have not been determined because it's "in the discovery stage," Raymond said. The genesis of the idea came from discussions Medical College officials held internally and with community leaders after the civil unrest in Milwaukee's Sherman Park neighborhood in August 2016, Raymond said.

The Medical College, which has its main campus in west-suburban Wauwatosa, will not provide clinical care at the new facility, Raymond said.

The project could be built near the new Froedtert & Medical College of Wisconsin McKinley Health Center, 1271 N. Sixth St., Raymond said. The new health center opening Nov. 16 is one block northwest of the new Milwaukee Bucks arena and is also near Milwaukee's high-poverty near-north side.

"If we were able to locate the new facility near the McKinley Health Center, which will be staffed by MCW and Froedtert clinicians, there would be opportunities for synergy and efficiency," Raymond said.

Medical College officials want the geographic focus of the new facility to be the near-north side of Milwaukee "in ZIP codes that have a high concentration of African Americans," Raymond said.

"Those areas have a high burden of poverty, health disparities, unemployment and fragmentation of resources," he said.

Raymond said Medical College officials have engaged in conversations for the past year to seek diverse ideas and opinions about this project. He hopes the new facility will include community and shared space, and could facilitate the Medical College collaborating with local nonprofit agencies.

The Medical College is seeking partners from the nonprofit, government and private sectors "who share our commitment to address the socioeconomic determinants of health care," he said. The Medical College so far has no formal agreements for specific occupants, Raymond said.

"We envision that the building could house community-based nonprofit entities and social entrepreneurs who would work together with each other and with us," Raymond said.

Students from the Medical College's medical school, pharmacy school and graduate program also could use the facility as a base for service-learning activities, he said.



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Medical College of Wisconsin president and CEO Dr. John Raymond

Medical College of Wisconsin departments that could be involved with the new facility include the Institute for Health and Equity, Center for AIDS Intervention Research, Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Center, Clinical and Translational Science Institute, Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin Endowment, Community Engagement Core and Cancer Center, Raymond said.

Also on board could be individual faculty members who “work in communities that bear disproportionate burdens of health and economic disparities,” he said.

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