

Adrian Billings, M.D.

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What are the current solutions in place?

3:05

So we have no clinicians that live in Presidio, a community of 6000, that economically should be able to support about three or four family physicians full time. And in the almost 20 years that I've been here, there has never been a physician living in Presidio. So the consequences of that is that there's no health care, essentially after hours, and very limited health care, on the weekend. So eight to five, Monday through Friday, we're able to staff this clinic, with bringing our clinicians from Marfa and Alpine where they live. But it's really the after hours care that is so limited. And because there are so few clinicians here, the wait times to get in to see a clinician, you know, can be too long. And there are consequences to that when it comes to healthcare outcomes. And so, you know, really this drone technology is trying to how can we support these remote rural clinics? How can Texas Tech and our partners with Matador and Swoop Aero How can we support and improve access to care by bringing in this this new technology.

What kind of dangers does the current system pose?

4:19

Having a rural zip code is a risk factor for one's life. We know from the data that rural residents live less long, they also live less of a quality of life because of the pain and suffering that that happens as a consequence when there's not an access to care and the all cause mortality between our urban and rural patients. That gap or that disparity has just been increasing since 2000. Although the all cause mortality is decreasing the gap the difference between our rural and urban populations that is actually widening and that's a consequence of not having a robust rural health care system in our rural communities, and that is something that I'm very proud of Texas Tech, as a mission and as setting our priority for rural health care access. And this is just today's drone flights are just a demonstration of that commitment of TTUHSC to rural health care and improving access to health care.

What would you say to someone who suggests these patients should just move to a more urban area?

5:30

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What keeps you motivated to continue serving in this area?

6:38

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I do not have all the knowledge, I do not have all the resources that these rural residents, these rural patients deserve that these rural clinicians that do this day in and day out that they deserve. But collaboration and working with an academic health center, like TTUHSC, working with private entities like Swoop Aero and the Matador Consortium, that's how we collaborate together to have much more of a significant impact than we could have had in our own silo in our own in our own, you know, area. And so it's all about collaboration with holding the patient at the center of that collaboration, and always thinking what is best for that patient and what can we do better to make the life of that patient better and longer.