On April 25, the Executive Master of Healthcare Leadership program invited Dr. Richard Besdine, a professor at Brown University’s Alpert Medical School and the Director of the Center for Gerontology and Health Care Research in Public Health, and of the Division of Geriatrics and Palliative Medicine in the Department of Medicine, to speak as part of our Perspectives in Healthcare Leadership Lecture Series.

With life expectancy increasing dramatically, the projected costs for Medicare are a major threat to our economy. Dr. Besdine presented data documenting the correlation between a country’s wealth and the amount it spends on healthcare, placing the United States at the top of the list. However, in the U.S. the amount we spend on healthcare is not reflected in our quality of care and healthy life expectancy. Although it’s widely understood that system-wide changes are critical, research suggests that one of the largest contributors to premature death is behavioral patterns (40%).

New strategies are needed to reduce utilization of Medicare and improve population health so that Americans can remain economically productive longer. Dr. Besdine reviewed evidence-based preventative services that allow people to stay healthier for longer and achieve better care at a lower cost, captured in the acronym:

**BESDINE’S BOOMERS SAD**

- Blood pressure
- Exercise
- Smoking cessation
- Driving safety
- Immunizations
- Nutrition
- Environment
- ‘Screening for Cancer
- Booze (EtOH problems)
- Oral Health
- Osteoporosis
- Mobility – prevent falls
- Emotional health
- Rx – drug safety
- Social networks
- Sexuality
- Advance directives
- Dementia