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**For Immediate Release**

## **NC Governor Visits Doshier to Host Roundtable Discussion on Healthcare**



**Governor Roy Cooper pictured with Doshier President and CEO Tom Siemers, at a roundtable discussion about healthcare access in North Carolina on Monday.**



**Doshier Physicians, Andrea Minor, MD, Alex Newsom, MD, Governor Roy Cooper, Doshier Chief Medical Officer Brad Hilaman, MD, and Doshier surgeon Robert Zukoski, MD.**

SOUTHPORT— On Monday July 15<sup>th</sup>, Governor Roy Cooper visited Doshier Memorial Hospital to lead a roundtable discussion focusing on the challenges of rural hospitals, such as recruitment of medical providers and the economic impact of treating a high number of uninsured patients. Attendees included Doshier Hospital executives Tom Siemers, President and CEO, Dan Porter, CFO, Carol Northup, VP, CNO, and COO, community leaders, local mayors, Aldermen, Doshier Hospital Board of Trustee members, and members of the Doshier Medical Staff.

Cooper explained the insurance gap, in which over a half a million citizens of North Carolina fall into, where they qualify for neither Medicaid nor an Affordable Care Act income based subsidy, earning too much income to qualify for Medicaid yet too little income to for the ACA. Many in this gap go uninsured because they cannot afford to procure private insurance.

Participants discussed the long term health consequences of a community when access to preventative care is limited due to lack of insurance. Cooper referred to the 40 opioid related deaths in Brunswick County in 2017, and that not one of those fatalities had health coverage.

Siemers noted the economic stressors characteristic to independently owned hospitals such as Doshier, who do not have access to the working capital of larger hospital systems. Chief Medical Officer Dr. Brad Hilaman voiced his concern not only for the rural hospitals whose futures may be in jeopardy but for the impact this would have on the citizens of rural areas. "I really am concerned that not just in Brunswick County, but the rural counties and areas across the United States are going to wake up in the not too distant future and say, 'Where's our health care?'"

Cooper asked the group to appeal to their elected representatives to support the expansion of Medicaid in North Carolina, joining the 37 other states who have already adopted it. Cooper explained how the expansion of coverage would not only give more people access to healthcare, but it could also help mitigate the financial burden that hospitals like Doshier face, by creating a larger percentage of insured patients.

For more information about Doshier Memorial Hospital visit [Doshier.org](http://Doshier.org)

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