

May 2009

STRATEGIC PLAN 2009-2014

HEALTH SCIENCES DIVISION

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA

Mission: The mission of the Health Sciences Division (HSD) of the University of South Alabama is to utilize our community of scholars to provide the highest level of socially relevant health care education for our students, to deliver compassionate and competent patient care toward eliminating disease and promoting health, to discover and disseminate new knowledge about the causes, treatment, and prevention of disease, and to alleviate health disparities throughout the Upper Gulf Coast Region.

Vision: To become a national academic leader in developing interprofessional models for our educational, research, and clinical programs and for developing strategies for reducing health disparities in the Upper Gulf Coast Region.

Goals:

I. Continue to Strengthen Student-Centered Educational Programs – Utilize Interprofessional Approaches Whenever Possible

A. Interprofessional Educational Experiences

a. Objectives

- i. Increase the number and frequency of interprofessional educational experiences in the basic sciences (e.g. small group exercises) and on clinical rotations to involve students from medicine, nursing, allied health, and pharmacy.

B. Rural Training

a. Objectives:

- i. Expand rural educational experiences for students/residents.
- ii. Develop interprofessional rural track in 1-2 sites

C. Health Disparities Training

a. Objectives:

- i. Enhance students'/residents' knowledge of the incidence, prevalence, etiology, and available interventions of and for health disparities populations.
- ii. Link interventions to enhanced education in cultural competence.

D. Simulation Program

a. Objectives:

- i. Expand the human simulation program across the HSD for students, residents, and faculty.
- ii. Establish interprofessional exercises for students and residents.
- iii. Establish continuing education experiences for community health professionals.

E. Enhance the Development of Professionalism in Students/Residents.

a. Objectives:

- i. Review and strengthen educational approaches within each College aimed at ensuring exceptional levels of professionalism in our graduates.
- ii. Further enhance the learning environment to ensure the proper role modeling of professionalism by our faculty and staff.
- iii. Establish interprofessional experiences for students to enhance their professional attitudes and behaviors.

F. Continue to Expand Graduate Programs

a. Objectives:

- i. Continue strengthening/expansion of Ph.D. programs across the Division, e.g. Ph.D. in CON.
- ii. Establish MPH and certificate programs in collaboration with UAB School of Public Health using online techniques.
- iii. Evaluate feasibility of dual degree programs, e.g. MD/MPH.
- iv. Collaborate with College of Arts and Sciences in development of Ph.D. program in Psychology.

G. Assess Graduate Medical Education Programs.

a. Objectives:

- i. Evaluate the feasibility of establishing Emergency Medicine residency.
- ii. Expand Psychiatry residency.
- iii. Establish Child Psychiatry Fellowship in collaboration with AltaPointe (formerly Mobile Mental Health).
- iv. Review need for additional fellowships to address future regional subspecialty shortages. Reallocate positions as necessary.
- v. Forge additional collaborative alliances with Infirmiry Health System to expand residency programs in specialties required to meet the region's need for physicians.

H. Accreditation

- a. Objectives:
 - i. Sustain/attain accreditation for all educational programs within HSD.
 - ii. Attain national average or above in passage rates and scores on board and licensure examinations.

II. Expand Research Programs

A. Basic science:

- a. Objectives:
 - i. Identify emerging and/or reaffirm current areas of excellence and areas of concentration. Focus discretionary spending on strengthening these areas (see below).
 - ii. Assuming educational needs of programs are covered, target faculty hires to enhance identified areas of research excellence. Such faculty should have >75% time allocated for research and should come with sustainable extramural funding (or strong promise of securing extramural funding within first three years of appointment). Award competitive start-up packages.
 - iii. Expand collaborative opportunities between COM faculty and new/existing faculty in CAHP/CON/COP interested in basic science research as well as those in colleges outside the Division, e.g. Engineering, Arts and Sciences, Computer Information Sciences.
 - iv. Expand student/resident research opportunities.

B. Clinical Research

- a. Objectives:
 - i. Identify/reaffirm areas of excellence/concentration. Focus discretionary spending on strengthening these areas (see below).
 - ii. Hire limited number of clinical investigators whose primary assignment will be conducting federal/foundation funded research. Award competitive start-up package to those faculty with existing funding and/or promise of securing substantial extramural support within first three years of appointment.
 - iii. Expand pharmaceutical/device research when supported adequately by extramural funds.
 - iv. Seek collaborations across the Division and across the University, especially in areas of excellence/concentration.

C. Expand Patents and Licenses

a. Objectives:

- i. Within institutional ethical guidelines, expand the number of patents and licenses sought by faculty.
- ii. Seek collaborations within and outside the Division, e.g. College of Engineering.
- iii. Develop ~2-5 start-up companies over five year period.

D. Enhance Current Areas of Excellence/Concentration

a. Objectives:

- i. Cancer
 - a. Enhance basic science/clinical research collaboration with Mitchell Cancer Institute scientists.
- ii. Center for Lung Biology (CLB)
 - a. Expand clinical research component.
- iii. Vascular Biology
 - a. Evaluate feasibility of developing a Center for Vascular Biology using model of CLB.
- iv. Health disparities, with emphasis on African American population
 - a. Use success of Center for Healthy Communities (CHC) to anchor interdisciplinary research activities across HSD and the University; increase faculty involvement across HSD.
 - b. Further the collaboration with UAB SPH.
 - c. Hire full time director for CHC.
- v. Gastroenterology
 - a. Expand clinical trials of drugs/devices.
 - b. Seek collaborative partnerships with regional gastroenterologists.
- vi. Evaluate new/emerging areas of concentration
 - a. Obesity and its complications – Primary, secondary, tertiary prevention.
 - (i) Childhood
 - (ii) Adult
 - (iii) Diabetes mellitus
 - (iv) Renal disease
 - b. Neurosciences
 - (i) Stroke
 - (ii) Epilepsy

- c. Geriatric care
 - (i) Explore “Center” concept
 - d. Autism
 - (i) Establish Center for Autism and Developmental Disabilities in collaboration with Division of Academic Affairs and AltaPointe
- E. Expand Educational Research
 - a. Objectives:
 - i. Use simulation program to foster research on the benefits and limitations of simulation exercises in basic science and clinical education.
 - ii. Using the CHC, determine most effective educational methods for instructing students/residents on approaches for reducing health disparities.
- F. Expand Center for Strategic Health Innovation
 - a. Objectives:
 - i. Expand initiatives/programs under the Center for Strategic Health Innovation as extramural resources permit
 - ii. Encourage increased faculty involvement from throughout the Division and across the University through interdisciplinary approaches.
 - iii. Enhance collaboration with UAB SPH and with Medicaid, State Health Department, and other state and federal agencies to evaluate new approaches for chronic disease management and prevention, especially in underserved populations.
- G. Evaluate Feasibility of Center for Health Services Research
 - a. Objectives:
 - i. Provide a venue for clinical faculty with limited research experience to conduct clinical/scholarly research activity.
 - ii. Provide mentoring to enhance clinical research skills.
 - iii. Provide interprofessional collaborations within and outside the Division.
 - iv. Provide biostatistical, epidemiological and other support services to complement existing research skills of clinical faculty.

III. Ensure the Continued Alignment of Clinical Services with Academic Mission and Region’s Needs

- A. Enhance the collaboration and integration of clinical programs spanning the Health Sciences Division and the Division of Health Systems.
 - 1. Objectives:
 - i. In the aggregate, all clinical programs must be in support of the academic mission of the Health Sciences Division.
 - ii. In the aggregate, all clinical programs must be financially viable and also in support of the mission of the Division of Health Systems (Hospitals and Clinics).
 - iii. All clinical programs must be patient-centered, strive for excellence in quality of care, be cost-effective, and be evidenced-based.
 - iv. As financially feasible, special focus will be given to providing access to health care to underserved populations, especially those suffering from health disparities.

- B. Assess the feasibility of expanding/establishing clinical programs and practice opportunities within the CON and CAHP, e.g. Nurse Clinics, Physical Therapy Clinics, Occupational Therapy consultations, etc.

- C. Strengthen alliance between the Infirmiry Health System and HSD/Health Systems programs
 - 1. Mitchell Cancer Institute
 - 2. Medical specialties
 - a. Orthopaedics
 - b. Gastroenterology
 - c. Stroke Center
 - d. ? Urology
 - 3. Nursing workforce
 - 4. Indigent care
 - 5. Graduate medical education

- D. Strengthen alliance with AltaPointe (formerly Mobile Mental Health)
 - 1. Further enhance educational initiatives, e.g. expand adult psychiatry residency program, and establish child psychiatry fellowship.
 - 2. Develop clinical research collaborations
 - 3. Assist AltaPointe in expanding mental health services to the region.

IV. Increase Diversity Among Trainees, Faculty, Staff

- A. Guided by USA's Diversity Plan, consistent with legal imperatives, enhance the cultural competence of the HSD by ensuring a diversity of students, residents, fellows, faculty and staff relative to gender, race, ethnicity and religion.
 - a. Objectives

- i. Review admission policies and hiring practices to remove any barriers to seeking an appropriately diverse complement of trainees, faculty, and staff.
- ii. As legally allowed, admission criteria should expand to give special consideration to “disadvantaged” applicants who are otherwise acceptable and who are seeking entrance into our health professions educational programs.