



New University Hospital Planning

Feb. 12, 2010

To the UT Southwestern Community:

I am writing to provide an update on one of the important efforts underway at UT Southwestern: our planning for a New University Hospital. As I've previously discussed, developing our academic health care system to be at the vanguard of quality, safety, and innovation in patient care - enhanced by clinical and translational research and our commitment to education and training - is one of the key strategic priorities set last year to guide UT Southwestern's future.

The strategic planning process that occurred last summer and fall addressed these priorities and, among other accomplishments, created a comprehensive clinical transformation agenda, with particular focus on setting new goals for clinical quality and the patient experience. Implementation of those recommendations is proceeding.

As an essential component of our long term goals, a proposal to authorize planning for a New University Hospital, to be located north of Record Crossing and west of Harry Hines Boulevard, was presented to - and approved by - the UT System Board of Regents in November 2009. Given the limitations of our current facility at University Hospital-St. Paul, we need a new replacement hospital as a base for being able to fully achieve our aspirations to provide world-class patient care in a comprehensive, state-of-the-art academic medical center. We are pleased and grateful to have the planning opportunity made possible by the Board of Regents' action.

With that approval, a planning process for a New University Hospital was launched in December. Sharon Riley, Vice President and Chief Executive Officer of UT Southwestern University Hospitals, and Dr. John Warner, who holds the Audre and Bernard Rapoport Chair in Cardiovascular Research and the Jim and Norma Smith Distinguished Chair for Interventional Cardiology and serves as Medical Director of the Doris and Harry W. Bass Jr. Clinical Center for Heart, Lung and Vascular Disease, have taken on the major added responsibility of co-chairing this planning process.

A dozen groups are now engaged in intensive efforts to fulfill their charge of developing recommendations for a facility that will promote innovative patient care and integrate it with attention to the needs of students and trainees and support for clinical and translational research.

The planning groups include faculty, nurses, physician assistants, technicians, administrators and staff, as well as members of our patient community. Each planning group has a specific area of emphasis: clinical care, critical care, education, research, patient experience, imaging, emergency department, surgical and interventional services, obstetrics and gynecology, support

and operations, information resources and communications. As design and operations recommendations are developed, further input will be sought from across the UT Southwestern community.

Our planning groups will deliver recommendations in March related to hospital programming and schematic design, from which our architects will then develop more detailed actual plans. We are expecting to submit a comprehensive proposal to the Board of Regents for final approval in November.

While we have a truly exciting opportunity before us, it is important for everyone to understand that clinical transformation is about a fundamental and collective commitment to achieving excellence, not just about building a new hospital. It is about a dedication to quality in the care we deliver and the manner in which we deliver it.

As crucial as a new hospital is to our future, it is imperative that we begin our clinical transformation process now, and I'm pleased to report that many key aspects are well underway. The work of Dr. Gary Reed, who began as interim Chief Quality Officer in January, is already generating interest and attention across the clinical enterprise as he shapes a Quality Improvement Initiative, working in close collaboration with hospital and medical leadership, faculty, and the clinical chairs.

Some important Information Resources initiatives have begun, and we are increasing recognition of our clinical capabilities through a bold and colorful public awareness campaign in print, radio, and billboards across North Texas.

We are also well along on a national search for an Executive Vice President for Health System Affairs, a critical appointment, since the EVP will be a key driver of our clinical transformation agenda.

Finally, I want to emphasize that even as we plan for the future of UT Southwestern University Hospitals, we remain deeply committed to our ongoing partnerships with Parkland Memorial Hospital and Children's Medical Center, as well as the Dallas VA Medical Center, in delivering care. These long-standing collaborations are core elements of our vision of UT Southwestern's future. They are fundamental to the quality of our educational and training programs, and they will become even more important as we develop our capacity for clinical and translational research. We are working closely with our partners, especially Parkland since they too are planning a new hospital, to ensure that our mutual planning efforts result in changes that make the entire Southwestern Medical District an even more attractive and accessible area for patients and their families, clinical staff, and employees.

I appreciate this opportunity to share the excitement of planning for the New University Hospital, and I look forward to keeping the campus community updated as these and other important initiatives progress.

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