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University officials announce vision for new health sciences center in Columbia; Dr. Harold Williamson to be center's interim vice chancellor

The University of Missouri's health sciences-based delivery system in Columbia is being realigned to enable it to meet future challenges and take advantage of new opportunities in the health care field. UM System President Gary Forsee and MU Chancellor Brady Deaton announced today their vision for a consolidated health sciences center that is organized to better serve the people of the state by integrating the university's medical education, research and clinical missions. The transition to the new health sciences organization will begin immediately. The new consolidated organization will officially begin operations on Sept. 8, 2008.

"Academic medical centers are extremely complex and specialized, and they operate in a highly competitive and rapidly changing environment," said Forsee. "We have a responsibility to position the university's health care enterprise now to continue serving the health care needs of Missourians well into the future," said Forsee. "The changes Chancellor Deaton and I are announcing today will allow our university to realize its full potential as the state's premier public health sciences center."

The consolidated health sciences center will be composed of University of Missouri Health Care, the School of Medicine and University Physicians, Sinclair School of Nursing and School of Health Professions. The CEO of University of Missouri Health Care and the deans of the three schools will report to a vice chancellor for health sciences. The vice chancellor, who will report to the chancellor of the University of Missouri-Columbia, will serve as the operating executive responsible for all academic, clinical and business operations for the hospital physician group and health-related schools, to include strategic planning; setting priorities, allocating resources and space, recruitment and developing operating and capital budgets.

The three academic deans and the MU provost will continue to have a collaborative relationship to address the broader academic mission of the university. The vice chancellor for health sciences and the MU provost will set up a process to ensure that collaboration in support of the academic mission remains strong.

"The overlapping missions of health-related organizations at MU call for coordination of strategic directions, priorities and on-going activities. We also want to encourage shared ownership of problems



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and issues. This can best be achieved by creating a consolidated health sciences center led by a single vice chancellor for health sciences,” Forsee said.

The plan also calls for establishment of a new advisory board to oversee University of Missouri Health Care. The advisory board will review hospital operations and make recommendations to the president, the vice chancellor for health sciences, the CEO of UMHC and other university officials regarding federal and state regulatory issues, major health care policies, strategic plans, operating and capital budgets, and joint ventures. The advisory board will be composed of individuals external to the university who possess broad expertise and experience in financial, health-related and other fields. The president of the University of Missouri System will chair the advisory panel. The vice chancellor of health sciences and the CEO of UMHC will serve ex-officio.

Deaton said he is confident the changes will bring about synergies in MU health care that haven’t previously been possible. “We know there are strategic, academic, financial and operational benefits to be gained with this new organizational structure,” Deaton said. “These changes will enable the major health care components at the University of Missouri in Columbia to achieve our mutual vision in a way that addresses the current and future business realities of health care while serving our primary teaching and research mission. MU is nationally recognized for the synergy that we enjoy among our various academic programs, with the health sciences being key to our future growth and ability to better serve all Missourians.”

Forsee said that Dr. Harold Williamson has agreed to serve as interim vice chancellor for health sciences while a national search is conducted for a permanent vice chancellor. Williamson will officially begin his new duties on Sept. 8. He is currently professor and Jack and Winifred Colwill Endowed Chair of Family and Community Medicine at MU.

“Chancellor Deaton and I are pleased that Dr. Williamson has agreed to lead this initiative on an interim basis,” Forsee said. “He has an outstanding reputation as a physician and administrator and enjoys the highest respect of his peers. Hal will have the full support of the board of curators, Chancellor Deaton and me as he lays the foundation for the new consolidated health sciences center.”

NOTE: To view a fact sheet, organizational chart and mission statements of the new consolidated health sciences center at the University of Missouri-Columbia, visit:
<http://www.umsystem.edu/ums/news/releases/orgchart.pdf>.

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