Dean’s Comments: Texas Medicine and the Elections

In his inaugural address exactly one year ago this month, William Hinchey, M.D., the current president of the Texas Medical Association (TMA) and an alum of UTHSCSA, stated that “despite several meaningful legislative and regulatory successes, many challenges remain before us as we struggle to continue that same critical mission, to improve the health of all Texans.” I think that every physician in Texas would agree with Dr. Hinchey on this point.

One year later, we face many of the same issues. Physicians are caring for the uninsured with little or no expectation of recovering costs, we are serving an increasing number of disadvantaged and elderly patients, with inadequate infrastructure to support them, and we continue to contract with health plans despite their lack of flexibility to meet the needs of the physicians and healthcare professionals they serve.

Dr. Hinchey offers an interesting perspective; he explains that “an outside observer might well ask, ‘Why?’ What makes a group of sane, intelligent men and women act in ways that are so obviously contrary to our own self-interest” and he challenges that we already know the answers. They are “because of why we entered this noble profession, because we took an oath, an oath we hold sacred, to serve, because we truly believe we have an ethical duty to serve, because it is all about the patient”. Physicians are bound to service for patients in tangible ways. This bond is well-recognized by many with more mercantile interests, which, in many cases, leaves physicians as the final safety net in our dysfunctional healthcare system.

TMA (www.texmed.org) and AAMC (www.aamc.org) have focused on these issues, as their web sites document. Although organizations such as The Texas Medical Association Political Action Committee (TEXPAC) (www.texpac.org), the political arm of TMA, exist to give its over 42,000 Texas physicians a voice in both the state and federal political arenas, and the AMA (www.ama-assn.org) has tripled its advertising dollars to promote its campaign for the uninsured in the midst of the 2008 Elections, these and many other professional healthcare organizations have opted to refrain from endorsing any one candidate or party and becoming involved in the spectacle that campaigns can become.

The fact is that we do not know the fate of the Presidential Elections (or even the outcome of the Democratic nominee for that matter). There has been much rhetoric surrounding healthcare as an issue in this country and each perspective presents interesting standpoints, which will undoubtedly affect the socio-economic circumstances and health disparities in our region.

Generally speaking, with regard to insurance, the Republican platform embraces insurance programs and tax credits to help families pay for coverage, and encourages insurance companies to expand nationally. The Democratic platform envisions a universal health plan, with a focus on prevention, managing chronic conditions, and increasing technology usage. Both parties agree that lower prices for Medicare’s prescription drug program should be negotiated by the federal government, and also agree on the use of technology to better facilitate health care information. It is important that as practitioners and representatives of this state and this region we diligently research each party’s platform in the context of how it will assist our patients and the overall healthcare of our citizens. I have listed a few web sites that discuss the facts of the healthcare proposals in various formats:

GoHealth: Health Care: America’s Number One Domestic Issue
http://www.gohealthinsurance.com/blog/coverage/entry/20070912

http://www.kff.org/kaiserpolls/h08_pomr083007pkg.cfm

Commonwealth Fund: Slowing the Growth of U.S. Health Care Expenditures: What Are the Options?

Texas remains home to the highest percentage of uninsured people in the nation (about 25%), and is experiencing a rapid rise in its population which promises to increase the magnitude of the problem. As such, our state is at an excellent place to seriously address these pressing issues. I invite you to join me in responding to the leading roles physicians should play in the political discourse over health care. I urge that you become involved through Bexar County Medical Society, TMA, AMA or a political party. Politicians and the public need to hear our voices.

William L. Henrich, M.D., M.A.C.P.
Dean, School of Medicine
Vice President for Medical Affairs
John P. Howe, III, M.D.,
Distinguished Chair in Health Policy
Welcome New Faculty

**Anesthesiology**

Dr. Nahim M. Pearose joined on March 1, 2008 as a part-time Clinical Assistant Professor. He received his medical degree from Kasturbia Medical College, Kabul, Afghanistan in 1983 and completed his residency training in Family Medicine at UTHSCSA in 1994.

**Family & Community Medicine**

Dr. Indumathi Kuncharapu joined on February 27, 2008 as a Clinical Associate Professor. She received her medical degree at Kakatiya Medical College, Warangal, AP, India in 1982 and completed her internship at Metrowest Medical Center in 1995 and her residency training in family medicine at State University of New York at Buffalo in 1997. She also completed a postdoctoral fellowship in Family Medicine at American Academy of Family Physicians in 2004 and McLennan County Medical Education and Research Foundation in 2006.

**Pediatrics**

Dr. Celia I. Kaye, past Vice Dean of the School and Chair of the Department of Pediatrics, rejoined the department to support a grant as a Clinical Professor on February 15, 2008. She received her medical degree from Wayne State University in 1969 and her PhD. from Northwestern University in 1975. Dr. Kaye completed her medical residency in Pediatrics at the Bronx Municipal Hospital Center in 1971 and University of Illinois Hospital in 1972.

**Radiation Oncology**

Zhi-Min Yuan, P.hD joined on April 1, 2008 as an Assistant Professor. He received his medical degree in Internal Medicine from Jiangxi Medical College, China in 1982, a Biomedical Chemistry degree from University of Maryland in 1993 and a masters degree in Pharmacology from Hunan Medical University, China in 1985. He completed his residency training at First Hospital of Jiangxi Medical College (Medicine) 1983, his Postdoctoral fellowship in drug metabolism at the University of Maryland in 1989 and a Postdoctoral fellowship in cancer at Harvard Medical School, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute in 1994.

**Radiology**

Daniel H. Duffy joined on April 1, 2008 as a part-time Clinical Associate Professor. He received his bachelors of science in Biology at University of California in 1992 and his medical degree at F. Edward Hebert School of Medicine in 1997. He completed his clinical fellowship at UTHSCSA in Nuclear Medicine in 2003, his Internship and his residency training in Radiology at Wilford Hall Medical Center between 1998 & 2002.

**Rehabilitation Medicine**

Dr. Christopher J. McAllister joined on March 10, 2008 as an Assistant Professor. He received his medical degree at Medical University of South Carolina in 2003. He completed his Surgery & PMR internship at Integrated Medicine and his residency training in Rehabilitation Medicine at UTHSCSA in 2007.

**Surgery**

Dr. Viraf Cooper joined on March 15, 2008 as a Clinical Assistant Professor. He received his Bachelors of Medicine and Bachelors of Surgery (MBBS) from Seth G.S. Medical College and King Edwards VII Memorial Hospital in India. He completed an internship in General Surgery at Brooklyn-Cumberland Hospitals in 1977 and King Edwards Memorial Hospital, Parel, Bombay, India in 1975 and his Neurosurgical residency training at Hahmemann Medical University in 1982 and a Surgical residency training at King Edwards Memorial Hospital, Parel, Bombay, India in 1976. Dr. Guiming Li joined on April 1, 2008 as an Assistant Professor in the Division of Vascular Surgery. He received his Master’s Degree in Forensic Medicine from Shanxi Medical University, China in 1988. He completed his research fellowship at UTHSCSA from 2005 to present and his internship at National Jewish Medical and Resident Center in 2005.

Ms. Elizabeth J. Tracy joined on April 1, 2008 as a Faculty Associate in the Division of Trauma. She received her bachelors degree in Nursing from UTHSCSA in 2001 and her Masters degree in Nursing in 2004.
ANNOUNCEMENTS

The 2008 Medical Miracles Honoree is Michelle Price’s, Surgery, husband, San Antonio Police Officer Larry Price. To read more about his story or attend this event, please visit http://www.universityhealthsystem.com/foundation/2008-medical-miracles.shtml.

Messages from Dr. Lewis Greenberg, Vice Dean for Clinical Affairs:

With Mr. Edward Grab’s recent departure from UT Medicine San Antonio, I have assumed leadership of the practice plan.

Working with each of the Vice Presidents and Directors, we will continue to strive to meet the needs of our patients, our staff and our providers. UT Medicine is in a transition period in many respects: new leadership, an opportunity for a new organizational arrangement and a comprehensive revenue cycle overhaul. We are currently implementing a physician driven coding/billing initiative in partnership with our Wellspring consultants and launching our first multidisciplinary patient centric service line, the Musculoskeletal Institute on 03/31/08.

I have asked Mr. Gabe Hernandez, VP and CFO of UT Medicine, to serve as a conduit for any concerns or inquiries that you may have. I would like to emphasize that I am always available to serve as your advocate and answer any questions or concerns that you may have. You may reach me at 210.567.4460 and you may reach Gabe Hernandez at 210.257.1500.

Dr. Randal Otto has agreed to be our interim Director, CTRC/Physician-In-Chief. I am very pleased that Randy has accepted this position, and he will be a vital resource in leading our Cancer Center’s efforts to design and create cancer-specific multidisciplinary product lines and to provide direct clinical leadership on-site on a daily basis.

I want to thank Randy for forming and leading our Clinical Development Team in 2007. Under his leadership, this team has reviewed and improved multiple aspects of our clinical enterprise operations and performance. Attention to the “blocking and tackling” aspects of daily clinic operations has resulted in creation of our Physician Consult Service to enhance physician directed appointment access and ultimately, to improve service and our payor mix. He has met on a regular basis with Departmental leadership to identify opportunities for improvement and has implemented many positive changes.

Our transition to the MARC is in better shape thanks to Randy’s hard work and dedication. The Committees of the CDT will now be under the leadership of Drs. Carlayne Jackson and Luci Leykum and will continue to provide the service and leadership you have come to expect.

Please join me in congratulating Randy in his new role and in thanking him for his excellent service to the School and to the University.

The Continuing Medical Education (CME) Office would like to announce the following conferences:

- 4/5/08 - 2nd Annual Pediatric Update in Laredo (sponsored by the Department of Pediatrics)
- 4/10/08 – Evidence Based Treatment of HTN, What Evidence? (jointly sponsored by the San Antonio Cardiovascular Society)
- 4/17-18/08 – Frontiers of Otolaryngology: Innovations in Rhinology and Laryngology (sponsored by the Department of Otolaryngology)
- 4/30/08-5/4/08 – Spring 2008 Southwest Oncology Group Meeting (sponsored by the Vice President of Research)

Please visit the CME website for more information: http://cme.uthscsa.edu/.
ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sent on behalf of Dr. L. David Hillis, Chair of Medicine:

- **Dr. Luci Leykum** has agreed to become the permanent Chief of the Division of Hospital Medicine, effective immediately. As most of you know, Luci has been the interim Chief since the Division was created about 2 years ago. I am delighted that she will assume that role permanently.

- **Dr. Tom Patterson** has agreed to become the Chief of the Division of Infectious Diseases, effective immediately. Dr. George Crawford, who functioned very ably in that position for the past 9 to 10 years, is eager to devote more time to teaching and serving as the Director of the Residency Program. I thank George for his years of service as Division Chief, and I look forward to continuing to work with him in his capacity as Program Director.

- **Dr. Jan Patterson** has returned to the VA Medical Center and re-assumed the position of Chief of the Medical Service. In addition, Jan will become the Director of the institution’s newly created Center for Patient Safety and Health Policy.

- **Dr. Mike Lichtenstein** has agreed to become the Chief of the Division of Geriatrics, effective immediately. He replaces Mike Katz, who retired in late December.

- **Dr. Richard A. Lange**, presently the E. Cowles Andrus Professor of Cardiology at Johns Hopkins, will join us in June as the Executive Vice Chair of the Department. Among other duties, Rick will assume the position of Director of the Department’s Education Office, working with Krista Bowers, Mysti Schott, and Kristy Kosub on the Department’s undergraduate educational efforts and with George Crawford and his associates on the graduate educational efforts.

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**Dr. Pedro L. Delgado**, Professor and Chair of the Department of Psychiatry and the Dielmann Distinguished Chair in Psychiatry, will chair the Chair of Neurology Search Committee. Members of the committee include:

- Carlos Bazan III, MD, Professor, Department of Radiology, School of Medicine; Bonnie Blankmeyer, PhD, Executive Director, Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action; Cary A. Fox, Regional Vice President and Chief Administrative Officer, CHRISTUS Santa Rosa Health Care System; Peter T. Fox, MD, Director, Research Imaging Center; Alan Frazer, PhD, Professor and Chair, Department of Pharmacology, Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences; Alice Gong, MD, Professor, Department of Pediatrics, School of Medicine; David F. Jimenez, MD, Professor and Chair, Department of Neurosurgery, School of Medicine; Luci K. Leykum, MD, Assistant Professor, Department of Medicine, School of Medicine; Nancy Ray, RN, MA, Associate Administrator and Chief Nursing Officer, University Health System; Arlan Richardson, PhD, Director, The Sam and Ann Barshop Institute for Longevity and Aging Studies; David S. Weiss, PhD, Professor and Chair, Department of Physiology, Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences; Janet F. Williams, MD, Professor, Department of Pediatrics, School of Medicine
The following alumnus, faculty, fellows, residents, staff and/or students appeared in the news (television, print media or radio): Dr. Steven Bailey, Medicine/Cardiology; Dr. Robert Brzyski, Obstetrics/Gynecology; Dr. Francisco Cigarroa, President; Dr. Richard Crownover, Radiation Oncology; Dr. Miguel Fernandez, Surgery; Dr. Franco Folli, Medicine/Diabetes; Sharon Fowler, Medicine/Epidemiology; Dr. Autumn Galbraith, General Medicine (former faculty); Dr. Frank Giles, Hematology/Oncology/CTRC; Dr. Anthony Infante, Pediatrics; Dr. Carlos Jaen, Family/Community Medicine; Dr. David Jones, Anesthesiology/Pharmacology; Dr. SreyRam Kuy, Surgery; Dr. Jan Patterson, Medicine/Infectious Diseases; Dr. Alan Peterson, Psychiatry; Alina Matutes-Eckhardt, Medicine/Cardiology; Dr. Jeffrey Meffert, Dermatology; Drs. Nadeau/Paily, Family/Community Medicine; Dr. Peter Nathanielsz, Obstetrics/Gynecology; Dr. Peter Paily, Primary Care; Dr. Jan Patterson, Medicine/Infectious Diseases; Dr. Basil Pruitt, Surgery; Dr. Jacquelyn Pugh, Medicine; Dr. John Roache, Psychiatry; Dr. Beatriz Tapia, Family/Community Medicine; Dr. Ian Thompson, Urology/CTRC; Dr. Kaye Wilkins, Orthopaedics (February 2008)

Dr. Srinivasa Prasad, Radiology, has received the "Best Scientific Poster" award at the 2008 Abdominal Radiology Course, presented by the Society of Gastrointestinal Radiologists and The Society of Uroradiology, held Feb. 17-22, 2008, Rancho Mirage, California. Prasad's poster is entitled: "Benign and Malignant Tumors (Pseudotumors) of the Secondary Mullerian System Revisited". Authors: S. Prasad, V. Surabhi, C. O. Menias, P. Huettner, N. Dalrymple and K. Chintapalli.

Dr. Jan Patterson appointed as the Director of the Center for Patient Safety and Health Policy, a newly created Center in the School of Medicine. She was also appointed by Dr. Shine to the UT System Patient Safety Steering Committee.

Please congratulate Dr. Patterson on this appointment and wishing her well as she assumes this important role.

Dr. Ruth Berggren appointed as Director of the Center for Medical Humanities and Ethics. Berggren has articulated a clear vision for the Center which has been embraced by its many constituencies.

The Center is a unique and valuable asset on our Health Science Center campus, and, among its several missions, seeks to imbue students, residents and fellows with a deeper understanding of the human condition and develop skills in the art of medicine.

Please congratulate Dr. Berggren on this appointment and wish her well as she assumes this important role.

Dr. Carlos R. Jaén, Family & Community Medicine, was elected as a member-at-large of the Board of Directors of the Association of Departments of Family Medicine (ADFM).

Dr. Darlene Metter, Radiology and current Chair of the RRC for Nuclear Medicine, has been elected as Vice Chair of the ACGME Council of Review Committee (CRRR).

Dr. Francis J. Giles, CTRC, received the Medtronic Award at the National University of Ireland Galway Alumni Awards Gala on March 1, 2008.

The Radiation Therapy and Oncology Group (RTOG) received a perfect score on a recent audit. Congrats to Ms. Carol Jenkins and her team.
The Department continues to provide outstanding services to our patients, colleagues, and partners. Long standing relationships with UHS, Audie Murphy VAMC, Warm Springs, and CHRISTUS Santa Rosa serve us well and allow us to provide a full range of clinical, educational, and research services in our specialty of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation. These relationships also provide our faculty and staff a comprehensive, stimulating, complex, and professional work environment.

During the past year, our residency program has been reaccredited by the RRC, our Reeves Rehabilitation Unit at UHS has been both JCAHO and CARF accredited, and of our 12 physicians, 5 have been recognized as among the best Doctors in America. We have also reorganized our research program by hiring a new Director of Research, Dr. Jim Schroeder, PhD, and closely examining/updating equipment and the lab layout at our Andrew Gitter GAIT Lab which is located in Audie Murphy VAMC.

Our UT Orthotic/Prosthetic Department has just been completely renovated, adding patient treatment rooms, a waiting area, and a comprehensively designed fabrication area. This new area now compliments our sister facility at the Texas Diabetic Institute. We provide a full range of Orthotic/Prosthetic services to UH ER and Inpatients, Carelink Members, UT Medicine Physicians, and many other providers and patients in the local community. We accept a full range of insurance products and serve the community with a staff of 2 CPOs, 1 CPED, 6 Technicians, and 4 Admin Staff.

We have agreed to begin providing physician services at the TDI Hyperbaric/Wound Care Clinic and a new faculty member, Dr. Chris McAllister, will join us very shortly to assume that responsibility.

We are all excited about the growth opportunities associated with Audie Murphy VAMC being appointed as one of 5 PolyTrauma Centers in the USA. We are directly involved with the planning, construction, and staffing of the new unit which will slowly evolve over the next few years. Our faculty will increase by as many as five physicians and our residents will be able to be increased by two per year beginning in 2009 with our revised resident count increasing to 32 from our current 24 by 2012.

Finally, our participation in planning for both the MARC and the new Muscular Skeletal Institute allow us to fully support SOM and UT Medicine initiatives and stay heavily engaged in our complex, multidisciplinary practice plan.

Nicolas E. Walsh, M.D.
Professor and Chair
Department of Rehabilitation Medicine