Dean's Comments: National Children’s Study

In the October issue of SOM eNews, I briefly mentioned that the Health Science Center had received notification from the National Institute of Health that we had been selected to receive $33 million to serve as the only center in Texas for the National Children’s Study, the largest analysis of child and human health ever conducted in the United States. Daniel E. Hale, MD, Professor of Pediatrics is the Principal Investigator and Donald J. Dudley, MD, Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology is the Co-Principal Investigator.

The National Children’s Study began in response to the Children’s Health Act of 2000, when Congress directed the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development and other federal agencies to undertake a national, long-term study of children’s health and development in relation to environmental exposures. The Study will assess the effects of environmental and genetic factors on child and adult health nationwide.

The Health Science Center will receive more than $33 million to manage participant recruitment and data collection at sites in Bexar, Hidalgo and Travis counties and is one of 22 new centers of the Study, which is a collaborative effort between the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development and the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, both of the National Institutes of Health, and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention are the participating HHS agencies.

Eventually, The National Children’s Study will follow a representative sample of 100,000 children from before birth to age 21, seeking information to prevent and treat some of the nation’s most pressing health problems, including autism, birth defects, diabetes, heart disease and obesity. In total, the Study will be conducted in 105 previously designated locations across the United States that together are representative of the entire U.S. population. A national probability sample was used to select the counties in the Study, which took into account factors including race and ethnicity, income, education level, number of births and number of babies born with low birth weights.

The Health Science Center was chosen as a Center for the National Children’s Study because of its demonstrable success in a) building partnerships in the community, b) recruiting children and families for long-term longitudinal studies and c) working with other institutions on multisite and multicenter projects.

I echo Dr. Hale’s sentiments in saying that, “We could not have brought this important national study to South Texas without the efforts of our community and institutional partners.” Numerous individuals and institutions in all three counties wrote strong letters of support for the project. In addition, we are proud to collaborate on this study with the following organizations in Bexar County: the San Antonio Metropolitan Health District, the CHRISTUS Santa Rosa Health Care, the University Health System and the Methodist Healthcare System. Clinical assessments of young participants in the Bexar County site will be done at CHRISTUS Santa Rosa Children’s Hospital and at most of the birthing hospitals in town.

When fully operational, the annual costs/expenditures will be $5-9 million per year, and there will be about 20 employees at each of the 3 sites (Bexar, Hidalgo and Travis Counties).

It is our privilege to have been selected as a Center for The National Children’s Study. We are proud to represent our state and our region in such an important Study that will have an enormous impact in the lives of children all over the world.

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. Julie Thompson joined on March 10, 2008 as a part time Clinical Assistant Professor. She received her medical degree from the University of Oklahoma in 2002 and completed her residency training and Anesthesia residency at University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio in 2006.
Dr. Denise Hamlin joined on March 1, 2008 as a Clinical Assistant Professor. She received her medical degree from the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio in 2002 and completed her internship from St. Vincent’s Hospital in New York in 2003. She completed Anesthesia residency from Georgetown University Hospital in Washington, DC in 2006.

Medicine
Dr. Tamara Simpson joined on March 1, 2008 as Clinical Instructor. She received her medical degree from UTHSC Houston in 2001 and completed her residency training in Internal Medicine and Pulmonary/Critical Care at University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio.

Pediatrics
Dr. Celia I. Kaye joined on February 15, 2008 as Clinical Professor. She received her medical degree from Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan in 1969 and her PhD. from Northwestern University Chicago, Illinois in 1975. Dr. Kaye completed her medical residency in Pediatrics at the Bronx Munic Hospital Center, Bronx NY in 1971 and University of Illinois Hospital, Chicago, IL in 1972.

Psychiatry
Dr. Lisa K. Kearney joined on March 1, 2008 as Assistant Professor in the department of Psychiatry. She received her Ph.D. from University of Texas at Austin in 2004 and completed her Clinical Psychology Internship at South Texas Veterans Health Care System.
Dr. Stephen L. Holliday joined on February 2008 as Clinical Associate Professor. He received his Ph.D. from university of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona in 1983 and completed his internship in Medical Psychology at Oregon Health Science University, Portland, Oregon in 1982.

Radiology
Dr. Gerald E. York, II joined on February 1, 2008 as Clinical Assistant Professor. He received his medical degree from ETSU College of Medicine, Johnson City, Tennessee in 1997 and completed his Internship in General Surgery from Brooke Army Medical Center, Ft. Sam Houston, Texas in 1998 and his Residency in Diagnostic Radiology also at Brooke Army Medical Center in 2002.

Surgery
Mr. Marc A. Hawkins joined on March 1, 2008 as Faculty Associate. He received his Master of Physician Assistant Studies from University of Nebraska Health Science Center in 2002. Currently, Mr. Hawkins is an Emergency Medicine Physician Assistant Fellow at Brooke Army Medical Center at Fort Sam Houston.
Mr. Edward L. Grab, the President and CEO of our practice plan (UT Medicine San Antonio), is resigning his position effective March 2, 2008.

As some of you may know, Edward and his lovely wife, Theresa, originally came to UTHSCSA from The University of Connecticut practice plan. Edward and Theresa both have significant family ties in the Northeast/New England area, and they have decided to return to an area closer to home.

Among Edward’s numerous laudable accomplishments are the following:

- Leadership in the planning of the MARC
- Significant financial improvements in UT Medicine
- Leadership in acquisition of the EPIC System and conversion to an Electronic Medical Record
- Responsibility for building an effective UT Medicine management team
- Leadership in the development of a more integrated group practice

An announcement of the leadership of UT Medicine will be made soon.

Please wish Edward and Theresa the best as he embarks upon the next phase of his career.

Medical Spanish through the Office of Academic Enhancement

The Office of Academic Enhancement is proud to announce the sponsorship of two Medical Spanish courses. Both courses were designed and are currently taught by UTHSCSA medical students.

The Beginning Medical Spanish course was developed by first year medical student Mark Rowan. This class focuses on Medical Spanish vocabulary and basic grammar and incorporates a large amount of class participation. The course meets on Fridays from 12:00-1:00 in room 209L.

The Advanced Medical Spanish course is taught by Gaby Martinez (MD/MPH student) and Celina Villa (fourth year medical student). This class is taught entirely in Spanish and those students enrolled have an opportunity to practice conducting histories in Spanish on standardized patients (SPs). The class currently meets on Thursdays from 12:00-1:00 in room 2.010.

Students who attend 8 of 10 classes, complete the assigned homework and participate in class discussions will receive credit on their transcript for the course. Both courses began during the first week back from winter break and have over 150 first and second year medical students enrolled.

The hope is to continue this program next year with the help of other interested medical students continuing to teach the class. For information, please contact Dr. David L. Henzi at henzi@uthscsa.edu or 567-4469.
The following alumnus, faculty, fellows, residents, staff and/or students appeared in the news (television, print media or radio): Dr. Robert Brzyski, Obstetrics/Gynecology; Drs. Brzyski/Crownover, CTRC/OB-GYN; Dr. John Calhoon, Surgery; Dr. Robert Campbell, Orthopaedics; Drs. Curiel/Giles, CTRC; Dr. Francisco Cigarroa, President; Dr. Richard Crownover, CTRC/Radiation Oncology; Dr. S. Dhandayuthapani, RAHC/Microbiology; Dr. Frank Giles, Hematology/Oncology; Ms. Kim Head, Pediatrics; Drs. Henrich/Curiel, SOM Dean/CTRC Director; Dr. Monica Mita, CTRC/Hematology/Oncology; Dr. Robert Parker, Family/Community Medicine; Dr. Alan Peterson, Psychiatry; Dr. Basil Pruitt, Surgery; Dr. George Thompson III, Medicine/Infectious Diseases; Dr. Peter Nathanielsz, Obstetrics/Gynecology; Dr. Mary Jo V. Pugh, General Medicine; Dr. Luis Fernando Velez, Epidemiology/Biostatistics; Dr. Kaye Wilkins, Orthopaedics (January 2008)

Presidential awards: Dr. Ralph A. DeFronzo, Medicine-Diabetes, was selected as the 2008 Presidential Distinguished Scholar. Ms. Kim Head, Pediatrics, received the bronze medal for 1,252 hours of volunteer service. Ms. Angela Shedd, MS III, received the Ambassador Scholar Award. Drs. Wayne Schweisinger & Ian Thompson, Jr., Surgery/Urology, received the Clinical Excellence Award. Ms. Judith Livingston, Pediatrics, received the Employee Excellence in Service Award. Drs. Sandra Adams, Glen A. Medellin, and Jean Petershack, Medicine/Pediatrics, received the Teaching Excellence Award.

Dr. Jan Evans Patterson, Medicine, was elected to the Board of Trustees of Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene, Texas. Hardin-Simmons University was founded in 1891 and is a church-related institution of higher learning affiliated with the Baptist General Convention of Texas. The university's mission is to be a community dedicated to providing excellence in education enlightened by faith. Hardin-Simmons University has an enrollment of approximately 2400 students in a wide variety of majors and concentrations offered through the Cynthia Ann Parker College of Liberal Arts, the Holland School of Sciences and Mathematics, the Kelley College of Business, the Irvin School of Education, the School of Music, the Patty Hanks Shelton School of Nursing, the Logsdon School of Theology, and the Graduate School.

Dr. Pamela Otto, Radiology, was chosen as the 2007 UHS Employee of the Year (Physician's category) at the University Health System's 2007 Annual Staff Recognition Awards Banquet held on Thursday, Feb. 28, 2008 at the Omni Hotel.
The Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology is dedicated to improving health care for women in our community in association with our institutional partners. The recent acquisition of the San Antonio Metropolitan Health District (SAMHD) clinics by University Health System (UHS) represents an unprecedented opportunity to enhance prenatal care and family planning services for the underserved women in San Antonio. On February 4, 2008, UHS became responsible for operating eleven former SAMHD clinic sites throughout our city. Our faculty will provide professional services and oversite of the part-time physicians and nurse practitioners currently providing prenatal care, family planning services and breast/cervical cancer screening. Dr. Mark Funk will serve as the Medical Director for these ambulatory services.

Several faculty have recently been successful in obtaining NIH grants. Dr. Robert Brzyski will serve as PI for a new U10 award entitled, “Cooperative Multicenter Reproductive Medicine Network.” Our infertility subspecialists will be participating along with five other universities in the design and conduct of clinical studies investigating problems in reproductive medicine. This is a highly competitive and prestigious program and we are looking forward to our participation. Dr. Craig Witz, Dr. Rajeshwar Tekmal and I were awarded an R01 to study the role of CSF-1 and c-fms in the pathogenesis of endometriosis. Our Division of Reproductive Endocrinology and Infertility has a long-standing interest in basic research related to endometriosis and in this competitive environment we are pleased that our track record of successfully competing for federal grants will continue in this field.

Dr. Peter Nathanielsz and his entire research team are to be congratulated for a successful P01 application entitled, “Nutrient Restriction: Placental, Fetal Brain and Renal Outcomes and Mechanism.” This 5 year award will total more than $8 million and involves a multidisciplinary approach to understanding the effects of poor maternal nutrition on fetal development and chronic disease in adulthood.

We welcome the addition of three new faculty members. Dr. Edd Bost joined our department after being in private practice in Denton, Texas for over 20 years. He is a generalist with expertise in gynecologic laparoscopic surgery. Dr. Luke Newton joined us after completing his OB/GYN residency at UNC. We are pleased that Dr. Michael Berkus, a maternal-fetal medicine specialist has rejoined our department after being in private practice in San Antonio. His expertise is fetal ultrasound and prenatal diagnosis.

Robert S. Schenken, M.D.
Professor and Chairman
Humana Foundation Distinguished Chair
Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology