Integrated Academic Health System Moves Forward with Fairview Health Services, University of Minnesota Physicians and the University of Minnesota Board of Regents Support

Approved Letter of Intent outlines core principles to guide discussions on creating a new, single clinical enterprise to advance care, education and research

MINNEAPOLIS - October 9, 2015 - With today's University of Minnesota Board of Regents meeting the Fairview Health Services, University of Minnesota Physicians (UMPhysicians) and University of Minnesota boards have now all signed a Letter of Intent to explore combining Fairview and UMPhysicians into a fully integrated academic health system. The Letter of Intent signals a commitment of the organizations to work together to improve health, discover new treatments and cures and educate the health workforce, helping people lead longer, healthier lives.

The Letter of Intent is the first step towards developing a definitive integration agreement for the three boards to consider in spring 2016. To date all parties have agreed to a set of core principles concerning governance and organizational structure, clinical practice and physician leadership, management and operations, and financials that will guide discussions going forward. The potential integration mirrors a growing national trend to combine academic medical centers and health systems with the aim to enhance clinical care while accelerating research efforts to help bring new treatments and cures to patients more quickly and more efficiently.

“Our shared vision is one of a true partnership that marries the strengths of Fairview and University of Minnesota Physicians into a new health system,” said Dave Murphy, interim CEO of Fairview Health Services. “A fully realized academic health system will benefit patients across the state and beyond, and we look forward to moving toward this important goal.”

The combined enterprise, with the academic mission at its core, will include one board of directors, one integrated physician group, one chief executive officer, one leadership team and one care team working under one name. Over the coming months the organizations will further define the details of the combined enterprise guided by a set of core principles (see full list). Some of the values deemed critical to the success of the integrated academic health system include:

1. A guiding belief that clinical care, research, training and education will be at the core of the mission and vision of the combined enterprise
2. Physicians and advanced practice providers having a strong voice in operations and being actively engaged at multiple levels, including senior leadership roles, key management committees and councils
3. A commitment to operating as a single system that leverages clinical and administrative economies of scale.
4. Additional support for the Medical School and other University health sciences schools to further the research and education missions

“An academic health center needs to be part of a comprehensive health system in order to be world class in the prevention and treatment of disease and to train the future leaders in the health sciences,” said Brooks Jackson, M.D., dean of the Medical School and vice president of health sciences at the University of Minnesota. “At the same time a world-class health system needs access to the leading-edge medical breakthroughs that have the potential to transform patient treatment and care.”

“Our organizations have long focused on improving clinical care, health research and medical education,” said Bobbi Daniels, M.D., CEO of University of Minnesota Physicians and co-president of University of Minnesota Health. “We look forward to further explore even more ways to advance an integrated academic health system for the benefit of Minnesota and beyond.”

The organizations are striving to develop a definitive agreement for approval by March 31, 2016 with a proposed July 1, 2016 effective date.

###

**Contacts**
Cindy Fruitrail
Fairview Health Services
612-672-2792
612-384-8723
cfruitr1@fairview.org

David Martinson
University of Minnesota
612-624-7403
763-218-7721
dpmartin@umn.edu