UAB Health System Signs Affiliation Agreement

Extending a relationship established more than a year ago, UAB Health System (UABHS) and Baptist Health of Montgomery have entered an agreement whereby Baptist Health will become a UABHS affiliate.

On June 28, the University of Alabama Board of Trustees created a health care authority into which Baptist Health will transfer its three hospitals — Baptist Medical Center South and Baptist Medical Center East, both in Montgomery, and Prattville Baptist Hospital. The agreement calls for creation of a new governing board for the health care authority, with six members selected by the UA system and five members by Baptist Health. The health care authority board will have full governance powers over the business and affairs of Baptist Health, while the UA system and Baptist Health boards will maintain oversight and reserved powers. The Baptist Health name and faith-based mission will not change.

New board members are Dennis Boulware, MD, senior associate dean of the School of Medicine (SOM) at UAB; Joseph C. Espy III, UA board member; Carol Garrison, PhD, UAB president and chair of the UABHS Board of Directors; John Henig, chair of the Baptist Health Board of Directors; David Hoidal, UABHS CEO; Charles Ingalls, MD, vascular surgeon; F. Cleveland Kinney, PhD, MD, senior associate dean for clinical affairs at UAB’s SOM; The Reverend Ken May, director of Missions for the Montgomery Baptist Association; Kay Miller, retired bank executive; David Patrick, senior vice president/branch manager, Wachovia Securities; and James W. Wilson III, UA board member.

“The relationship between UAB and Baptist Health has grown in scope in the past year,” Hoidal says. “We have found a multitude of instances whereby the two systems are able to benefit each other in the public interest. UAB will have opportunities to enhance its education and research opportunities, while Baptist Health will gain operational and financial efficiencies through partnership and establishment of a health care authority structure.”

“We are very proud of the work that has been accomplished over the past year between UABHS and Baptist Health boards,” Henig says. “Together, we have found a solution that will ensure the long-term viability and growth of health care services provided to the residents of central Alabama.”

“Baptist Health remains the primary provider of health care services in central Alabama. This partnership will help ensure the organization’s ability to honor its mission and provide essential care and services for the benefit of our community,” Russell Tyner, president and
CEO of Baptist Health, says, “Additionally, the affiliation will offer certain economic advantages, which will allow us to focus on growth of services, invest in new technology, and enhance our physician network.”

“Extending our working agreement with Baptist Health provides both institutions with opportunities for continued efficiencies and opportunities for growth,” says UABHS Executive Vice President Steve Pickett, who served as the chief restructuring officer of Baptist Health.

Baptist Medical Center South has long been a training site for some 18 to 20 UAB residents annually. It also is a medical training site for approximately 20 residents in the Baptist Health Family Practice residency program. Additionally, nearly 40% of physicians at Montgomery Baptist Hospitals are graduates of the UAB SOM.

Objective structured clinical exams (OSCE), simulated clinical encounters that use standardized patients to test students’ history taking, physical examination, and communication skills, have been part of UAB undergraduate medical education since 1985, Introduction to Clinical Medicine Program Director Pat Norton, EdD, says.

“Before the new center, we conducted OSCEs anywhere we could find space — at the VA, on the coliseum concourse in Tuscaloosa, even in an abandoned pharmacy,” she says. “We are thrilled to have a permanent, state-of-the-art facility.”

The Step 2 component of the United States Medical Licensure Examination (USMLE) now includes an OSCE-type assessment, called the clinical skills exam (CSE). The graduating classes of 2005 are the first who must pass the CSE as part of licensure requirements. Since 1998, the Education Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates has required that medical school graduates from other countries pass a similar exam to ensure minimum proficiency in patient interaction.

“Not all medical students are happy about the new licensure requirement. A recent Medscape editorial by two fourth-year Harvard students noted that while OSCEs provide detailed feedback and are generally considered valuable by students, many feel the pass-fail CSE provides “no helpful information of any kind” and “adds little to education or training at [a cost of] over $1,000 per student.” Med Gen Med. 2005;7(2) is available at medscape.com/viewarticle/503527.

“The USMLE CSE is designed to evaluate three areas of proficiency for medical licensure that are not tested in other licensing exams. These are integrated clinical exam skills, communication and interpersonal skills, and spoken English proficiency,” Roger L. Berkow, MD, professor and vice chair of pediatrics and assistant dean for clinical education, says.

“The exam was developed to demonstrate to the public that physicians who obtain a license are competent in these important skill areas. Student discontent with the exam is understandable as the cost is high and students must travel to take the exam. In the end, the public benefits by having confidence that physicians are skilled, not only in the knowledge of medicine, but also in the clinical application of that knowledge.”

Despite any perceived shortcomings, students need to be prepared for the requirement, which can be anxiety-provoking. “The new skills center gives UAB medical students a competitive advantage for this high-stakes, expensive exam,” Dr. Norton says.

The center also is available for teaching activities for residents and others, she says. “Six of our exam rooms have video playback capabilities, making them ideal for educational programs. We hope to expand the center’s activities, and that requires more standardized patients — we’re always on the lookout for people who are interested in helping train the physicians of the future.”

Standardized patients are paid $10 an hour for training and testing time. Interested individuals aged 18 to 70 years should contact Dr. Norton at pnorton@uab.edu.

**NEW CLINICAL SKILLS CENTER**

**TRAINING FUTURE DOCTORS**

The new Clinical Skills Center on the third floor of Volker Hall boasts 20 patient examination rooms outfitted with exam tables, diagnostic equipment, and unobtrusive ceiling-mounted cameras that allow faculty and evaluators in a central viewing room to assess medical students’ clinical skills.
Oleson Joins Department of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation

UAB Professor and Chair of the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Amie B. Jackson, MD, announces the appointment of Christina V. Oleson, MD, as assistant professor. Dr. Oleson is currently accepting patients at Spain Rehabilitation Center.

A magna cum laude graduate of Harvard College in Cambridge, Massachusetts, Dr. Oleson completed her MD degree at the University of Massachusetts Medical School in Worcester. After an internal medicine internship at North Shore Medical Center in Salem, Massachusetts, she completed a residency in physical medicine and rehabilitation at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. She then completed a fellowship in spinal cord injury medicine at McGaw Medical Center of Northwestern University School of Medicine and the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago, Illinois.

In addition to her numerous peer-reviewed publications, abstracts, invited lectures, and presentations, Dr. Oleson served 3 years as contributing editor and regional managing editor for Rehab in Review, a monthly publication of rehabilitation articles summarized for clinicians and published by Harvard Medical School/Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital.

Dr. Oleson also is a professional figure skater and has coached competitors at the national and international level. In addition, she is a member of the U.S. Figure Skating Association’s Sports Medicine Society and has presented on its behalf to the International Skating Union, an official governing body of the International Olympic Committee.

Dr. Oleson’s clinical interests include spinal cord injury, multiple sclerosis, and performing arts medicine. Her current research focuses on osteoporosis and related bone metabolic disorders secondary to spinal cord injury.

Dr. Oleson may be reached at 996-4047; e-mail Oleson@uab.edu. For patient appointments call 934-5858.

GEF GRANT APPLICATIONS DUE AUGUST 29

Application packets for the University of Alabama Health Services Foundation (UAHSF) General Endowment Fund (GEF) grants are available at www.uab.edu/uasom/hsgef, the office of the dean of the School of Medicine (FOT 1203), and the offices of each Academic Health Center (AHC) dean. The same form is used for the four categories: patient-oriented research, laboratory research, clinical care initiatives, and medical education initiatives.

Any university faculty member who obtains sponsorship and approval of one of the AHC departmental chairs may apply. For details on the grants, visit www.uab.edu/uasom/hsgef.

2005-06 GEF GRANT DEADLINES

◆ June 27, 2005: Application packets to deans for distribution
◆ August 29, 2005: Applications due to SOM dean, FOT 1203 (4 PM)
◆ November 14, 2005: GEF Review Group recommendations completed
◆ December 12, 2005: GEF Committee meeting
◆ February 1, 2006: UAHSF Board decision released
◆ March 1, 2006: Funding available for use by awardees

GRANTS.GOV IS 1 YEAR OLD

Grants.gov is the single Web site unifying federal grants. Through the site, state and local governments, colleges and universities, nonprofits, research institutions, and others can access and apply for grants from more than 900 grant programs representing some $360 billion in annual grant funds offered by the 26 federal grant-making agencies. www.grants.gov

To access a Synopsis article from the last 2 years, visit our Web site at www.health.uab.edu/synopsis. You can search by date or subject in the left sidebar.

UAB physicians: visit MSI, the password-protected Medical Staff intranet site, at https://horizon.hs.uab.edu.
impossible to determine whom to con-
tact for clarification.

If Dr. UAB or Dr. Staff is typed on
the prescription label as the prescribing
physician, legal requirements are not
being met because the physician’s name
is not included on the label. And more
important, the patient’s well-being is
compromised because the patient (or
family members) may not know whom
to call if problems arise.

Be sure that all prescriptions for con-
trolled substances contain the required
information (eg, patient address and
physician DEA number). Prescriptions
should be written legibly. The physi-
cian’s name should be printed below the
signature so that, when clarification is re-
quired, the appropriate physician can be
located in a timely fashion.

Welcome, New Residents

On behalf of the Medical Staff, wel-
come to UAB Health System (UABHS).
We look forward to your being an inte-
gral part of the UAB team, committed
to providing the best possible care to
patients and their families. We also are
committed to helping you meet your in-
dividual educational and career goals.

We encourage you to share suggestions
for improvements in patient care, cost
containment, or any other aspect of opera-
tions. We hope Synopsis will provide a vi-
tal link to University Hospital and The
Kirklin Clinic® activities and serve as a
valuable source of news and information
about Health System activities. With best
wishes that you will find residency train-
ing a rewarding experience,