

# The State of the Medical School - 1997

## A Vision for the Next Century

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In 1996 Jordan Cohen, M.D., president of the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) set forth a new vision for academic medical centers in the 21st century. The AAMC's goals include establishing substantial medical school-community partnerships, emphasizing prevention and health maintenance by focusing on population-based medicine, addressing significant societal problems such as substance abuse, and fostering diversity in the profession through student, faculty and staff development.

The AAMC's national vision for the future of medical education is consistent with values and objectives that are well-established at Wright State University School of Medicine and in the Dayton medical community. In the past year we have continued to meet our mission as a national leader among community-based medical schools. Our successes are demonstrated in the outcome measures summarized below:

### **EDUCATION**

Wright State University School of Medicine trains tomorrow's physicians to practice in a rapidly changing health care system. The school is nationally recognized for achieving an effective balance between generalists and specialists, and our graduates from diverse backgrounds are responsive to the multicultural needs of the region.

### **RESEARCH**

External research funding at the School of Medicine is one of the nation's highest for community-based medical schools. Wright State's research efforts range from regional initiatives to applied research and strong basic science programs.

### **SERVICE**

Through its network of 30 affiliated health care institutions, Wright State serves diverse populations in the community. Last year, we along with our community partners provided medical care for 485,000 patient visits, many of them urban and rural poor.

### **ECONOMIC IMPACT**

Through its undergraduate and graduate medical education programs and its biomedical research efforts, WSUSOM makes a significant economic impact on the Miami Valley region. The School of Medicine brings state and federal funding into the region as well as external research support from industry and some of the nation's most prominent private foundations. In 1996, the School of Medicine and its 30 affiliates generated approximately \$360 million in economic activity in the region, which represents approximately 2,500 positions related to academic medicine in the region.

In 1996 Wright State University School of Medicine continued to gain national and international recognition

for interdisciplinary programs and research efforts that serve diverse populations in the community. As the following summary demonstrates, our areas of emphasis range from infants to the frail elderly, and our community-oriented models have a global impact.

**Promoting Children's Health:** Ongoing research by the Division of Human Biology is used to refine the child growth charts used in doctors' offices throughout the nation; the World Health Organization now distributes the charts world-wide. Wright State pediatricians at Children's Medical Center implemented a parent-education campaign that conveys the message "Never, Never Shake A Baby." Community surveys following the campaign demonstrate increased public awareness of problems caused by Shaken Baby Syndrome. The Student-to-Student program conducted by volunteer medical students from Wright State provides timely health education to younger students in grades K-12. Since its inception in 1987, medical students have reached more than 70,000 youth in our community.

**Promoting Women's Health:** Physiological research on estrogen's molecular processes in the cardiovascular system may lead to new methods for preventing heart attacks in older women. Wright State gynecologists at Miami Valley Hospital

have developed guidelines and standards for hysterectomy, oophorectomy, and prevention of anterior vaginal wall prolapse. Use of the new guidelines and procedures by physicians across the country can reduce health care costs, time spent in the hospital, and time spent off work. Research on recurrent pregnancy loss has led to the identification of immunologic cause of miscarriage and other complications of pregnancy as well as the development of laboratory tests to detect patients with immunologic-mediated pregnancy loss.

### **Geriatric Medicine and Law:**

Research on the decisions made by physicians and patients during mammography referral, conducted by a family medicine investigator at Franciscan Health System, has yielded important insights about involving community physicians in public health research and may lead to more effective referral guidelines for older women. Wright State biochemists are studying the molecular and genetic processes involved in macular degeneration, the leading cause of blindness among older Americans. Our Office of Geriatric Medicine and Gerontology has conducted extensive research on legal issues affecting older patients in long-term care facilities, fostering more effective interaction between law, medicine, and public policy.

**Trauma Prevention and Treatment:** Collaborative technology transfer between Wright-Patterson Air Force Base and Wright State surgeons at Miami Valley Hospital is developing custom-fitted pressure masks that improve healing for burn patients. Rehabilitation research at the Dayton Veterans Affairs Medical Center has developed specialized therapeutic exercises for people with spinal-cord injuries that enhance their

physical capability and reduce secondary medical complications. The Injury Prevention Center of the Greater Dayton Area received the American Hospital Association's 1996 NOVA Award for collaborative efforts by hospitals and health-care systems that improve the overall health of the community.

**Global Perspectives:** The Department of Emergency Medicine at Kettering Medical Center received its second five-year grant for educational development at China Medical University in Beijing, where it helped to establish China's first emergency medicine residency. A life sciences experiment designed by a graduate student at Wright State's Aerospace Medicine program at Good Samaritan Hospital flew aboard the Space Shuttle Columbia, thanks to international collaboration from ITA, Inc., the Israel Space Agency, and the Canada Space Agency.

In August 1996 the School of Medicine initiated a strategic planning process to guide our growth and development through the year 2001. Participants in this broadly based process included leadership from Wright State University, the School of Medicine, and diverse health care organizations in the community. Our strategic plan for the next five years focuses the School of Medicine's efforts in seven key areas:

- 1. Advance community partnerships through the Dayton Area Graduate Medical Education Consortium, the Center for Healthy Communities, and urban and rural primary health care centers.
- 2. Expand funding opportunities with foundations, regional business and community groups.
- 3. Foster multicultural understanding through faculty, staff, and stu-

dent programs and curriculum design.

- 4. Harness information technology at local and distant sites for student learning, continuing medical education and outcome studies.
- 5. Enhance research strategies through consultations, faculty incentives and resource reallocation.
- 6. Expand emphasis on health promotion in the curriculum, in clinics, and through specific strategies in injury prevention.
- 7. Integrate educational programs for a more systems-based curriculum and one that better links undergraduate and graduate medical education.

With this five-year plan to guide us, Wright State University School of Medicine's future development will be well-informed and strategically focused. Our values and experience with innovative collaboration in the community place Wright State at the leading edge of the national vision for medical education in the next century.

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