

AHC STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

PHASE II – REPORT ON DEFINING QUESTION NO. 4:

HOW ARE WE GOING TO BE A REAL PLAYER IN THE HEALTH CARE DELIVERY PROCESS?

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The Academic Health Center is one of very few Academic Health Centers in the country to train a full complement of health professionals and deliver care across a very broad spectrum of disciplines. While each school has a well-established presence in health care delivery that should continue and grow according to the school's priorities and academic mission (as outlined in the Phase 1 reports), there are areas where improved collaboration and development of interdisciplinary models could enhance our performance in the health care delivery process as well as strengthen our academic mission.

Imperative to be a real player in health care delivery

The delivery of health care is central to the mission of the Academic Health Center and is the basis for much of the research and education of its schools and colleges. It has also been a significant and critical portion of the funding of the AHC, in particular the Medical School, School of Dentistry, and College of Veterinary Medicine. Therefore, it is essential that we strengthen our position in the delivery of health care. However, changes in the health care marketplace, with intense competition for patients, profound cost pressures, and greatly reduced reimbursements, are threatening the viability of our clinical practice and the education and research that is supported by it.

As individual schools we must establish ourselves as strong, integrated, multi-specialty practices supported by cutting-edge bench-to-bedside research.

Ideally, we would become model academic integrated, multi-specialty practices that are highly cost effective and demonstrably improve outcomes, supported by cutting-edge bench-to-bedside research. However, we will not be able to accomplish this across all "service lines" and need to set priorities based on our academic and marketplace strengths. We need to establish standards for clinical excellence, both for service delivery and quality of care. We need to be leaders in understanding causality and prevention; development of new therapies as well as new prevention and health promotion strategies; providing leadership in both providing care and documenting clinical effectiveness; and outcomes research, that complement and collaborate with the excellent health promotion and clinical care that is provided in the community.

As an Academic Health Center we must work collaboratively to develop and incubate novel interdisciplinary models of care delivery focused on one or limited number of chronic diseases.

The Academic Health Center is uniquely positioned to develop novel care delivery models utilizing the combined skills of all types of health professionals. In the future, chronic disease care and management will require increased attention and resources due to an increasing prevalence of chronic disease in part related to aging of the population. Given the projected shortages of health care providers in nearly all areas, our ability to meet the needs of the Minnesotans will likely require re-examination of our present models. Ideally, we would draw upon the market presence in chronic disease care delivery on this campus to develop a model of interdisciplinary care that maximizes the contributions of all disciplines, develops synergies between the various professions, and extend the continuum of care over all ages. In addition, increased interactions between providers of human and animal health care may provide both improved models for the study of human disease but also transfer of treatments from humans to animals.

We can no longer cross-subsidize our academic mission with clinical revenues. We need to reinvest in our clinical practices to remain competitive. We need to own and manage our own clinics in facilities that are efficient and convenient to our patients and faculty. We need a core of outstanding clinical faculty and strong partnerships with providers throughout the state to sustain our clinical practices.

Our clinical practices require significant reinvestments from clinical revenues to improve business practices, facilities, and patient support and to provide for strategic program development. The present cross-subsidization of the academic mission by clinical revenues limits the ability of our clinical practices to accomplish these objectives. Adequate mission-based support of the academic mission, especially in education, will enable our clinical practices to provide the appropriate support for the clinical mission.

The present inefficiencies and limitations of our clinical practice environment hinder our ability to meet our mission and provide care that meets the expectations of patients and referring practitioners. We also need to continue looking for opportunities to reduce costs. Increased collaboration in information technology, purchasing, patient support, business services, marketing, and ancillary services across our clinical practices could reduce administrative costs and improve our competitiveness.

We need to sustain and enhance Fairview-University Medical Center as a world-class, flagship center.

Despite ongoing efforts and a number of important successes by Fairview, UMPhysicians, and the AHC, important management, cultural, and service issues remain as barriers to the effective implementation of the academic affiliation and operation of the clinical enterprise. Renewed efforts to address these issues are absolutely critical if we are to accomplish the stated goals of the affiliation agreement with Fairview: to create a world-class, flagship

campus and an integrated operating system, to support certain components of the education, research, and patient care missions of the AHC, and to provide community and financial support to the AHC's education, research, and patient care missions.

There are many attributes of a world-class academic health center and its clinical practice. They include the ability to deliver the latest health care technology in a cost-effective, patient friendly, quality-driven manner; vibrant educational programs; and a national and international reputation of the institution and its practitioners. A world-class, flagship academic health center must possess an understanding of the education and research process; a culture of cooperation for education and research-related activities; a supporting infrastructure; and an ability to link education and research with health care as a differentiating feature of the system that provides additional value to the patient. The defining attribute of a successful academic health center is its ability to integrate the three major components of its missions (teaching, research, and service).

Education and research at a world-class academic health center is a way of thinking and a way of doing. Education and research must be part of the system vision. For education and research to be part of the culture, there must be understanding of, acceptance of, accountability for, and integration of education and research into the structure of the institution. Clinical education and research also necessitates certain flexible and dedicated resources. These include facilities, ancillary services, an effective clinical/AHC interface, and defined financial support.

We need to continue to develop and strengthen our affiliations with all of the state's health care providers.

While we have an important relationship with Fairview, it is not an exclusive one and, in fact, it would be impossible for the AHC to carry out its education and research missions without strong affiliations with health care providers across the state. There are too many students to educate and train and too much research to conduct to be able to rely solely on Fairview.

Furthermore, as a land grant institution, it is critical that we maintain and enhance our relationships with all health care providers in Minnesota. We need to further strengthen our affiliations with the state's other health care providers using the same criteria as in our Fairview relationship – namely to build world-class academic health programs in medicine, dentistry, nursing, pharmacy, public health, and veterinary medicine.