

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
REGENTS COMMUNICATION

ACTION REQUEST

Subject: Establishment of a Depression Center within the University of Michigan

Action

Requested: Approval to establish a Depression Center within the University of Michigan

Background:

Clinical Depression is a prevalent brain disorder afflicting approximately 21% of women and 12% of men. The World Health Organization (WHO) categorizes Clinical Depression as the fourth most disabling diagnosis in the world and projects it will be second by the year 2010 unless meaningful improvements occur in prevention, diagnosis, and treatment.

In the spring of 1999, initial steps were taken to develop a Center for the study and treatment of depression at the University of Michigan. It became evident that the Center's short- and long-term success would be dependent upon the multidisciplinary excellence obtainable only in a first-class university such as the University of Michigan. More than 100 faculty, scholars and clinicians throughout the Health System and University have developed areas of expertise in depression-related topics and have expressed interest in becoming members of the University of Michigan Depression Center. The Health System leadership has indicated support for this proposal and has incorporated the Depression Center into its strategic plan.

The Depression Center missions are consistent with those of the University of Michigan Health System and support its strategic plan. It is expected to enhance excellence and leadership in patient care, research and education in the following manner:

Research Mission

Enhancement of existing research excellence will be the foundation of the Depression Center. Current federal and foundation depression-related grant funding is extensive and many faculty have strong national/international reputations in the field. Future breakthroughs are most likely to be optimized through enhanced translation of molecular and genetic neurosciences and studies of brain imaging to further improve clinical diagnosis, treatment, and even prevention. These will be accomplished by expanding existing linkages with MHRI, ISR and other academic networks, and by developing new linkages with the Life Sciences Initiative. Health services researchers will provide evaluations of prevention strategies, clinical outcome, and cost-effectiveness, all of vital interest to corporations and payers. Such initiatives require multidisciplinary collaborations, a hallmark of the Center.

Educational Mission

The educational mission emphasizes two groups. The first includes patients, families, the community, media, corporate and government leaders, and health care policy experts. The second includes health care professionals such as medical students, psychology and social work students, psychiatry and other Medical School residents, faculty, researchers, nurses, as well as students and scholars from other schools within the University of Michigan and other academic institutions. Major educational initiatives have been implemented to date, with significant financial support from the FRIENDS of the University of Michigan Health System.

APPROVED BY THE REGENTS ON

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Patient Care Mission

Clinical programs will be tailored to support research and educational missions and will be continually updated based on new research advances. The core approach involves a paradigm shift: earlier detection, treatment, and recurrence prevention in settings where patients appear, notably primary care, the Women's Health Center of Excellence, Student Health services, and selected specialty settings. The Center will emphasize the lifetime course that characterizes depression, integrating child and adolescent, adult, and geriatric depression. It will also provide a clinical laboratory to develop and evaluate new clinical delivery strategies and train a new generation of clinicians and researchers.

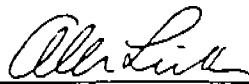
It is believed that achieving the goals of the Depression Center will require a new facility. More detailed proposals will be presented to the Regents in upcoming months when project approval is sought.

Center designation will facilitate a planned significant philanthropic effort and enhanced recruitment of sterling research faculty. It will convey to prospective donors, the public, and the scientific community the University's commitment to research, clinical care, and education related to Depression.

The University of Michigan Department of Psychiatry will administer the Depression Center's home facility and all clinical, research, and educational operations contained therein. The Center facility will also serve as the administrative home of the extended program, coordinating Depression Center Core activities with other parts of the Health System and University, including the Cancer, Geriatric, and Cardiovascular Centers and the departments of Family Medicine, Obstetrics and Gynecology, and Pediatrics. Faculty members and students from Nursing, Social Work, Public Health, Pharmacy, Dentistry, ISR, Psychology, and Kinesiology will be potential participants in Depression Center activities following approval by their respective dean or department chair. There will be multidisciplinary and multidepartmental leadership and participation on governing and advisory committees. A senior Department of Psychiatry faculty member with expertise in Depression will be identified as the Executive Director of the Depression Center, beginning with the present Chair of the Department of Psychiatry. The Executive Director will be appointed by and report to the Dean of the Medical School.

The need for a Depression Center is profound. The University of Michigan is poised to become an international leader. Significant progress has been made in the development of collaborative research, educational and clinical programs for depression. Federal and foundation grant opportunities are widespread. There is extensive internal, corporate, and philanthropic interest and support.


We recommend the Regents approve the establishment of the University of Michigan Depression Center.



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