



University of Nevada  
School of Medicine

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## A Vision Statement The University of Nevada School of Medicine

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### **Introduction**

The University of Nevada School of Medicine (UNSOM) is entering what could be considered its third major phase of development, and perhaps its most exciting and positive phase. The first phase, from its founding until the late 1990s, was characterized by full teaching programs based in Reno for a small class, moderately-strong support from community physicians, and outreach to rural Northern Nevada.

The second phase focused on expansion of the class size from 40 students/class to about 60. This expansion required the development of new clinical teaching capacity for 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year students in Las Vegas at the University Medical Center (UMC). As the only public medical school in Nevada to this point, UNSOM attempted to fulfill its mission to serve the entire state but was not entirely successful. In particular, significant political conflict, exacerbated by the state's economic decline, detracted from UNSOM's stability, growth and success.

UNSOM is now entering its third phase of development, with greater clarity regarding its role and position in the state, and greater congruence between its mission and structure. The history of public medical education in Nevada to this point is characterized by uncertainty regarding how UNSOM is positioned, where it is located, its academic and geographic home and how it serves the entire state. These uncertainties are now in the process of resolution.

### **Vision**

The result of several major affiliations and events occurring over the past year is that UNSOM will develop as a research-intensive, primary care- and community-based school of medicine in Reno with a full, four-year campus serving a class size of 70 for the next several years. The long-term determination of class size will depend on many demographic, economic and political factors that cannot be predicted at this time. UNSOM will support 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year student teaching in Las Vegas at a markedly reduced level, but a level that takes maximal advantage of the special educational experiences and residency exposure available in Las Vegas. UNSOM will develop new residency and fellowship training opportunities in Reno and partner with hospitals in Las Vegas to develop new residency and fellowship training programs.

The current student teaching capacity is split roughly 1/3 in Reno and 2/3 in Las Vegas; the split will more than reverse over the next 5-6 years such that a minority of clinical teaching will occur in Las Vegas. For example, approximately fifty student FTEs receive their clinical training in Las Vegas currently; this capacity will decline to about 10-20 FTEs by 2020. The continued

student teaching presence in Las Vegas is important for both quantitative and qualitative reasons; the clinical teaching in Las Vegas at UMC provides diverse urban patient populations and experiences that complement the experience in Reno and provides a superlative educational experience.

The new affiliations in both Las Vegas and Reno described below have opened up opportunities for the creation of an innovative and special school of medicine based in Reno. UNSOM will become more clearly identified as a major component of UNR that is firmly based in Reno, but with continued collaboration in residency training throughout the state and a renewed commitment to rural outreach. Three major events provide the foundation for these new opportunities to fulfill UNSOM's vision and mission to serve the region and the state from a strong platform in Reno.

### **Three Events**

The first event is a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed by leaders of NSHE, UNR, UNLV and UNSOM, followed by a First Amendment. The MOU and First Amendment together describe and support the launch of a school of medicine sponsored by UNLV, with an equal and reciprocal endorsement for the development of UNSOM as a full school of medicine based at UNR in Reno. It is recognized as well that UNSOM has a near-term responsibility to continue to sponsor all residency and fellowship (GME) programs in the state, and a long-term responsibility to continue these sponsorships in Reno, and to coordinate GME programs in Las Vegas with UNLV.

The second event is a proposed affiliation agreement with the Renown Health system. This agreement has recently been approved by the Renown Health Board of Trustees, including a major financial commitment. The agreement creates a platform for new teaching and clinical programs, which will be brought to the Board of Regents for approval as developed, with the following proposed programs and expected outcomes:

- A new department of neurology integrated with the Renown Institute of Neurosciences, including integrated leadership of the two entities by a single academic neurologist who would serve as department chair and institute director.
- Integrated leadership of the UNSOM Department of Pediatrics and Renown Children's Hospital by a single academic pediatrician who would serve as department chair and pediatrician-in-chief.
- The recruitment of several pediatric subspecialists providing clinical services not currently available in Reno.
- Development of new residency training programs in neurology and pediatrics and other possible new fellowship programs, resulting in an increase from 110 to 140 residency and fellowship positions.
- Expansion of new clinical teaching capacity for 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year medical students, in particular in surgery, obstetrics-gynecology, emergency medicine and neurology, so that roughly three-fourths of the entire class can be accommodated in Reno if desired.

- The recruitment of a substantial number of new community physicians to serve as clinical teachers.
- The creation of an Office of Community Physician Faculty Engagement to be housed at Renown and funded by UNSOM.
- The development of full teaching capabilities must be completed by 2019 or 2020 at the latest as the UNLV School of Medicine develops its clinical teaching needs in Las Vegas, but in practical terms much earlier so to fully develop and evaluate the clerkships.
- Continuation of the overall medical school class size of 70 students consistent with high-quality clinical teaching capacity described above.
- A long-term assessment of state needs and financial and educational resources to determine future class size in 2022 and beyond.
- Integrated physician and administrative leadership of the affiliation.
- Creation of a new position of Director of Medical Education at Renown Health.
- The development of new and expanded affiliations in clinical and translational research with the intent to build a clinical research portfolio of external grant funding of \$10M/year, to complement the current biomedical research portfolio of \$25M/year.
- Exploration of a new medical education building on the Renown Regional Medical Center campus.
- The initial commitment by Renown Health of \$5M over the next 3 years to stimulate the launch of many of these initiatives, particularly the recruitment of pediatric subspecialists, the Director of Medical Education, physician and administrative leadership for the affiliation, and support of the new integrated leadership in pediatrics and neurology.

The third event provides a platform for UNSOM's role as a continued partner in the development of teaching programs in Las Vegas, in part to expand the overall GME opportunities in the state, and in part to secure a small base of student clinical teaching. This will be accomplished through a recently-signed MOU between UNSOM and MountainView Hospital, a large, successful HCA hospital in Las Vegas that primarily serves a Medicare population. The agreement commits to developing a large set of primary care and specialty residency and fellowship programs with UNSOM affiliation. The total complement of training programs is likely to eventually be larger than the current set of programs based at UMC in Las Vegas. The eventual partnership of UNSOM and UNLV with Las Vegas hospital GME programs is under the control, to a considerable extent, of the hospital owners and governance.

### **Financial Support**

The financial support necessary to achieve this goal will require commitments by the state, Renown Health (the first phase of which is described above), and donors. All three are critical to take full advantage of the opportunities afforded by these affiliations. No combination of any two sources will be sufficient to achieve the maximal value because each source is specific to certain needs. The lack of full funding of this expansion by the state will result in a longer, slower and less comprehensive development of the resources necessary to be fully successful.

If all three funding streams are secured, Northern Nevada can expect to see, over the next 5 years, the development of a robust academic medical center that will have new clinical services not now available in Reno, new teaching programs for both students and residents that will produce new primary care physicians, new outreach programs to bring new expertise to the Northern Nevada community, and new clinical research programs that will bring visibility to Reno and improve clinical practice. These outcomes will be supported by the following specific tasks:

- Recruitment of two distinguished academic physicians each year for 5 years (10 total), in areas of potential collaboration with current research and clinical programs such as neurosciences, cognitive disorders, endocrinology and diabetes, microbiology and infectious diseases, and gastrointestinal physiology and smooth muscle function.
- Development of new residency programs in Pediatrics and Neurology as described above.
- Development of a fellowship in headache and pain management.
- Restructuring of the Internal Medicine residency program so as to enhance academic quality.
- Stabilization of the medical school class size at 70 students/year.
- The creation of an Institute of Clinical and Translational Research to support the above activities, including space renovation, informatics and computer capabilities, research assistants, and biostatistics expertise.
- The development of a training program, Master's degree or equivalent (possibly linked with the current Master's of Public Health degree) to train physicians in clinical research skills.
- The initial planning for a new medical education building to be built on the Renown Regional Medical Center campus, with signage to indicate the co-branding of Renown Health and UNSOM, as well as highlighting the possible re-naming of UNSOM.

### **Ten-Year Outcomes**

The expected 10-year outcomes of these major events and partnerships include the following:

- Development of a full four-year medical school campus in Reno with expanded biomedical and clinical research programs, major hospital affiliations, community-based teaching, and a focus on training primary care physicians,
- Support of a class of 70 medical students/year, a majority of which will be Nevada residents, but will also include an expanding catchment of students who are children of alumni, have Nevada connections, or live in contiguous areas,
- Creation of 50 new residency positions in Reno (neurology, pediatrics and family medicine), and partnerships with hospitals in Las Vegas that will create 150 new residency positions in primary care and specialty disciplines,
- An increase in total federal and external research funding from \$25M/year to \$35M/year, based in considerable part on expanded clinical research programs,
- Recruitment and training of 100-150 new volunteer community physician faculty members, primarily to support the development of full required clinical clerkships in Reno,

- Generation of 4,560 new jobs by 2030, primarily through expanded research and clinical programs, the latter in partnership with new hospital affiliations,
- Generation of an economic impact of \$684M by 2030,
- Generation of \$4 in non-state revenue for every \$1 of state funds invested.

## **Conclusion**

After 15 or more years of political and economic stress, weak hospital and community physician affiliations, and multiple leadership changes, UNSOM is now poised to become the Reno-based school of medicine with statewide influence it was intended to be, and needs to be, to serve Northern Nevada and the entire state. UNSOM now has the affiliations, political support, vision, leadership and clinical platform to contribute to a significant and long-term enhancement of the quality of health and health care, the quality of life, the quality of the business environment and the success of Northern Nevada.