HEALTH SCIENCES IN THE NEVADA SYSTEM OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Goals for the Health Sciences of the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE)

1. Improve health care for Nevada citizens.
2. Address critical challenges and gaps in Nevada’s health care delivery.
3. Educate a health care workforce to meet Nevada’s health care and biomedical needs.
4. Increase self-supporting biomedical education and research with external, competitive funding, contracts, and philanthropic contributions.
5. Provide leadership in health care policy and infrastructural development.
6. Support and partner with other private and public entities to promote economic diversification by building the health care industry in Nevada.
7. Improve efficiency and effectiveness in delivering these outcomes through inter-institutional, inter-agency, and public/private collaboration, leveraging existing infrastructure and scaled to financial and other resource projections for the state.

Health Sciences education within NSHE is governed by the Board of Regents and overseen by its Health Sciences Committee, whose charge is to “…promote quality education, research, patient care and community health across health care disciplines, driven by access, quality, value and the needs of the people of the State of Nevada,” Board of Regents Handbook Title 1, Article VI, section 3, paragraph (f). The System’s efforts are coordinated by the Executive Vice Chancellor of Health Sciences (EVCHS) who reports directly to the Chancellor. The EVCHS’s role is to coordinate and facilitate comprehensive system-wide planning in the health sciences, facilitate and support cooperation among NSHE institutions and between NSHE institutions and external partners in education, research and provision by:

- Promoting a Systems Approach: Work to promote a systems view/approach to enhancing NSHE’s ability to meet Nevada’s health care needs through education, research and training;
- Promoting Efficiency & Effectiveness: Work to increase effectiveness and efficiency of NSHE health sciences program;
- Promoting Program Development: Work to foster further development of NSHE health sciences programs;
- Promoting Collaborative Opportunities: Work to foster enhanced internal and external collaboration” (Board of Regents, Aug. 2009).

Education in the Health and Allied Sciences in Nevada is structured efficiently with one medical school, one dental school, and one dental hygiene program. Nursing programs are present at all
colleges and universities, specializing in varying levels of education and training. Strategic health sciences initiatives at the University of Nevada, Reno are displayed in Appendix I; the strategic health sciences initiatives at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas are displayed in Appendix II; the health sciences degree programs at all NSHE institutions are displayed in Appendix III. Some examples of collaborative programs the EVCHS has encouraged and facilitated within the system include collaboration among nursing programs and public health programs, etc. The University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) and the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) Nursing Schools share the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree program with joint recruiting and each school providing half the courses. UNR and UNLV Schools of Community Health Sciences share a PhD program. UNR and UNLV are seeking accreditation for their Master of Public Health (MPH) degree programs, with accreditation reviews being conducted soon. Though the System provides leadership in strategic system-wide planning and facilitates collaboration among institutions, each campus is responsible for independently developing, managing and delivering health science degree programs within their staffing and financial resources. Senior administrators at each college and university are “full players” in the statewide conversations about health science programs.

GOVERNANCE

Governance can be and it is recommended should be made more explicit by establishing an Executive NSHE Health Sciences Planning Committee (Committee). This Committee will be lead by the Chancellor (Chair) and composed of the EVCHS, the Presidents of the two universities and Nevada State College and one President from the community colleges. Additional ex-officio members may be added from time to time as determined by the Committee.

The Committee will have responsibility for academic master planning for health care education and clinical training, for identifying and forming useful inter-institutional collaborations and for ensuring that the plans are timely and successfully implemented. In practice, this Committee will critically evaluate the state needs in health sciences and collaboratively establish directions and areas of educational focus, establish areas of common and collaborative research focus, establish key coordinated community collaborations, and plan system facility and budgeting proposals for the health sciences in order to successfully meet the needs of our students and the state.

Additional, content-specific work groups could be formed at the discretion of the Committee to create practical plans for collaboration and identify resource gaps which limit fulfillment of system goals. The EVCHS will be responsible for working with the related Vice Chancellors, Provosts, Vice Presidents and Deans, to manage the implementation of the Committee’s plans. The Committee will be accountable to the Chancellor and report regularly to the Board of
Regents’ Health Sciences Committee. The Presidents of UNR and UNLV and the EVCHS are committed to this more explicit governance structure.

Immediate Topics for Policy Discussions and Action (and the role of the System)
A number of issues are of immediate concern for the Committee and for subsequent action, including:

1. Expanding the University of Nevada School of Medicine (UNSOM) throughout Nevada emphasizing class size growth, expanded hospital relationships with clinical service and graduate medical education growth, and enhanced basic and clinical research. The current opportunity to enhance the relationship between NSHE, UNSOM, and the University Medical Center, in Las Vegas, represents one example of possible expansions of education, research and clinical services in medicine, nursing, social work, and public health, as well as with other community partnerships. This enhanced relationship and mission integration with UMC is the single most important issue facing health sciences within the System at the current time and should be the focus for the most intense effort of the Committee.

2. Establishing a practical method to plan and manage the Shadow Lane Campus, accounting for the investment, operational support and overheads currently borne by UNLV and the availability of funds to achieve capital improvement goals.

The role of System: Topics 1 and 2 have been previously identified as important and critical priorities for NSHE. The System will play a coordinating role in these efforts to ensure the integrity of the inter-institutional academic enterprise. In particular the System will (1) lead the efforts in facilitating the relationship with key external partners (i.e., UMC, NVCI, etc.); provided, however, that the Dean of the School of Medicine shall be a “co-lead” in all aspects of fashioning the new and enhanced relationship with UMC discussed herein; and, (2) facilitate the discussion of the implementation of an Academic Health Center.

3. Expanding applied, translational and clinical research collaboration between the NSHE research institutions, and with other regional research universities, based on mutually agreed upon specializations or fields (e.g., support for neurodegenerative diseases, geriatrics, molecular medicine; biomedical engineering, novel chemotherapeutic treatments, etc.).

4. Developing a mutually agreed upon roadmap for critical faculty and clinical staffing to support the education, research, and clinical service directions of NSHE, and plans for developing resources to implement the roadmap.
The role of the System: Topics 3, 4 will be based on the strategic planning of the NSHE research institutions, feedback from the NSHE faculty and the approval of the Committee; the System will convene and facilitate specific taskforces composed of faculty and institutional academic leadership to explore and identify system-wide initiatives based on existing strengths and develop implementation plans to support these initiatives including means to support these plans (i.e., identification of sources of support (federal, state, industry, philanthropy) and collaborate with NSHE institutions to secure the necessary support. In addition, the System will coordinate the efforts in establishing the necessary processes/structure that will facilitate the inter-institutional collaboration in research (e.g., facilitate the approval, monitoring, and review of inter-institutional biomedical and behavioral research; development of inter-institutional research core support infrastructure, etc.).

5. Encouraging faculty in the research institutions to identify a set of core health care policy initiatives for which inter-institutional, inter-disciplinary programs can be developed. Such issues could include: early intervention, elder care, health care in immigrant communities, health care infrastructure, and developing statewide databases. Interactions between academic departments, community health programs, and centers, like the UNLV Lincy Institute and the Brookings Mountain West Initiative and the UNR Sanford Center for Aging and the Center for the Application of Substance Abuse Technologies, can support these efforts and should be encouraged and maximized.

The role of the System: For Topic 5, the role of the System would be focused on facilitating a discussion at the Committee level to identify the priority health care policy issues of focus, identify the key stakeholders and coordinate the development of strategic inter-disciplinary/inter-institutional plans for setting measurable goals, and monitoring and tracking implementation. The System will represent NSHE’s interests in statewide and national health policy discussions and initiatives, i.e., Nevada Academy of Health, the Governor’s Blue Ribbon HIT Taskforce and the federal HHS’s Electronic Health Records Nevada Statewide Initiative. The representation by the System shall be consistent with the direction of the Board, the Chancellor and the actions of the Committee and shall be coordinated with State goals.

6. Promoting collaboration through sponsoring meetings, workshops and conferences between the various governmental, non-profit, and private health care entities to promote broader regional and state-wide collaboration, to exchange results from clinical studies and research efforts, and to develop a more vigorous biomedical and health care economy.
The role of the System in Topic 6: Based on the needs identified by the institutions, external partners and the community at large, the System will help organize such meetings and collaborate with institutional leadership and faculty in identifying and pursuing the necessary financial support for these activities.
Appendix I
Health System Objective of the
University of Nevada, Reno Institutional Strategic Plan
(Adopted by NSHE BOR 12/09)

Goal 5: Improve the physical and mental health of Nevadans.

The State of Nevada is in a critical health care and health care workforce position. Nevada ranks 48th among states in number of physicians per capita (189/100,000 population; 300 for the U.S.), 50th among states in number of registered nurses per capita (514/100,000 population; 780 for the U.S.), 50th among states in number of registered dietitians per capita (12.8/100,000 population; 25.1 for the U.S.), 48th among states in number of social workers per capita (89/100,000 population), and 44th among states in number of clinical psychologists (19.3/100,000 population) and psychiatrists (6.7/100,000 population) per capita. This low level of health care workforce is serving a state which is above the national average in deaths due to cancer and heart disease and ranks fifth among states in the prevalence of major depressive disorder, and has the 2nd highest rate of suicide in the nation. At the University of Nevada, Reno, the health sciences consist of the University of Nevada School of Medicine, the Orvis School of Nursing, the School of Community Health (Public Health), the School of Social Work, The Center for the Application of Substance Abuse Technologies, The Sanford Center for Aging, the Program in Dietetics, the Program in Neuroscience, the Program in Clinical Psychology, and numerous related and supportive natural and social sciences.

Purposes

The purposes of the University of Nevada, Reno in expanding Health Sciences are to: a) educate and train licensed health care industry professionals in medicine, nursing, public health, social work, dietetics, substance abuse counseling, and psychology, b) perform fundamental research to discover new approaches to prevent and combat human disease and promote physical and mental health, and provide clinical research on new pharmaceuticals and medical practices, and c) participate in clinical practice and health outreach to add to the capacity of Nevada’s health services and inform the public about disease-preventing lifestyles.

Planning Goals for the Health Sciences for the Period 2009-2015:

- **Education:** Maintain undergraduate and graduate degrees in professional fields of medicine, nutrition (dietetics option), psychology, community health sciences, nursing, social work, speech pathology and audiology, and neuroscience with in-depth education in the basic scientific knowledge and practice of these professions. Achieve in excess of 90 percent first-attempt passage rates on licensure exams in each field. Continue
undergraduate minors in addiction treatment services and substance abuse prevention services which support certification and licensure for addiction counseling. Model integrated training across the medical and health sciences fields.

- **Nursing:** Increase the semi-annual starting class size of the Orvis School of Nursing to 96 (currently 48).
- **Medical School:** Increase the annual starting class size of the medical school to 100 (currently 62). Enhance residency programs by expanding the scope and size of programs in both Las Vegas and Reno, as resources and hospital partners permit, while maintaining an emphasis on primary care (family medicine, internal medicine, obstetrics/gynecology, and pediatrics). Address curricular, facility, and resource issues prior to expanding the admissions class size.
- **Public Health:** Achieve accreditation of the Master of Public Health degree and expand emphases in the PhD in Public Health. Enhance collaboration with UNLV on the joint PhD in Public Health.
- **Aging Programs:** Expand teaching, research, and outreach programs related to gerontology and geriatrics, coordinated through the Sanford Center for Aging.
- **Basic Research:** Produce results of fundamental, scientific discovery in psychology, biochemistry and molecular biology, physiology, microbiology, pharmacology, pathology, biotechnology, and biomedical engineering, supported by competitive research grants from federal agencies.
- **Applied Research:** Produce results of applied, scientific discovery and assessment research on practice interventions in nutrition and dietetics, biomedical engineering, psychology, cognitive and brain sciences, nursing, community health sciences, social work, and speech pathology and audiology, supported by competitive research grants from state and national agencies.
- **Faculty:** Grow the number of faculty in the health science units to increase class size and research.
- **Clinical Services:** Provide clinical services in health care and psychology through complementary educational and training programs.
- **Outreach:** The Center for Education and Health Services, the Sanford Center, and Cooperative Extension will continue to bring knowledge of health professions and healthy lifestyles to the public, promoting healthful practices across the lifespan.
Appendix II
Health System Objective of the
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Mission Statement

The University of Nevada, Las Vegas, is a research institution committed to rigorous educational programs and the highest standards of a liberal education. We produce accomplished graduates who are well prepared to enter the work force or to continue their education in graduate and professional programs. Our faculty, students, and staff enthusiastically confront the challenges of economic and cultural diversification, urban growth, social justice, and sustainability. Our commitment to our dynamic region and State centrally influences our research and educational programs, which improves our local communities. Our commitment to the national and international communities ensures that our research and educational programs engage both traditional and innovative areas of study and global concerns. UNLV’s distinctive identity and values permeate a unique institution that brings the best of the world to our region and, in turn, produces knowledge to improve the region and world around us.

UNLV is committed to and driven by these shared values that will guide our decision making:

- High expectations for student learning and success;
- Discovery through research, scholarship, and creative activity;
- Nurturing equity, diversity, and inclusiveness that promotes respect, support, and empowerment;
- Social, environmental, and economic sustainability;
- Strong, reciprocal, and interdependent relationships between UNLV and the region around us;
- An entrepreneurial, innovative, and unconventional spirit.

Purposes

Under the guidance and direction of the UNLV Mission Statement the purposes of the University’s role in expanding Health Sciences are to (a) educate and produce health care workers ready to enter the work force or to pursue graduate and professional degrees, (b) confront the health care realities and needs of a dichotomous state that is both highly urbanized but that also encompasses vast and sparsely populated areas, and (c) engage in basic and applied research to promote mental and physical health within the Las Vegas community, the state of Nevada, the United States, and the world.
Planning Goals for the Health Sciences

- **Community Outreach and Clinical Services:** Continue to provide hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of assistance to the community through the School of Dental Medicine, School of Nursing, School of Allied Health Sciences, School of Community Health Sciences, Marriage and Family Therapy Program, Department of Counselor Education (substance abuse), and Department of Psychology. Expand those where feasible.

- **Collaborations with NSHE Partners:** Continue and enhance collaborations between the UNLV and UNR School of Community Health Sciences (joint Ph.D.) and School of Nursing (joint DNP). Expand collaborations with the University of Nevada School of Medicine including increased use of clinical simulation to enhance practice, and further cooperative biomedical research.

- **Collaborations with non-NSHE Partners:** Continue and expand partnerships and collaborations with the Ruvo Brain Institute/Cleveland Clinic, the Nevada Cancer Institute (NVCI), and other similar institutions. Continue and enhance collaboration with the Nevada State Health Division to improve the health of Nevadans. We are also actively engaged with state and private partners in developing state-wide databases for improving health care, medical records, and promoting research.

- **Research:** Produce results in basic and applied research in the health sciences including, but not limited to, Urban Health Sustainability, Clinical Simulation, Healthy Homes (asthma), Workplace Injuries, Cancer, etc. Improve success in achieving competitive research grants in basic research such as microbiology, physiology, biotechnology, biochemistry, and other related disciplines. We are also dedicated to expanding biomedical research through partnering with NSHE and Inter-Mountain West colleagues to create a biomedical roadmap to guide us.

- **School of Dental Medicine:** Develop an oral and maxillofacial surgery program. Develop an endodontic residency program. Affiliate with an existing dental anesthesiology residency program to allow residents to provide clinical care at UNLV. Develop a dental HMO plan for NSHE employees using faculty practice, residency programs, and predoctoral students. Expand clinical research facility and programs. Expand UNLV dental student outreach throughout the state. Affiliate with an existing dental public health residency program at another institution to allow residents to fulfill requirements in Nevada.

- **Community Health Sciences:** Maintain a branch of the Nevada State Health Laboratory on the UNLV campus. Achieve accreditation for the MPH degree in four concentrations. Enhance and continue collaboration with UNR on the joint Ph.D. program in Public Health. Offer a minor in Public Health to increase undergraduate awareness of the field.

- **Nursing:** Enhance and continue collaboration with UNR on the joint DNP degree. Achieve accreditation by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) for the joint DNP.

- **Allied Health Sciences:** Achieve reaccreditation for the Nuclear Medicine Program in the Department of Health Physics. Evolve the certificate program in Radiography into a Bachelor of Science degree.

- **Gerontology and Geriatrics:** Revive the Center on Aging and appoint as a director a proven grant writer and researcher to work with other interested faculty on campus to
establish a core research and teaching group. Move the Gerontology certificate into the Interdisciplinary Studies Program in the College of Liberal Arts in order to provide greater visibility to students.
Appendix III

Health Sciences Education Degree Programs at the Member Institutions

University of Nevada, Reno

Doctor of Medicine (M. D. and graduate residencies)
Nursing: RN to BSN, BSN, MSN (Nurse Educator, Family Nurse Practitioner, Clinical Nurse Leader, Post-Master’s Certificates (Nurse Educator, Clinical Nurse Leader, Family Nurse Practitioner), DNP
Community Health Sciences: BS Community Health Sciences, MPH, PhD in Public Health
Social Work: BSW, MSW
Speech Pathology and Audiology: MS, PhD
Undergraduate Minors: Addiction Treatment Services, Health Care Ethics, Health Ecology, Gerontology
Graduate Certificate Programs: Bioethics, Clinical Nurse Leader, Family Nurse Practitioner, Nurse Educator

University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Doctor of Dentistry (DDS)
Nursing: RN to BSN, BSN, MSN, PhD, DNP
Public Health: BS in Health Care Administration and Policy, BS in Public Health, BS in Community Health, BS in School Health Education, MSEd, MPH, Master of Health Administration, PhD
Health Sciences: BS Radiography
Kinesiology: BS Athletic Training, BS Nutritional Science
Physical Therapy: Doctor of Physical Therapy
Social Work: BSW, MSW

Nevada State College:
Nursing: RN to BSN, BSN, BS Occupational Science

Truckee Meadows Community College
Nursing: Associate Degree in Nursing, Certified Nursing Assistant

Western Nevada College:
Nursing: Associate Degree in Nursing

College of Southern Nevada:
Dental Hygiene: Associate of Science, BS
Nursing:  Associate of Applied Science (Medical Laboratory Technology - CSN Occupational Track, Medical Laboratory Technology - UNLV Transfer Track, Mental Health Services, Nursing, Nursing - LPN to RN Bridge, Occupational Therapy Assistant, Ophthalmic Dispensing Technician, Surgical Technology)

Great Basin College:
  Nursing:  Associate of Applied Science, BSN, Certified Nursing Assistant
  Radiology:  Associate of Applied Science in Radiology Technology