



CHARTING PROGRESS

SAN ANTONIO MEDICAL FOUNDATION • *Founders and Directors of the South Texas Medical Center*

University Hospital Garners Continuing Recognition for Quality Care

University Hospital, located in the South Texas Medical Center and part of the University Health System, has again received national recognition that places it among other outstanding hospitals in the country.

For the fifth year in a row, University Hospital has been recognized by U.S. News & World Report in its Best Hospitals rankings. The 2015 rankings recognize University Hospital as the best hospital in the San Antonio region, the sixth-best hospital in Texas and among the top 50 nationwide for the care of patients with kidney disease.

University Hospital earned a national Top 50 ranking in care of patients with kidney disease.

Only 137 out of nearly 5,000 hospitals earned a national Top 50 ranking in any specialty, putting University Hospital in the group of just 3 percent with this designation. University Hospital also was ranked nationally high-performing in cancer, gynecology, pulmonology and urology.

U.S. News & World Report ranks hospitals by assessing processes, structure, patient safety and clinical outcomes. Outstanding performance in these areas included University Hospital's recognition as the only Nurse Magnet Hospital in South Texas as well as one of the Nation's Most Wired Hospitals and Health Systems for the seventh consecutive year.

Furthermore, this prestigious recognition reflects the value of the partnership between University Health System and the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio. Jointly, these organizations are committed to several strategic collaborations including:

- The Level I Trauma Center at University Hospital, providing life-saving care to injured adults and

children from all of South Texas

- The University Transplant Center, which provides comprehensive services for patients needing liver, kidney and lung transplantation
- Premiere children's health services provided in both the inpatient setting and at ambulatory clinics throughout the community
- The Heart and Vascular Institute, offering comprehensive care for cardiovascular diseases
- A Neurosciences Center of Excellence, offering both neurosurgical and neurological care

These organizations comprise an academic medical center that recently entered into a new 15-year affiliation agreement to provide outstanding clinical outcomes and patient experience, while committing to improve the health of the people of Bexar County, South Texas and beyond.

University Hospital also serves as the primary inpatient training site for physician residents and medical students from the Health Science Center, providing exceptional medical and dental education and training for tomorrow's healthcare providers.



Barshop Institute Receives Two Top NIA Center Grants

The National Institute on Aging (NIA) has awarded the Barshop Institute for Longevity and Aging Studies at The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio two grants totaling \$7 million.

The grants coupled with two five-year grants awarded in 2014 for \$15 million will expand research on how people age and how to improve health throughout life.

One new NIA award establishes the Claude D. Pepper Older American Independence Center at the Barshop Institute. The center translates research into practical applications in the lives of older Americans.

The second NIA grant continues work of the Nathan Shock Center of Excellence in the Biology of Aging, which provides core services and support for aging research and education.

The Barshop Institute became one of a handful of centers in the country when it received the Shock Center designation in 1995, and it has maintained the designation ever since.

Barshop Institute Designations

- Nathan Shock Center of Excellence in the Biology of Aging (NIA)
- Claude D. Pepper Older American Independence Center (NIA)
- NIA-sponsored Interventions Testing Program
- U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs GRECC

"A very small number of these centers have been able to secure the NIA Shock Center funding," said Barshop Institute Director Nicholas Musi, M.D., a physician-scientist in the areas of aging and metabolic disease who is a professor in the Health Science Center's School of Medicine.

This year, for the first time, the Barshop Institute successfully competed for a Pepper Center designation. These centers of excellence increase scientific knowledge and lead to better ways to maintain or restore independence in older persons.

Both awards will support Barshop Institute researchers as they move the science of healthy aging from the idea stage to preclinical and animal studies and then into proving that an intervention works in humans. "With the Pepper Center award from the NIA, we join few places in the country that are able to both investigate the aging process and move findings into the clinic," said Dr. Musi.

The Geriatric Research, Education and Clinical Center (GRECC) at the South Texas Veterans Health Care System is a designation renewed in 2014 that continues to enhance aging and longevity research. The Barshop Institute is also one of only three centers in the NIA Interventions Testing Program (ITP) and last year received funding through 2019 to investigate treatments that have the potential to extend life span and delay diseases and dysfunction in mice.

The Barshop Institute is now the only aging-intensive research institute in the country to have four designations: two NIA-funded centers (Nathan Shock and Claude D. Pepper), a testing site of the NIA-sponsored Interventions Testing Program and U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs GRECC. It also is the only institute in the U.S. this year to receive both the Nathan Shock and Claude Pepper awards.



St. Luke's Baptist Receives Designation

St. Luke's Baptist Hospital in the South Texas Medical Center has been certified as a Comprehensive Stroke Center, the only hospital in San Antonio and South Texas to earn the designation.

The Comprehensive Stroke Center is the highest level that can be achieved by a stroke-care program and indicates that the certified hospital provides the full spectrum of stroke care, including diagnosis, treatment, rehabilitation and education. The certification establishes metrics to evaluate outcomes and the designated hospitals generally are the best-equipped in a given geographical area that can treat any kind of stroke or stroke complication.

The designation comes from DNV Healthcare, part of Det Norske Veritas, a global independent foundation. DNV accredits acute care and critical access hospitals and provides Comprehensive as well as Primary Stroke Center certification.

University Health System Plans Construction

The University Health System plans major building projects in the South Texas Medical Center that will include pediatric inpatient facilities and space for the Heart & Vascular Institute at University Hospital and a new Northwest Clinical Services and Dialysis Center.

The projects will allow all pediatric inpatient services to be consolidated in one building at University Hospital. The first phase will relocate inpatient pediatric beds from the Sky Tower to the Horizon Tower. The investment to create state-of-the-art pediatric facilities follows an agreement with the Health Science Center's pediatric specialty programs.

The plan also includes finishing out a portion of the new Sky Tower for the Heart & Vascular Institute to bring together the cardiology, vascular and cardiothoracic surgery teams. The change will increase capacity and will include upgrades and replacement of equipment to create a technologically advanced facility. The estimated cost is \$17.8 million.

The University Health System will build a new Northwest Clinical Services and Dialysis Center to house services now in leased facilities that are inadequate, especially for pediatric needs. Services will include primary care, a 36-chair adult dialysis center and an eight-chair pediatric dialysis center to work in concert with the pediatric transplant program. The estimated cost is \$12.1 million.

Health Science Center Researchers Grow Salivary Cells

A research team at The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio, led by Chih-Ko Yeh, B.D.S., Ph.D., is the first in the nation to use silk fibers as a framework to grow stem cells into salivary gland cells. The process has been submitted for a patent and was published in the May edition of the scientific journal *Tissue Engineering Part A*.

The research team's new process is the first major step toward helping millions of individuals with dry mouth caused by Sjogren's syndrome, radiation treatments for head and neck cancer and by reactions to medications.

Because there are few salivary gland stem cells in the human mouth, the scientists plan to continue using rat salivary glands to refine the process. Eventually, they hope to use stem cells from human bone marrow or umbilical cord blood to regenerate salivary glands for humans.

"Our group pioneered the development of cell culture technology for harvesting large numbers of stem cells from human bone marrow and human umbilical cord blood," said Dr. Yeh. Stem cells from these two sources are abundant and can be guided into different types of cells using tissue engineering.

The research was partially supported by the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research and a Veterans Administration Merit Review Grant.

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