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Good Shepherd Health System announces plans for Internal Medicine Residency Program affiliated with UT Health Science Center

LONGVIEW – Good Shepherd Health System announced today the signing of a memorandum of understanding with The University of Texas Health Science Center to create a three-year internal medicine residency program, which will be located at Good Shepherd Medical Center in Longview.

Good Shepherd is enthusiastic about the new residency training program. “By combining the expertise and resources of our two outstanding institutions, we will be able to offer a depth of medical training that will be of tremendous benefit to the long-term health care needs of our region,” said Edward Banos, Good Shepherd Health System president and chief executive officer.

“As the only academic medical center in Northeast Texas, UT Health Science Center is an experienced leader in medical education, and we could not find a better partner to work with us to develop a first-rate internal medicine residency program at Good Shepherd.”

Kirk A. Calhoun, MD, UTHSC president, said one of his top priorities is to help Good Shepherd build an internal medicine residency program that is one of the most respected in Texas. “Good Shepherd has an excellent clinical infrastructure and environment that will be well suited to creating innovative learning experiences for new doctors,” said Calhoun.

“We know from our own experience with our Family Medicine and Occupational Medicine residency programs that many residents typically stay in or near the community where they complete their training.”

UTHSC’s Family Medicine Residency Program, which is celebrating its 25th year, has graduated 132 physicians, with about half of those staying in East Texas. The Occupational Medicine Residency Program has graduated 22 physicians since it began in 1994, with 60 percent of these graduates remaining in Texas.

The Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) recently re-accredited UTHSC’s family medicine and occupational medicine residency programs for

five years, the maximum period of accreditation. The ACGME is the national organization that oversees medical residency programs.

“Texas currently has a significant shortage of physicians, ranking 42 out of 50 states in number of physicians per capita,” explained Banos. “Even more alarming, it is projected that Texas will need an additional 40,000 doctors by 2025 to keep up with Texas’ growing population. Having an internal medicine residency program in Longview will allow us to train and retain some of the best and brightest physicians graduating from top medical schools across the country.”

As an ACGME-accredited institution, the UT Health Science Center will be the program sponsor, with oversight provided by a graduate medical education committee comprised of members from both facilities. UTHSC will be responsible for scheduling, curriculum, and rotation development under the supervision of residency program director David Coultas, MD, UTHSC’s vice president for clinical affairs.

Following the successful completion of four years of medical school, graduating physicians enter an internal medicine residency program lasting three years. Good Shepherd Medical Center will serve as the primary clinical training site for the new internal medicine residency training program and will work with its sister hospitals and other East Texas hospitals as participating facilities.

The residents will also have the opportunity to expand their knowledge of basic and clinical research through UT Health Science Center’s research program. This program will provide resident physicians the opportunity to complete their training in a variety of health care settings including inpatient, outpatient, and emergency care.

“Our goal is to work together to train physicians who are well-rounded, highly competent, and compassionate internal medicine doctors and are equipped to begin a general practice or to pursue a fellowship that may lead to an academic or subspecialty career,” Dr. Calhoun said.

The steps involved in the establishment of the new internal medicine residency program include recruitment of faculty, program and curriculum development, and conditional ACGME accreditation, with the goal of the first class beginning in July 2012.

This program will also have a positive economic impact to the Longview community. The salaried residents and their families could generate an estimated \$3 - \$5 million to the Longview community.

Good Shepherd Medical Center is the area's preferred hospital with a strong history and reputation for providing high quality, compassionate medical care. A full service, acute-care 425-bed regional referral center, Good Shepherd operates specialty nursing units including cardiology, orthopaedics, general surgery, neurology/neurosurgery, oncology, critical care, obstetrics and pediatrics, where patients receive specialized care. With more than 20,000 annual inpatient admissions, 88,000 annual Emergency Room visits and Family Health Centers located throughout the region to provide primary and urgent care services, Good Shepherd is able to offer physicians a range of health care settings with a variety of patients to treat.

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For 60 years, **The University of Texas Health Science Center** has provided excellent patient care and cutting-edge treatment, specializing in pulmonary disease, cancer, heart disease, primary care, and the disciplines that support them. UTHSC's annual operating budget of \$125 million represents a major economic impact of over \$287million to the Northeast Texas region. In FY 2009, scientists in the Center for Biomedical Research were awarded 80 competitive grants and contracts totaling \$14.6 million. As the academic medical center for Northeast Texas, its graduate medical education program – with residencies in family medicine and occupational medicine - provide doctors for many communities throughout the region and beyond. For more information, visit www.uthct.edu.