

The Planning Process

The 2017 strategic plan was developed by a group of over 90 individuals, consisting of faculty, residents, students, university leadership, clinical partners, and community representatives. Drawing upon the foundation of the 2015 strategic plan, this current process involved a series of in-person meetings of participants and ongoing review of draft materials throughout Fall 2017. Utilizing five strategic workgroups, the planning process developed specific goals, objectives, and metrics in five key areas: education, research, clinical enterprise, community engagement, and sustainability. Through an iterative, collaborative process, the workgroups and their leaders created this final plan, which will be submitted to the president and to the University of Texas System Board of Regents for final approval and adoption.

Mission

The mission of the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley School of Medicine (UTRGV SOM) is to educate a diverse group of medical students and future biomedical scientists; to develop physicians who will serve across all disciplines of medicine; to bring hope to patients and communities by advancing biomedical knowledge through research; to integrate education and research that advances the quality and accessibility of healthcare; and to engage with the Rio Grande Valley (RGV) communities to benefit Texas and the world.

Vision

To be a leader in the creation of a diverse and representative workforce, the stimulation of biomedical innovation, and the delivery of patient-centered healthcare for the Rio Grande Valley and beyond.

UTRGV SOM Goals

The UTRGV School of Medicine's curriculum is designed to instill students with scientific expertise in a rigorous program that prioritizes improving health at the individual and community levels.

- Provide forward-thinking medical education experience dedicated to scientific, evidence-based, patient-centered medicine in all settings, including underserved communities
- Leverage UTRGV's unique geographic location on the border of the United States and Mexico, a place rich with diverse cultural and family traditions, but also one burdened by health disparities
- Instill dedication to research, generation of new knowledge, and public service. Graduate culturally aware medical students who will be able to provide exemplary care to diverse populations and improve health outcomes in the Valley and beyond
- Increase underrepresented minorities in medicine.

Values

In all of its activities, the UTRGV SOM is guided by the following values:

Patient-Centeredness: Dedication to serving patients and their families through the practice of ethical, evidence-based, patient-centered medicine

Community Focus: Commitment to improving health outcomes and reducing health disparities of at-risk populations through community and population-based interventions

Cultural Awareness: Integration of knowledge, awareness and empathy to successfully work with the diverse and unique needs of any community

Collaborative Leadership Style: Practice through interprofessional healthcare teams, as well as promotion of interdisciplinary leadership in matters of community health

Lifelong Learning and Problem Solving: Application of critical thinking to approach all health matters, including clinical, community and social issues

Themes

In order to encompass the range of core activities that articulate the SOM's mission, the strategic planning process examined five themes critical for the School's success:

Theme 1 – Education: To educate a workforce of physicians and scientists for the Rio Grande Valley and the nation through high-quality professional and graduate degree programs in the biomedical sciences.

Theme 2 – Research: To create and translate biomedical knowledge through basic and applied research and scholarship in areas of focus for the Rio Grande Valley, the nation, and the world.

Theme 3 – Clinical Enterprise: To establish a sustainable clinical enterprise that focuses on interprofessional, team-based care for all residents of the Rio Grande Valley.

Theme 4 – Community Engagement: To improve the health and well-being of people in the Rio Grande Valley by engaging and partnering with community members, providers, organizations, and governments.

Theme 5 – Sustainability: To provide a robust mechanism for continued and sustained financing of the UTRGV School of Medicine, through educational and clinical revenue, research funding, and donor development.

Theme 1 – Education

To educate a workforce of physicians and scientists for the Rio Grande Valley and the nation through high-quality professional and graduate degree programs in the biomedical sciences.

Goal 1

Provide team-based interprofessional education (IPE) in patient-centered care that emphasizes patient experience and social justice

Objectives

- Enhance development and offering of interprofessional educational activities through the oversight of the joint SOM-COHA IPE Steering Committee
- Increase the number of IPE learning activities linked to curricular competencies across the 4-year UME program
- Expand the use of informational technologies to educate students in the retrieval and analysis of evidence-based medical knowledge
- Increase student education in skills of empathy and patient-centered healthcare
- Increase student literacy and communicative ability in medical Spanish

Outcome Measures

- Number of UME programs classified as IPE
- Number of collaborative IPE programs with health professions learners in the College of Health Affairs
- Proficiency scores on standardized assessments of evidence-based medicine
- Proficiency scores on standardized assessments of physician empathy
- Proficiency scores on standardized assessments of medical Spanish

Goal 2

Educate students with a strong foundation in population health

Objectives

- Increase collaborative opportunities between the SOM and the UTHouston School of Public Health
- Develop offerings across UTRGV in population health through the UT System’s Collaborative on Population Health Innovation and Improvement and the SOM Department of Population Health and Biostatistics
- Enhance practical experiences and coursework for medical students in population health

Outcome Measures

- Number of students participating in joint programming with the UTHouston School of Public Health
- Number of students participating in UTRGV-wide courses in population health
- Number of population health-based clinical experiences for medical students

Goal 3

Establish joint degree and certificate programs to foster innovation and broaden student experience in healthcare

Objectives

- Develop and implement joint MD/MBA and MD/MS programs with the UTRGV Vackar College of Business and Entrepreneurship
- Develop and implement joint MD/MPH degree and certificate programs and joint MD/MS in Biomedical Informatics degree and certificate programs with the UTHouston School of Public Health
- Develop and implement joint MD/PhD programs at UTRGV within the SOM and in collaboration with other UTRGV schools and colleges
- Develop and implement a certificate program in medical education for faculty within the SOM

Outcome Measures

- Number of joint degree and certificate programs developed
- Number of students entering and completing joint degree and certificate programs
- Number of faculty members entering and completing certificate program in medical education

Goal 4

Create an infrastructure for continuing medical education

Objectives

- Establish an Office for Continuing Medical Education (CME) in the SOM
- Expand the operations of the Office of CME to facilitate application to the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) for certification
- Increase CME offerings sponsored by the SOM, both internally and in the community

Outcome Measures

- Establishment of CME office
- Accreditation by ACCME
- Number of CME offerings

Goal 5

Establish the UTRGV School of Medicine Institute of Bioethics and Social Justice

Objectives

- Recruit faculty and leadership to develop the Institute
- Increase student understanding and application of principles of bioethics and social justice in medical decision making
- Enhance collaborative programming in bioethics and social justice for students, faculty, and community health providers
- Develop interdisciplinary programs through the SOM Institute of Bioethics and Social Justice
- Increase educational offerings across UTRGV in bioethics and social justice

Outcome Measures

- Number of programs within the SOM for students focusing on bioethics and social justice
- Number of community and CME programs offered in bioethics and social justice
- Number of courses and programs across UTRGV in bioethics and social justice

Theme 2 – Research

To create and translate biomedical knowledge through basic and applied research and scholarship in areas of focus for the Rio Grande Valley, the nation, and the world.

Goal 1

Support the projected growth of the UTRGV research enterprise

Objectives

- Increase the number of research scientists and staff through target hires in areas of focus
- Enhance the development, acquisition, and allocation of research space, equipment, and core facilities
- Expand services in research administration
- Create a Clinical Trials organizational unit in the School of Medicine
- Increase capabilities in advanced information technology applications

Outcome Measures

- Number of faculty and staff engaged in biomedical research
- Amount of research space under management and being utilized
- Expenditures on specific equipment and development of core facilities
- Number of publications, grant submissions, and funded applications

Goal 2

Facilitate synergies in the research enterprise that will further the SOM's focus on health and disease in the Hispanic population

Objectives

- Enhance research into relevant areas of concern for health and disease in the Hispanic population, including diabetes, obesity, neurodegenerative disorders, cancer, and infectious diseases
- Increase interdisciplinary research across UTRGV's colleges and institutes
- Expand disparities research in the social, environmental, and biological determinants of health through collaborations within UTRGV and with extramural partners
- Increase research funding for programs focusing on health and disease in the Hispanic population

Outcomes Measures

- Number of research projects and research grants in Hispanic health
- Receipt of funding from extramural agencies
- Number of extramural partnerships around biomedical research in health and disease in the Hispanic population

- Number of and funding for health disparities research
- Number of partnerships with Hispanic-serving agencies in the facilitation of biomedical research

Goal 3

Improve the health of the Rio Grande Valley through basic, clinical and translational research

Objectives

- Increase interdisciplinary research in basic science across UTRGV
- Facilitate an infrastructure that will support the growth of clinical and translational research
- Work in partnership with public and private agencies to expand clinical and translational research across the RGV
- Increase the commercialization of research discoveries

Outcome Measures

- Establishment of a Community-Based Participatory Research Center to facilitate clinical and translational research
- Number of patents and copyrights to facilitate technology transfer and commercialization
- Number of research projects in basic, translational, and clinical research
- Generation of revenue through research activities

Goal 4

Create a learning environment to facilitate formal education in research for medical students, graduate students and residents

Objectives

- Increase experiential learning opportunities
- Expand the number of courses in research design and methodology
- Enhance programming for students at both the graduate and undergraduate levels
- Support a campus environment at UTRGV that recognizes faculty and student research and scholarly activity

Outcome Measures

- Number of degree programs for graduate students in biomedical research
- Number of medical students, residents, and faculty participating in research
- Number of minority scholars participating in research activities
- Number of programs for all learners across the university in research design and methodology

Theme 3 – Clinical Enterprise

To establish a sustainable clinical enterprise that focuses on interprofessional, team-based care for all residents of the Rio Grande Valley.

Goal 1

Engage stakeholders across the RGV to identify and prioritize clinical initiatives for UTHealth Rio Grande Valley

Objectives

- Enhance clinical partnerships throughout the RGV to provide necessary clinical services for diverse populations
- Expand the number and breadth of autonomous UTHealth Rio Grande Valley clinical sites and workforce
- Increase the use of existing databases to assess needs and develop appropriate clinical programs and initiatives

Outcome Measures

- Number of UTHealth Rio Grande Valley physicians and clinical associates practicing throughout the RGV
- Number of institutional and community partnerships established to provide needed clinical services
- Number of conversations with clinical stakeholders around areas of need

Goal 2

Leverage the use of data-driven decision making through clinical management and revenue cycle information systems

Objectives

- Utilize data systems for clinical enterprise management, revenue cycle management, and use and sharing of health information
- Enhance the collection of revenue for clinical activities
- Development and expansion of a marketing strategy for UTHealth Rio Grande Valley
- Explore opportunities for development of a population management system with UTHealth Rio Grande Valley's clinical affiliates

Outcome Measures

- Number of visits to UTHealth Rio Grande Valley providers
- Collection rates across the practice
- Net collections across the practice
- Percentage of users on UTHealth Rio Grande Valley electronic health record
- Results of consumer surveys

Goal 3

Promote clinical activities that utilize cutting-edge technologies and direct outreach to facilitate access to clinical services across the RGV

Objectives

- Increase ability to provide clinical services to unserved communities throughout the RGV through on-site care and use of telehealth technologies
- Increase the sharing of clinical information through promotion of a health information exchange (HIE) in the RGV
- Enhance interfaces of any UTHealth Rio Grande Valley electronic health record with those of its clinical and institutional partners
- Enhance comprehensive strategies for the use of technology and advanced practice providers in the community

Outcome Measures

- Number of individuals served outside of UTHealth Rio Grande Valley's clinic system
- Number of telehealth encounters
- Number of interfaces built between UTHealth Rio Grande Valley's EHR and those of its clinical partners

Goal 4

Develop and maintain a clinical workforce that will fulfill the needs of the RGV

Objectives

- Expand number and specialty areas of GME programs
- Enhance recruitment and retention of faculty and staff
- Increase initiatives to retain residents completing one of UTRGV's graduate medical education programs
- Increase extramural funding to facilitate recruitment and retention of faculty and staff
- Expand range of recruitment activities in Texas and beyond
- Expand targeted recruitment of both primary care physicians and specialists

Outcome Measures

- Number of physicians recruited to UTRGV
- Number of physicians retained for greater than 3 years
- Number of physicians interviewed for clinical positions in UTHealth Rio Grande Valley
- Number of applications received for faculty positions

Goal 5

Ensure that all clinical endeavors have a sustainable revenue plan

Objectives

- Increase clinical revenue across UTHealth Rio Grande Valley's physicians and practices
- Expand grant funding to promote clinical activities for all residents of the RGV
- Increase private donor philanthropy for the clinical missions of UTRGV

Outcome Measures

- Net clinical revenue across physicians and practices
- Donor funds dedicated to SOM clinical activities

Theme 4 – Community Engagement

To improve the health and well-being of people in the Rio Grande Valley by engaging and partnering with community members, providers, organizations, and governments.

Goal 1

Improve the mental and physical health and quality of life for the RGV's diverse and growing population

Objectives

- Increase health promotion and education activities to facilitate illness prevention and to enhance physical and mental health
- Maintain active participation with city, county, and state governments to coordinate activities in health promotion and education
- Increase partnering activities with private and public healthcare institutions

Outcome Measures

- Number of medical students, residents, and faculty that are involved in health promotion and education activities
- Number of health promotion and education activities sponsored by the School of Medicine across the RGV

Goal 2

Engage with external partners and stakeholders to promote and sustain the missions of the School of Medicine

Objectives

- Increase communication with the RGV community that highlights the work of SOM faculty, students and staff in health promotion and education
- Strengthen ties with the RGV business community through dialogue and information
- Enhance development of relationships with the RGV community to facilitate support of programs and initiatives

Outcome Measures

- Number of postings on SOM and UTRGV websites concerning the involvement of SOM students, residents, and faculty in community health promotion and education activities
- Number of reports in the public media about students, residents, and faculty participating in health promotion and education activities

Goal 3

Work with school districts and charter schools to enhance programs that will facilitate secondary students' entry into health professions education, including medicine

Objectives

- Increase the number of middle school and high school programs focusing on health professions awareness and preparation
- Enhance funding opportunities for secondary students to enter health professions education
- Increase exposure of secondary school students to clinical medicine through experiences in simulation labs and with anatomic specimens
- Enhance the SOM's participation in HESTEC to highlight health professions education

Outcome Measures

- Number of health professions outreach programs established with secondary schools
- Number of medical students, residents, and faculty that are involved in outreach activities
- Number of students involved in outreach educational programming
- Number of SOM programs offered to advance health professions education through existing UTRGV programs, such as HESTEC

Theme 5 – Sustainability

To provide a robust mechanism for continued and sustained financing of the UTRGV School of Medicine, through educational and clinical revenue, research funding, and donor development.

Goal 1

Engage patients, community, faculty, and students to facilitate the SOM's investment in clinical growth, research focus, and education.

Objectives

- Enhance the SOM's visibility through the deployment of branding and marketing strategies
- Develop a communication strategy for the SOM to share our strengths and successes both internally and externally
- Increase business investment and philanthropy to enhance delivery of uncompensated or poorly compensated care
- Expand our collaborative partnerships with hospitals, public agencies, and industry
- Improve patient experience at all UTHealth Rio Grande Valley clinical sites
- Increase research and grant revenues to the SOM
- Increase the clinical footprint of UTHealth Rio Grande Valley across the entire RGV

Outcome Measures

- Awareness of the UTRGV School of Medicine and the UTHealth Rio Grande Valley brands in consumer surveys
- Number of UTHealth Rio Grande Valley clinical sites and associated operational metrics
- Net revenue collected from business investment and philanthropy directed to clinical enterprise
- Patient experience scores after UTHealth Rio Grande Valley clinical encounters
- Number of clinical partnerships created with external stakeholders

Goal 2

Establish processes, structures, and procedures that encourage efficiency, mitigate against financial risk, and allow for sound investment decisions

Objectives

- Increase the efficiency and transparency of the faculty onboarding process
- Enhance the current budgeting process with SOM departments and institutes
- Implement a faculty compensation and incentive plan based on productivity and quality
- Increase sustainable funding to central mechanisms in the SOM that will oversee operations
- Enhance operational efficiency across the SOM through mechanisms such as LEAN-six sigma methodologies

- Increase the ratio of clinical revenue to other sources of income for the SOM

Outcome Measures

- Ratio of clinical revenue to other funding for the SOM
- Number of budget deadlines met in line with revised budget calendar
- Implementation of faculty compensation and incentive plan
- Number of faculty credentialed by start date

Goal 3

Implement data and reporting systems that provide decision-makers and users with complete and transparent information about operations

Objectives

- Increase clinical productivity across sites
- Enhance clinical documentation through implementation of an electronic health record across UTHealth Rio Grande Valley clinical sites
- Increase financial and productivity reports available for use by clinical leaders and departments
- Increase the use of business intelligence and data integration through enterprise data management systems
- Increase faculty communication and data-sharing through establishment of web materials and portals
- Enhance the budget process through use of software resources

Outcome Measures

- Number and proportion of sites and clinicians using the UTHealth Rio Grande Valley EHR
- Proportion of financial and productivity reports shared with faculty
- Establishment of portal resources for faculty communication

Approvals:

December 14, 2017 by Dr. John Krouse, Dean, School of Medicine

December 14, 2017 by Dr. Guy Bailey, President, UTRGV

July 30, 2018 by UT System