

UT Southwestern Medical Center

UT Southwestern Capital Project Initiatives

April 15, 2019

To the UT Southwestern Campus Community:

With a major new construction project soon to be launched on the North Campus, I am writing to let you know about this important initiative and to also provide an overview of several other major facility projects currently underway. Thanks to the work of everyone on campus – and to our disciplined use of our resources – UT Southwestern is thriving, and we are very fortunate to be able to undertake these capital projects to support and advance our strategic priorities in pursuing UT Southwestern’s mission.

The new North Campus project will comprise a building with two nine-story towers. One tower will be home to outpatient clinical services of our Harold C. Simmons Comprehensive Cancer Center. This tower will allow our outstanding cancer care teams to accommodate the increasing number of patients who are turning to us and provide an environment that will ensure an optimal experience for patients and their families. The other tower in this new building will house laboratories and related support space for growth of the research programs of the Peter O’Donnell Jr. Brain Institute. UT Southwestern has long-standing strengths in neuroscience research, and we are now seeking to build on that background to become a national leader in basic discoveries about the brain – and in the translation of those discoveries into innovative approaches to the diagnosis, treatment, cure, and prevention of brain diseases.

Site preparation for this new building will begin next month. It will be a three-year construction project, and the first patient day for the Simmons Cancer Center is projected to be September 30, 2022.

As we begin construction of the new North Campus building, we are completing the final elements of West Campus Building 3, which opened at the end of last summer. The building includes both clinical and academic space. Being able to move several departments from the Aston Ambulatory Care Center to this new building allowed us to decompress both space in Aston and the traffic congestion that had developed as patient volume increased in recent years.

A highlight of the academic space in West Campus Building 3 is the state-of-the-art Simulation Center. One of the largest in the country, it is already becoming an integral part of the education and training for medical students, residents, and fellows, and it is also used by faculty and community physicians, nurses, and other clinicians. A “Forest of Lights” sculpture installation, made possible through the generosity of community friends, will be added to the fourth-floor garden area of WCB3 at the end of August, and we expect it will serve as a new campus landmark.

Everyone on campus no doubt has been able to see progress on the expansion of our William P. Clements Jr. University Hospital. The new patient tower at the north end of the hospital will serve as the

clinical home for neuroscience programs that are part of the O'Donnell Brain Institute. The tower will be used to relocate inpatient services currently being provided at Zale Lipshy University Hospital and increase total inpatient capacity on the campus. The Emergency Department is also being expanded; new operating rooms, imaging, and labs are being added; and two new garages are being built. The Emergency Department expansion will be completed in December 2019, and the new tower will be ready for use in September 2020.

On the South Campus, we have begun a project to provide critically needed support for our research activities – a new, state-of-the-art Vivarium, located behind the Aston Building. Construction began this month and will continue through the summer of 2020. Current projections are for the building to be ready for use in October 2020.

In addition to these significant initiatives on our main campus, another important project is heading toward completion by the end of the calendar year – UT Southwestern Medical Center at Frisco, in conjunction with a new hospital that is being built jointly with our partners at Texas Health Resources. Both facilities will open this fall, extending UT Southwestern's footprint as a provider of clinical care into a rapidly growing area of North Texas. The Frisco initiative complements our current off-campus regional medical centers in Richardson/Plano, Park Cities, Las Colinas, and Fort Worth.

And finally, we will be asking the Board of Regents next month for approval to proceed with a new Radiation Oncology Building, adjacent to the existing facility on East Campus. Although the latter opened just two years ago, as with Clements University Hospital, growth in patient volumes has greatly exceeded our projections, and this expansion project will allow us to better serve the needs of patients and families who come to UT Southwestern for care from North Texas and beyond.

I hope you all share my excitement and pride in the growth and development of UT Southwestern, but I recognize that to make these construction projects possible, most require unavoidable – and at times very substantial – inconvenience to those who work on the campus, including students and trainees, as well as those who come to UTSW as patients and visitors. Many of our colleagues working at Clements University Hospital and others have certainly already felt those challenges, and inevitably, the same will be true for many working on the North Campus as we begin our large new project there. Details on changes in parking necessitated by the start of the North Campus project will be shared shortly. I want to assure you that in all instances we endeavor to minimize that inconvenience as much as possible.

I ask you for your patience and thank you for your forbearance. I have great confidence in the resilience of the UTSW community. Your readiness to adapt to these challenges enables UTSW to be positioned to thrive in the years ahead, and I hope that knowing this offsets the pain of the near-term inconveniences. I thank each of you for your commitment to UT Southwestern and for everything you do to contribute to our success in advancing our institutional mission.

Daniel K. Podolsky, M.D.
President, UT Southwestern Medical Center