

Primary Care Pathway, an expedited pathway for primary care education Memorandum of Understanding

As the second most populous state in the nation, Texas adds on average over 1,000 additional residents each day¹. This growth will continue to strain the limited supply of health care providers currently practicing in the state. Even though the number of graduates from health-related degree programs continues to climb, it is unlikely this will offset the growing demand for their services in the near future. This will be particularly true in the primary care specialty areas and will be especially impactful in rural Texas counties.

Midland and surrounding counties are prime examples of communities where the supply of primary care physicians has not kept up with increases in population. According to data from the 2010 Census, Midland County has had a 10.7% increase in population from 2010 to 2013, compared to only 5.4% in Texas as a whole. Twenty percent of the county's population lives in a rural area, which adds to the complexity of the region's health care workforce needs.

In order to bridge this gap, novel approaches are needed to develop new physicians who have a propensity to return to their rural communities. By taking local students and preparing them for medical school early in their higher education path, students will be more likely to return to serve as physicians in their own communities, thus improving the health of Texans.

The goal of the proposed partnership delineated below is to identify students from the region who have an interest in becoming primary care physicians and to guide them through an expedited educational pipeline requiring them to spend a minimal amount of time away from their community. The intent is for these students to return to complete their clinical education in Midland and the surrounding communities, with the eventual outcome of the candidates' pursuing primary care residencies in the Midland area.

The primary objectives of this agreement are to establish the criteria for participation in an expedited pathway for medical education which from this point forward will be referred to as the Primary Care Pathway or PCP, and to codify the responsibilities of the partner institutions in the execution and maintenance of the PCP program. The PCP program is composed of the following components:

- An enhanced 3 year premedical curriculum
- Healthcare enrichment activities that include mentoring and physician shadowing
- A summer enrichment experience

Participants successfully completing the program will gain automatic admission into the Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine at the University of North Texas Health Science Center.

Project partners are Midland College (MC), Midland Memorial Hospital (MMH), the University of North Texas in Denton (UNT), and the University of North Texas Health Science Center in Fort Worth (UNTHSC).

The target population for participation in the PCP program will be community college students from rural areas, specifically Midland County, with a preference given to candidates who have attended high school in the area. Historically, Midland County has a population made up of 56% Hispanic residents and suffers from both a 25% poverty rate and a record of low educational attainment similar to many other rural areas in Texas.

To that end, MC, MMH, UNT and UNTHSC agree that this special offering program, hereafter referred to as the UNT@MC PCP, shall include the following requirements, restrictions and conditions.

Responsibilities for each institutional partner in this agreement:

Each institution represented in this agreement agrees to make a good faith effort for success and administer the following programmatic functions (including administrative funding required for those functions) as outlined below:

Midland College agrees to lead the initial recruitment effort to attract qualified students into this program. In addition, the College agrees to make class schedules available so that program participants are able to complete the sequence of courses as outlined in Appendix A of this agreement. Midland College also agrees to serve as a host site for activities during the first two years of the program including facilities for one-on-one advisement, workshops and other administrative activities related to this agreement. Upon program participant consent, Midland College agrees to supply the University of North Texas Health Science Center-Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine official transcripts to monitor academic progress.

Midland Memorial Hospital agrees to administer a clinically-oriented summer experience for program participants. This experience should provide program participants an understanding of the nature of medical practice. Concepts including professionalism, teamwork, ethics and basic clinical medicine should be addressed in this program.

University of North Texas agrees to admit as transfer students (based on eligibility to transfer as prescribed in the University Catalog) program participants who have successfully completed the first two years of study at Midland College as well as satisfactory completion of both summer program experiences. The University also agrees to make class schedules available so that program participants are able to complete the sequence of courses as outlined in Appendix A of this agreement. Upon program participant consent, the University of North Texas agrees to supply the University of North Texas Health Science Center-Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine official transcripts to monitor academic progress.

University of North Texas Health Science Center-Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine agrees to give eligible program participants consideration for admission to UNT@MC PCP after the first year of study at Midland College. The Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine also agrees to administer the second year summer residential medical sciences experience. This experience will be held at the University of North Texas Health Science Center in Fort Worth. Upon successful completion of all program requirements as outlined in their admissions agreement, participants will be allowed to matriculate into the Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine. The Office of Admissions and Outreach will serve as the primary administrative unit for this program.

Admission and Eligibility Requirements for Program Participants:

Any Midland College student who is interested in participating in the PCP may do so by enrolling in the requisite courses as prescribed in the curriculum outline. (see appendix A)

Eligibility for admission to UNT@MC PCP:

By the end of the first two semesters of the curriculum, participants will be required to submit an application for admission to UNT@MC PCP. Selected applicants who have met the eligibility requirements will be invited to the UNT Health Science Center campus for an interview. Each applicant will be evaluated by the TCOM Admissions committee to determine suitability for continuation in the program. The committee will evaluate applicants on both the cognitive and non-cognitive domains that are listed in the TCOM medical school catalog⁽²⁾.

Students will not be required to submit a Medical College Admission Test (MCAT) score. However, a competitive score on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) or American College Testing (ACT) score will be required beginning with Fall 2016 initial enrollment at Midland College.

All acceptances are provisional and will require program participants to adhere to the requirements as outlined in their acceptance agreement.

Eligibility for continuation in the program

Once accepted, participants must continue to meet program requirements and be in good academic and conduct standing⁽³⁾ at each of the partner institutions as outlined by their respective policies. In addition, participants must meet the following conditions and agree to have their performance periodically assessed as deemed necessary.

- Students must complete course work in the order and in the time frame prescribed by the curriculum (see appendix A).

- Students must maintain no less than a 3.50 unduplicated GPA and a minimum grade of "B" in each of their science and math courses taken at each of the partner institutions prior to matriculation to the medical school.
- Students must submit an application and meet the eligibility requirements for transfer admission to the University of North Texas.
- Students must take a minimum of 15 semester credit hours each Fall and Spring term they are actively enrolled in the PCP undergraduate curriculum.
- Students must consent to the release of official academic transcripts to the Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine upon request to demonstrate they continue to meet academic eligibility requirements.
- Students must complete a healthcare enrichment activity that includes mentoring, physician shadowing, and attend a summer residential enrichment program hosted at the University of North Texas Health Science Center. Students will be evaluated during each of these activities and can be dismissed from the program for failure to successfully complete each requirement.
- Students must be able to meet the Health and Technical Standards for the Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine.⁽⁴⁾

Other considerations for this agreement:

This agreement will commence effective in the fall semester of 2015 with a commitment of five (5) years. This agreement will be reviewed on an annual basis and may be amended by mutual written consent of all parties by issuing an addendum to this agreement

The parties agree that they will negotiate in good faith to fully develop the policies, agreements, protocols, and standards necessary to fully define and facilitate the program.

1. <https://www.dshs.state.tx.us/chs/HealthStatusTexas2014.pdf>
2. <http://catalog.unthsc.edu/content.php?catoid=2&navoid=128>
3. http://catalog.unthsc.edu/content.php?catoid=2&navoid=164#Student_Conduct
4. <http://catalog.unthsc.edu/content.php?catoid=2&navoid=133>

This memorandum of understanding is the complete agreement between the agencies represented below as it relates to the implementation of the Primary Care Pathway Program and may be amended only by written agreement signed by each of the parties involved.

University of North Texas Health Science Center

Thomas Yorio, PhD
Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

Don Peska, DO, MEd
Dean, Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine

Date

Date

University of North Texas



O. Finley Graves, PhD
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs



David Holdeman, PhD
~~Interim~~ Dean, College of Arts and Sciences

8-20-15
Date

8/21/15
Date

Midland College



Steve Thomas, PhD
President



Margaret Wade, EdD
Dean of Math, Science and Kinesiology

8/28/15
Date

8-28-15
Date

Midland Memorial Hospital



Russell Meyers, FACHE
President\CEO



Robert L. Dent, DNP, MBA, RN, NEA-BC, CENP,
FACHE
Senior Vice President\Chief Operating Officer

9/10/15
Date

9/10/15
Date