

**CONFERENCES & MEETINGS**

Grand Rounds
Thursday, October 25, 2007, 12:00 Noon - 1:00 p.m.
Clinic Auditorium

Timothy S. Harlan, MD
"Dr. Gourmet"

The Mediterranean Diet = The American Diet

FYI

- The Carolina Women's Center Faculty Scholars Program is accepting applications for its Spring 2008, Fall 2008, and Spring 2009 Faculty Scholar. All full-time faculty with three or more years of service may apply. The mission of the CWC is to empower women to promote their equality in all spheres of life and to celebrate the work of women that betters mankind. Applications are available at the CWC [website](#), and are due today, Wed. Oct. 24. Questions, contact Dr. Donna M. Bickford, Director, CWC, at 3-5620, or dbickford@unc.edu.
- The Dean's Office presents a special seminar by the candidate for Director, Center for Women's Health Research, Abbey Berenson, MD, of The University of Texas Medical Branch. Her lecture will be entitled, "Developing a Center of Women's Health Research," and will occur on Mon., Oct. 29, 4:00 p.m. in Old Clinic Auditorium. Refreshments will be served.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- A memorial celebration will be held for George Johnson, Jr., MD on Thurs., Oct. 25, 3:00-5:00 p.m., 1st Floor Bioinformatics Auditorium, 130 Mason Farm Rd. A reception will follow. Questions, contact UNC Dept. of Surgery, 6-4321.

FROM THE CHAIR'S OFFICE

Last week, Dr. Roper began a discussion on the investments into cancer that have been made for UNC by the state of North Carolina. This week I would like to follow-up with some additional

commentary.

As you have all surely heard, the North Carolina General Assembly created the state's first University Cancer Research Fund with the passage of the new state budget. The stated purpose of the fund is to accelerate the battle against cancer at the UNC School of Medicine and the UNC Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center, and will receive \$25 million in 2007-2008. This amount is expected to increase to \$50 million per year beginning in 2009.

Twenty-five million dollars is an incredible amount of money. With this new funding, the School and the LCCC are poised to become international leaders in cancer research. UNC will be able to further improve the quality of life and treatment of cancer patients statewide and will enjoy enhanced access to science and technology. UNC Lineberger will be even better equipped to disseminate knowledge among cancer researchers. We will see real improvements in prevention, early detection, and therapies.

But cancer research and treatment isn't all that we do here at the School of Medicine and within the Department. Although many of us work in areas that relate to cancer, we have a number of outstanding School of Medicine wide (and campus wide) programs that stand (entirely) apart from cancer issues and the LCCC. These include the Diabetes Center, the Cystic Fibrosis Center, the Thurston Arthritis Research Center, the Cardiovascular Biology Center, the Kidney Center, the Center for Functional GI and Motility, the Glomerular Disease Collaborative Network, the Center for Aging and Health – truly, all ten centers within the Department of Medicine enjoy excellent reputations within their area of focus, and the physicians and researchers associated with them are among the best in their fields of expertise.

The question I was asked, and began discussing last week "what does this mean for me?" is one I've been asked many times in different forms. The principle questions have to do with resources and I will address these here.

Question 1: Will the funding and emphasis on cancer programs mean a de-emphasis in other areas of interest and expertise here at UNC?

Answer: No.

Cancer, while devastating, is not the only disease that threatens the lives and health of North Carolinians and others. We must ensure that our other strong programs not only enjoy continued support but are given every available opportunity to grow and improve upon their solid foundations. A number of you have brought up valid concerns about the possibility that this recent cancer funding will be used only for direct research costs, resulting in a substantial strain on the School as it works to cover resultant overhead costs, provide space and salary support, etc. Some are concerned that this would result in resources being re-directed from other programs. Drs. Roper, Pisano, Earp, and I are all working towards finding the right balance – that is to leverage the University Cancer Research Fund and other resources in ways that will actually facilitate growth and expansion in other areas. There are many ways one might imagine this being the case – in terms of collaborative efforts, in terms of technologic advances, in terms of setting the tone for the level of clinical care that we all hold as our ideal.

Question 2: Will the space needs for cancer mean that research, clinical and teaching space assigned to other disciplines will be re-examined and changed, or that there will not be space sufficient to grow other programs of importance?

Answer: No.

As is often the case in academic medical centers, space is a precious resource at UNC. Long before the University Cancer Research Fund came into existence, Drs. Roper, Pisano and others recognized

the need for continued growth in space across disciplines. Indeed, the Genetics Medicine Building is near completion and other new buildings and plans for renovation are being actively considered. Jeffrey Houpt should be credited for starting this process with a bang during his tenure as Dean. During his years as Dean, 1.1 million square feet of space was designed, built or renovated in the School of Medicine including Neurosciences Research Building, MBRB, the Burnett-Womack renovation, the Bondurant Hall renovation, the Bioinformatics Building, and the Genetic Medicine Building. For several years, under Dr. Roper's leadership, our space needs have continued to be addressed and plans made for the future. This planning process does sometimes necessitate analysis of existing space utilization. Recently, in the process of doing this analysis, some of our faculty became concerned that they might be asked to consolidate space to allow recruitment of new investigators related to the University Cancer Research Fund. That is not the case, but it is true that we need to be very proactive today to meet tomorrow's needs.

As is evident, this is a complicated process and I encourage you to become involved. The University Cancer Research Fund is truly a laudable legislative expenditure, and I'm sure we can all agree that it will result in real benefits for the School and for the people of North Carolina. Yes, there will be challenges, but you have my word and that of Drs. Roper, Pisano and Earp that as we plan for the future, the excellence that has been built, and can be built, in areas besides cancer will continue also to be a hallmark of our great institution so that we can continue to advance knowledge and improve lives across the full spectrum of human illness.

Questions or submissions, contact sarah_perry@med.unc.edu.