



2021-2024 STRATEGIC PLAN

Leading the Way

UNC Department
of Orthopaedics



THE UNIVERSITY
of NORTH CAROLINA
at CHAPEL HILL

Letter from the Chair

Becoming the **nation's leading public musculoskeletal program** is a high order. In developing this vision along with our mission and each of its critical components, our faculty, residents, and staff delved deeply into our current state and thoughtfully developed this strategic plan. This plan clearly focuses on critical internal goals and behaviors centering on clinical care and operations, our people, education, and research rather than specific external tactics. Our department uniformly commits ourselves to this plan, recognizing it as our best way forward.

As a department, we purposefully focused on a musculoskeletal rather than strictly orthopaedic surgery plan. UNC has many areas of excellent musculoskeletal care such as our non-operative physicians and other outstanding clinical and research programs including the Thurston Arthritis Research Center, Exercise and Sports Science, Bioengineering, and Public Health, and many others. Interacting and collaborating with these other disciplines makes our program uniquely positioned to succeed in the future. Each of these colleagues are necessary for excellent musculoskeletal care, and UNC is well recognized for our strong and collaborative culture.

This strategic plan expresses our desire for excellence. This is not the vision of one person or just a few leaders but of the whole department including our faculty, residents, and staff who are clearly dedicated to fulfilling this vision and plan through diligence and accountability. It was a great privilege to develop this strategic plan with this great group of people, and I am very excited to move ahead together.

James O. Sanders, MD

Frank C. Wilson Distinguished Professor
Chair, Department of Orthopaedics
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill



Vision

Our vision is to become the nation's best public musculoskeletal care program.

Mission

We will achieve this vision by providing the highest quality clinical care, developing innovative and effective education and research programs, and having a firm commitment to our people.

Our Strategic Framework and Values

Clinical Care and Operations



- We are committed to outstanding and equitable care for every patient
- We work hard to make it easy for our patients and all who help care for them
- We are responsible stewards of healthcare resources

Our People



- We treat each other with respect
- We embody high-functioning, patient-focused teams where all individuals flourish
- We embrace diversity, equity, and inclusion

Teaching



- We educate using the best methods and materials for each individual
- We inspire lifelong learning and teaching
- We model the highest professional standards as we mentor future generations

Research



- We foster curiosity, innovation, and continual improvement
- We conduct high-quality research that improves lives
- We will create an exceptional research infrastructure to drive significant advances



Clinical Care and Operations

Our team works together to provide efficient, high-quality, patient-centered care

At UNC Orthopaedics, our department prides itself on clinical excellence. Medicine is changing in important ways, and we need to be at the forefront of this change. As care transitions from an unsustainable fee-for-service model to value-based care, patient outcomes and costs become paramount.

To succeed in this new environment, we have to consistently measure and improve our patients' outcomes and assure that costs are well-directed to patient improvement. The best patient care does not happen by single expert clinicians working in isolation. To that end, we need to transform our care to collaborative teams which can identify, address, and consistently meet patient needs. Our responsibility is to our patients across a diverse spectrum of backgrounds and needs, and we must be resourceful, insightful, and competent in caring for each of them. Patients and their families often find navigation of healthcare challenging, and we will do everything in our power to make it easy for patients to receive state-of-the-art care by continually improving our clinical operations.

Our Goals

- Make the experience of being a patient easy by always putting the patient first
- Provide outstanding and equitable evidence-based care for every patient
- Demonstrate responsible stewardship of resources to deliver high value and affordability to our patients
- Lead the transition to value-based care within orthopaedics





Our People

To fulfill our missions of patient care, research, and education, the Department of Orthopaedics strives to create a culture that empowers its people and helps each person reach their potential as a great caregiver. Whether in the operating room, a clinic, or a teaching conference, effective collaboration is the key to excellence.

Our people are the foundation of everything we do and want to achieve. A healthy work environment emphasizes the well-being and success of each individual. Fostering greater health and wellness in our people will help us provide the same for those we care for and teach. We must create an environment that recognizes the strengths of each person in order to develop excellent teams. Diversity is essential to creating successful teams, and we view equity and inclusion as central to our mission of caring for our very diverse patients.



We hold ourselves accountable to treat each other with decency and respect, empowering one another to be our very best



Our Goals

- Create highly functional, patient-focused teams
- Develop mentoring and professional development programs that support all faculty and staff
- Create a culture of mutual respect and support to foster the wellness of patients, staff, and providers



Teaching

Our Department has a long, distinguished history of orthopaedic education, spanning undergraduate and graduate medical education. We were one of the first in the United States to develop a comprehensive musculoskeletal course for medical students, which to this day remains a key component of the UNC School of Medicine's foundational curriculum. Similarly, the Department has a great legacy of resident education focused on mentorship and development of the individual learner. The program is committed to preparing residents to make significant contributions to patients, communities, and the profession, and our alumni remain actively engaged in advancing orthopaedic care across the nation.

The science of education has advanced, and we are enthusiastic about our educational program's direction. We must embrace new approaches and techniques and seek collaboration with other leaders in the field. In addition to our close relationship with the University, we are developing partnerships with experts across the country to enhance our program and continue meeting the needs of our residents, students, and faculty, both today and in the future.



We inspire lifelong teaching and learning



Our Goals

- Emphasize core principles and values that lead to the best care for every patient
- Focus on the latest developments in medical education, including a new faculty mentoring program and training for residents as teachers
- Grow the skills lab and simulation program
- Connect our educational activities with the department's other core missions: clinical care, our people, and research



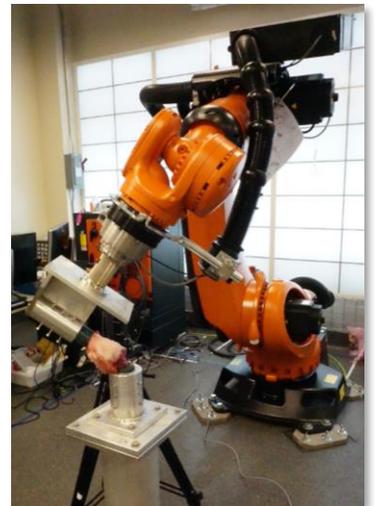
Research

We conduct high quality, impactful research that respects the dignity of patients, empowers research team members, and fosters innovation in musculoskeletal research



Our goal is to be a national leader in research on the prevention and treatment of musculoskeletal disorders. We are dedicated to combining clinical care with basic science and patient focused research to improve patients' outcomes.

Musculoskeletal research is a core part of our mission that strengthens both our academic and clinical mission. Our Department pursues research in areas as diverse as injury prevention and tissue engineering. Continuous innovation in all areas of orthopaedic care is driven by the intellectual curiosity of our faculty who present their research at national and international meetings to share their discoveries with their peers. As we look to the future, we aim to collaborate with research partners across the University campus and the Triangle region.



Our Goals

- Create a research infrastructure that enables faculty to take research ideas from concept to reality by assisting in development, securing funding, and project execution
- Support and develop the next generation of orthopaedic surgeons by making research an integral part of the resident experience
- Improve a culture within the Department that encourages research output through mentoring and career incentives
- Promote collaboration within the Department, across the University, and around the world



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