

Minutes

UW Medical School Medical Education and Research Committee 5:00 PM September 22, 2004 – Room 4201 Health Sciences Learning Center

Members Present: Lynn Allen-Hoffmann, Sanjay Asthana, Paul DeLuca, Maureen Durkin, John Frey, Susan Goelzer, Jeff Grossman, Debra Hullett, Rick Moss, Javier Nieto, Greg Nycz, Gordon Ridley, Susan Skochelak, Doug Smith, Jeff Stearns

Members Absent: Dave DeMets, Norm Drinkwater, Jeff Glassroth, Layton Ridders, Joan Schiller

Guests: Philip Farrell, Patrick Boyle, Ken Mount, George Wilding, Kevin Wymore

Staff: Tracy Cabot, Tonya Paulson, Eileen Smith

The Committee was called to order by Vice Dean DeLuca at 5:10 p.m. DeLuca reminded the group that the next scheduled meeting is on October 20, and presented an overview of the current meeting's agenda.

1. The draft minutes from the August MERC meeting were presented. Greg Nycz moved that the minutes be approved, the motion was seconded and minutes were approved unanimously.

2a. Eileen Smith reported that the Oversight and Advisory Committee (OAC) has awarded 20 planning grants to community organizations throughout Wisconsin. 94 applications were received. A total of \$500,000 was awarded with most organizations receiving \$25,000. The OAC is preparing to receive the next round of applications for the collaboration implementation grants, which are due October 1. Awards will be made in late December.

As a result of this round of applications, 20 organizations are beginning to develop partnerships with Medical School faculty around the state. Many of the organizations who were unsuccessful will be revising their applications and reapplying next year. Smith told the MERC that she has hired an outreach specialist, Cathy Frey, who will be providing support to the organizations funded and as well as to those organizations seeking funding in future years.

Dean Farrell and Regent Boyle presented the OAC's results to the Board of Regents, who were pleased with the geographic diversity of the recipients of the awards. Farrell stated that it was a wise decision to make the first RFP a call for planning grants, as this gave the OAC the opportunity to gain experience with the review. The OAC was able to quickly identify the top group of applications and also the bottom group, with a large group in the middle ground.

Sanjay Asthana asked if the applicants were provided written critiques of their proposals, and Smith answered no. However, the reviewers' written comments were provided upon request. Jeff Grossman asked if the applicants had received their rank ordering, and again Smith said no. Grossman wondered if there were a significant number of organizations that didn't meet the

application criteria? Smith said no; the Wisconsin Partnership staff did a technical review to be sure the applications fulfilled the requirements before sending to reviewers. Lynn Allen-Hoffmann asked if successful awardees would be willing to have their applications used as examples for future applicants. Farrell indicated that this would be more useful for the implementation grants. George Wilding asked if it would be possible to get a list of unfunded applications that deal with cancer, in order to offer assistance to those organizations. Farrell stated that this could raise confidentiality and intellectual property issues. Nycz suggested that the staff could provide those organizations with the Cancer Center contact information.

2b. Smith reported that she and Dean Farrell have contacted the Medical College of Wisconsin to arrange a meeting with Dean Dunn and other MCW representatives on potential areas of collaboration. DeLuca noted that we will be looking for overlapping interests.

3. In response to a request from the MERC, DeLuca showed a document listing the considerations and actions during first 3 MERC meetings. He also showed a funding summary, breaking down MERC approved expenses and remaining available balances.

4. DeLuca discussed the need to make progress on initiatives between the monthly MERC meetings. He suggested that the Focus Leaders serve as an executive subcommittee, which would meet between the monthly full committee meetings and which would be subject to the open meetings and public records law. DeLuca asked for comments on this proposal. Nycz stressed that access to the Executive Subcommittee meetings would be important. Allen-Hoffmann assumed that meeting dates for the Executive Subcommittee would be posted on the website and other locations used for notices of the full MERC meetings. There being no other discussion, Allen-Hoffmann moved that the MERC create an Executive Subcommittee consisting of the focus leaders and the MERC chair, using the Roles and Responsibilities and the Functionality documents as their charge. Sue Skochelak seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

5. DeLuca summarized the notes from the August 31 meeting of the Focus Leaders, identified a number of issues that need to be finalized, which include defining, approving and implementing the overall plan and funding process, identifying and approving targeted projects, and developing an RFP process. The focus leaders discussed the decision matrix presented by Grossman at the August 18 MERC meeting. Allen-Hoffmann added that the Focus Leaders also talked about need to be clear about what the plan is for the allocation of funds using the matrix, and communicating the plan.

The agenda was reordered. Dean Farrell was asked to report on the Strategic Allocations Initiative.

6. Farrell stated that he is pleased with the progress made to date in getting approval for the MPH program. It is his hope that the MPH program will accept students this winter for matriculation in Fall 2005. Skochelak and Nieto commented that they should meet this goal. Nycz indicated that this program is generating excitement statewide, but there is still a strong desire to include a distance education component to the MPH program.

Farrell reported on the Wisconsin Alzheimer's Project, which he has agreed to support at a level of \$75,000 per year for 5 years from the Strategic Allocations fund. This project has broad medical and social implications statewide and beyond, and this use of Wisconsin Partnership funds capitalizes on a 2:1 match from the Helen Bader Foundation in Milwaukee. The goals of the Wisconsin Alzheimer's Project are to expand the statewide network of satellite diagnosis centers to allow the recruitment of healthy people who are the children of Alzheimer's patients to the registry. The emphasis is on early identification of risk and diagnosis. Farrell noted when he toured the state in the Summer of 1999 related to the Blue Cross project, numerous speakers talk about Alzheimer's initiatives. At that time, Governor Thompson pledged \$600,000 to start this program, which was matched by funds from the Bader Foundation. Since then, the commitment from Bader has totaled \$5 million over 5 years.

Asthana added that the Wisconsin Alzheimer's Institute is on track to establish a center at UW-Madison. The NIH supports 27 Alzheimer's Centers in the United States, and there will be an RFP next year to create new Centers. The expected funding would be \$1 million per year for 5 years, and the UW-Madison's chances of success are very good. In the last 5-6 months, Medical School researchers have received 7 Alzheimer's grants from NIH. When the Wisconsin Alzheimer's Institute was started 5 years ago, it consisted of statewide clinics. Two and a half year ago the Institute expanded to include a research focus with the hiring of 5 new researchers. The institute now has the capacity for diagnosis, clinical care, teaching and research related to Alzheimer's disease.

Nieto asked who is in the study cohort? Asthana said that 500 healthy adult children of Alzheimer's patients at genetic risk for developing the disease are being followed; their mean age is 50. The goal is to add 500 more people to the cohort, and look for genetic markers that allow for better diagnosis.

Frey stated that the Dean is likely to receive a number of wonderful proposals like the Alzheimer's initiative, and asked Farrell to elaborate on his selection of projects to fund from the Strategic Allocation. Farrell agreed to do that at next MERC meeting.

By way of introduction to the next proposal, Farrell reminded the MERC of the ambitious goal of the Wisconsin Partnership Fund to make Wisconsin the healthiest state. He emphasized that WUHF and others will examine our progress towards reaching our goals and objectives. In speaking with Pat Remington about these issues, Farrell was reminded of the Wisconsin Public Health and Health Policy Institute's County Health Report Card. David Kindig started the Report Card many years ago, and it includes information about what is necessary to improve health in each region of the state. The changes required could take 40 years to accomplish! Remington noted that our goal could be focused on making Wisconsin as healthy as Minnesota—which is tied for 1st place in the country, while Wisconsin is currently ranked 14th and slipping. Farrell asked Kindig to develop a proposal about how to accomplish our goals, and that proposal has been circulated to MERC and OAC. Farrell asked the MERC to provide comments and advice, and also asked if other groups should be involved in this activity.

Nycz pointed out that the Wisconsin Public Health and Health Policy Institute has an External Advisory Board, which should be able to provide good input about connecting with

communities. Nycz also noted that we should not be too focused on the exact numerical rank, because there are lots of rankings, including one where Wisconsin is rated 21st in the nation. Nycz emphasized that we should seek input from a number of local and governmental agencies, as well as the MCW Blue Cross program, and ensure that our activities are tied to the State Health Plan implementation.

Goelzer observed that the OAC members received the County Health Report Cards, and it might be helpful to distribute that to MERC members as well. She questioned how Kindig's proposal interacts with dSHOW, and would like a presentation about that. Frey asked how to translate the public health rankings into the clinical environment and into communities to change behavior to impact health. Durkin expressed concern that the Institute is already doing what has been proposed. The indicators of health are already known; what would this proposal add to that? Durkin noted that the primary issues that undermine health are obesity, injuries, tobacco use, alcoholism and poor nutrition. Solve those and Wisconsin Becomes the Healthiest State.

Grossman commented that although surveying a population is important in the long term, how much can you show in a short term? Nycz suggested that the focus should be on what are the key interventions for the 11 health priorities in the State Health Plan. He reminded the MERC of the need to connect the grassroots people with the faculty and staff in the Medical School who have access to scientific literature and information about best practices. Skochelak and others thought that the intent of the proposal was not clear, and wondered if the goal was to identify the main determinants of health or to emphasize improving Wisconsin's health ranking to catch up to Minnesota's?

Farrell suggested that the MERC send their critiques to Kindig and Remington.

5a. Grossman returned to the discussion of a process for determining funding priorities. General principles included development of an integrated strategy for use of the funds; a need to concentrate expenditures to maximize impact, allowing for funding of proposals over several years; and a recognition that initial expenditures would likely be made in infrastructure in order to build programs and leverage other sources of funding. Grossman also expressed an interest in extending our focus into health services research and education.

Grossman showed a graph of his perception of the impact of scientific research on health over time, where researchers have produced increasing amounts of scientific data, but a lesser amount of the data is synthesized into biomedical knowledge, and the impact on health is even lower. In the past, a scientific discovery was quickly put into a biological model that had immediate impact on health. Now scientific data is accruing at a much higher rate than it is being translated into practice. An Institute of Medicine report says that it takes 17 years from data discovery to health impact.

Grossman reviewed the Eisenberg model of Health Services research, and noted that biomedical research shows efficacy while health services research impacts effectiveness. He presented definitions of health services research, applied research, translational research and evaluative research. The group discussed the need to decrease the timeline from scientific discovery to implementation of medical interventions. Frey noted that embedded in this discussion is the

issue of human behavior—translation of knowledge to people who won't follow advice. Asthana quipped that it is also hard to change physicians' behavior in their practices.

Grossman presented a revised version of the decision matrix discussed at the August MERC meeting. The Focus Leaders used the feedback from the MERC to modify the matrix. These changes include making the title broader, and adding a column called knowledge transfer, to reflect the concepts of both education and communication. Grossman discussed how each of the 5 focus groups would fit into the rows and columns of the matrix. Moss observed that knowledge transfer became a column because of the need for infrastructure investment in education, including curriculum development.

Moss noted that the biomedical research infrastructure needs might be developed in 2 discrete proposals; one related to dSHOW-CT and another regarding gene and protein analysis. We will look for complementarity and collaborations with other organizations in Wisconsin, for example, with MCW for the gene and protein analysis center. Nycz cautioned that knowledge transfer means finding new approaches to transferring knowledge to communities. Allen-Hoffmann asked how that could be achieved, and Nycz suggested that it would be important to engage the communities in the research early on, so that they would be a part of the knowledge base. Skochelak stated that outcomes and assessment are certainly part of the vision of knowledge transfer. Grossman said that the model leaves room to address some of these concerns because of the porosity between the columns, with individual initiatives bridging the boundaries of biomedical research, health services research, and knowledge transfer. Doug Smith said that we have to think of ways to accomplish some goals that may be outside the boundaries of medicine, such as changes in engineering, legislation, sanitation, or nutrition.

Regent Boyle cited an example of how land grant institutions have revolutionized the production of food in this country in the last 25 years. We're the most efficient in the world because we did the research and education at the community level to cause people to change their behavior. Moss observed that perhaps the population cohort should be listed in all 3 columns, because knowledge transfer includes public education. Stearns suggested that the distance education network may be another way to communicate with the general public. Frey said this would be a transformation of the Medical School, by including curriculum that teaches students how to be effective communicators. Grossman indicated that these suggestions should be attached to the matrix as prose explaining each box.

DeLuca asked if the matrix is an item that the MERC is ready to formally accept as a mechanism for setting priorities and making decisions about soliciting and reviewing proposals for funding. Skochelak moved approval of the matrix as a conceptual framework, with refinement and prose added by the Focus Leaders. Asthana seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

At 7:05 p.m. the group took recessed for dinner and reconvened at 7:25 p.m. DeLuca stated that since the group had approved a framework of how to do business, the next step will be to focus on infrastructure. He asked for input on beginning that process.

Moss suggested that since the population cohort / CT network cuts across all 3 columns, it could be the backbone for the first several years of this program. One way to proceed is to have conceptual proposals from the Focus Leaders brought to the full MERC for discussion and approval. Since this is a major undertaking, a business plan would need to be prepared, and that would probably require a planning grant. Similarly, we would also need conceptual proposals for the areas of gene/protein analysis and curriculum. It was suggested that the Focus Leaders be charged with developing a brief 2 page document outlining each of these 3 infrastructure areas.

DeLuca suggested that we have in-depth presentations about each of these areas over next couple of MERC meetings, in order to reach some initial decisions by January. Doug Smith asked what things should be included in the proposals, and DeLuca encouraged him to look at the guidelines and criteria for review of proposals. Asthana wanted to know if a call for proposals to create infrastructure would be open to all faculty, or if these would be developed by the Focus Leaders. DeLuca said that has not yet been resolved, because we need to know what the full aspects to develop the infrastructure are. DeLuca asked the Focus Leaders to present an overview consisting of a 2-page document and 20 minute presentation for each of the 3 infrastructure items at the next MERC meeting.

7. DeLuca presented a draft communication plan. We need to be sure that people understand what we are doing, and therefore we need to provide information to the outside world as well as to our campus. He showed a wide list of audiences that will be interested in the activities of the Wisconsin Partnership Program, and more specifically, the MERC. Grossman suggested adding state government to our list of audiences, and Nycz noted we should also include WUHF. Nycz also suggested making use of the internet as a communication vehicle, because it can be accessed by in remote areas. Nieto recommended press releases as appropriate. Frey urged DeLuca to include in communications background information about the Wisconsin Partnership Program.

DeLuca concluded the meeting by showing a list of the grants for medical and research initiatives funded by the MCW.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Tracy Cabot
Recorder