

Appendix



Interim President Jeff Ettinger's Remarks at Task Force #5 November 21, 2023

As prepared for delivery

"Thank you for letting me take a few minutes of your time. I greatly appreciate the effort of this Task Force toward advancing the University of Minnesota's academic health mission.

I know that you have had the opportunity to hear from the University about the alignment of our mission to the interests of the State of Minnesota, and about the scale of our commitment to health sciences. This history and structure have come together to form a strong legacy that today serves Minnesotans through 1.2 million patient visits each year.

But we know that the State of Minnesota is asking for more from the University: leadership in ensuring the health of Minnesotans in the future. As the University's interim president at this critical time, I am grateful to share with you that we have a bold vision for the future of Minnesota's health

We will have near-term, medium-term and longer-term recommendations for the State to consider. We hope that the Task Force will allow us to expand upon these concepts at the upcoming meeting on December 6.

But I do want to take a few minutes today to preview those plans, even as you hear from our health sciences deans and deepen your understanding of the strengths the University brings to this challenge for our State.

In the near-term, the critical priority is bringing stability to the clinical enterprise that funds the academic operations of our medical school. We will be asking the 2024 legislature for support to the academic enterprise.

In the medium-term, our plans will focus on ensuring the State has good information upon which to consider investments in physical infrastructure for health care. Potentially, this may involve bonding to lengthen the lifespan of existing facilities, but also a feasibility

study to better understand the transformation of needs for physical infrastructure of health care service delivery.

In the longer-term, we want to make the case for investment in a next-generation medical enterprise center on campus at the University.

Let me share thoughts with you about this long-term vision. As a business person, I admit I am sometimes skeptical about the need for “new.”

But after touring our facilities, and learning from Dr. Tolar and the other health sciences Deans who are here today, there are clear challenges that need our careful attention:

Our University of Minnesota Physicians and other M Health Fairview medical professionals are offering patients outstanding care, but working in outdated facilities;

Space is extremely tight, sometimes with patient crowding that does not promote privacy, recovery and health;

There is a frequent need to turn patients away – particularly troubling when it involves important medical referrals or procedures where we have demonstrated expertise;

There is operational inefficiency, including when patients and staff must go back and forth across the river to our current facilities;

Frankly, it’s the wrong approach for Minnesota to support world-class teaching, research, and care – all core to our mission and service to the state – in these aging and outdated facilities.

Our patients deserve better, and as a leading academic health enterprise, we must do better.

The University already owns an on-campus site for a potential new medical center facility, right next door to our innovative Clinics and Surgery Center on the East Bank.

Our vision is to collaborate with you and those across Minnesota’s health care community to ensure the future of academic health and its facilities. The University would intend to be involved in the planning of the scope and function of this new center in collaboration with other stakeholders.

What makes sense to get us there? Is it a partnership with Fairview? Would a new partner play a role in the operation of this center? Would the University bring in experienced professionals and run the on-campus center ourselves? I cannot speak for others but these are options we are actively discussing. But ultimately, the University must have

greater control of the facilities that serve as the primary base for academic health and clinical practice of the next generations of practitioners.

The University does not intend to ask for specific financial support for new facilities in the 2024 legislative session. The near-term need is clearly to stabilize the funding for academic medical programming.

We will be keenly interested in soliciting and receiving your conceptual support for this vision – for a world-class medical center on the Twin Cities campus that fosters our academic health mission, is core to all health sciences, and serves Minnesotans with the best we have to offer.

Thank you for allowing me the gift of your time, and for your attention to this incredibly important issue for our state, the University, and the health of all Minnesotans.”