



The University of Vermont

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LARNER COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

**DIRECTOR**  
**HEALTH SERVICES RESEARCH CENTER**

The University of Vermont (UVM) seeks a highly accomplished tenure-pathway health services researcher to serve as founding Director of its new Health Services Research Center in the Robert Larner, M.D. College of Medicine (COM). The Director will join the College at an exciting time, with Vermont poised to embark upon a unique all-payer accountable care organization model spanning the state that will facilitate remarkable opportunities for innovative health services research.

UVM health services researchers currently collaborate across multiple units and disciplines, and the new Director will guide the integration of these dispersed health services research activities into a center model with strong research, education/training, and service components. Implementation science, comparative effectiveness research, health economics, policy analysis, and community-focused primary care networks are all areas of interest.

The Director will lead and grow UVM Health Services Research, promoting a collaborative interdisciplinary program focused on evaluating the impact of innovative healthcare delivery models, chronic disease prevention and management, organization and financing of health care, integrated health information systems, health policy or other health service domains. S/he will facilitate health services data access, and will promote development of a state-wide Vermont health data resource. Integral to the role will be engagement, education, and mentoring of faculty and graduate and post-graduate trainees in health services research, and providing access to design, data management, and analytic consultation resources for collaborating investigators and trainees.

The successful candidate will bring evidence of success leading, coordinating, and facilitating interdisciplinary research teams, hold a doctoral degree (MD, PhD, MD/PhD, or equivalent) and strong experience in health services research, and will be granted a faculty appointment in a department appropriate to expertise and interests. Expertise in nationally and internationally recognized health services research and experience using large healthcare databases for research purposes is desired, along with a strong record of scholarly, peer-reviewed publications and extramural research funding consistent with appointment at the Associate Professor or Professor level.

## **THE COLLEGE OF MEDICINE**

Established in 1822, the COM very much reflects the attributes of UVM. It combines the ethos of a major research university with the innovative, personalized education of a smaller institution. The COM has traditionally taken great pride in educating the next generation of physicians and biomedical scientists, and has trained over 35 percent of the physician providers in the state. It takes equal pride in its scientific stature and has competed successfully for significant extramural research funding. The clinical faculty of the COM delivers patient care to the state and region through the University of Vermont Medical Group at the University of Vermont Medical Center (UVMHC), UVM's partner in Vermont's Academic Medical Center.

In 2007, Frederick C. Morin, III, M.D., became the 17th Dean of UVM's COM. He came to Vermont from the University of Buffalo, where he was A. Conger Goodyear Professor and Chair of Pediatrics in the School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, and Chief of Pediatric Service for Women and Children's Hospital of Buffalo and Kaleida Health. Since joining the COM, Dean Morin has played a key role in strengthening the partnership between the COM and the growing health system, and metrics on virtually every aspect of the COM's performance reflect a strong and positive trajectory.

The COM has 711 full-time faculty and 473 staff, with an additional 1,032 volunteer faculty in Vermont, New York, Maine, Connecticut, and Florida. The College enrolls 469 medical students; 203 graduate and PhD students, 50 post-doctoral fellows, and 411 residents also participate in its programs. The COM has a \$195M expense budget, and along with the rest of the University, has moved to an incentive-based budgeting model. As of June 2016, COM endowments totaled approximately \$145M, with private gift revenues of \$40.6M. The COM currently receives approximately \$90M in extramural research support annually.

More than 35 percent of the physicians practicing in Vermont today received their education or training at UVM and UVMHC. Each year nearly 6,000 applicants compete for 114 places in the College's entering class. Graduates go on to residencies at top institutions nationwide, with many choosing to pursue careers in primary care. The award-winning Vermont Integrated Curriculum offers students early access to broad clinical experience, a firm grounding in the basic sciences, the opportunity to work with internationally known researchers, and an emphasis on community service.

The COM's commitment to education was validated in 2012 when it completed a successful three-day LCME Accreditation Site Visit. In a post-survey meeting with the Dean, and UVM's President and Provost, the reviewers specifically noted "the remarkable level of collegiality, cooperation and transparency among administrators, faculty, staff and students," as well as responsiveness to student feedback in improving clerkship experiences and the technology services team.

## **THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT HEALTH NETWORK**

The University of Vermont Health Network (UVMHN) is the parent organization of a five-hospital, cross-lake partnership that establishes a highly integrated health care system serving the communities of Vermont and northern New York. The hospitals include The University of Vermont Medical Center in Burlington, Vermont; Alice Hyde Medical Center (AHMC) in Malone, New York; Central Vermont Medical Center (CVMC) in Barre, Vermont; Champlain Valley Physicians Hospital (CVPH) in Plattsburgh, New York; and Elizabethtown Community Hospital

in Elizabethtown, New York. This integrated health delivery system includes more than 1,000 physicians, more than 2,000 nurses, and countless other health care professionals. Over the next several years, the UVM Health Network will carry out centralized activities for the benefit of patients of all the partner organizations.

### **The University of Vermont Medical Center**

A critical feature of UVM's academic profile and future potential is the strength of its partnership and shared mission with UVMMC. UVMMC is a full-service, sophisticated tertiary care, vertically integrated health care system that serves as a regional referral center—providing advanced care to approximately one million people in Vermont and northern New York—and as a community hospital for approximately 150,000 residents in Vermont's Chittenden and Grand Isle counties.

UVMMC, whose physicians have faculty appointments at UVM, is the main teaching hospital for the COM. Much of the COM clinical and health services research is conducted in collaboration with UVMMC, and facilities there for biomedical research and patient care have dramatically expanded and improved over the last 15 years.

UVMMC is recognized for high-quality, cost-effective care, and routinely benchmarks its performance with Vizient (formerly the University Health System Consortium), the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), the Council on Teaching Hospitals (COTH), and several other national organizations. On cost and many quality metrics, the UVMMC's performance consistently ranks well above the median and frequently among the top performers. In 2016, UVMMC ranked 13<sup>th</sup> among the 100 academic medical centers and more than 124 affiliated hospitals for quality and accountability. State reports show the medical center having among the lowest utilization of services in northern New England, including the lowest Emergency Department use and lowest per-capita costs for residents in its catchment area.

### **OneCare Vermont**

UVMMC has also played a key role in establishing two accountable care organizations (ACOs). The first, OneCare Vermont, was established in collaboration with Dartmouth Hitchcock Health and works with Medicare, Vermont Medicaid, and the Commercial Exchange Shared Saving Programs. OneCare Vermont comprises an extensive network of providers, including several of Vermont's hospitals, two New Hampshire hospitals, hundreds of primary and specialty care physicians and advance practice providers, federally qualified health centers, and several rural health clinics, to coordinate the health care of approximately 95,000 combined Medicare, Medicaid, and Commercial Exchange Vermont beneficiaries. The second, the Adirondacks ACO, has been formed with hospitals, health centers, and providers in upstate New York.

## **HEALTH SERVICES RESEARCH AND SUPPORTING RESOURCES AT UVM**

Vermont and northern New England provide unique opportunities to test highly innovative models of healthcare delivery in a rural setting, and UVM is well-positioned to play an increasingly important role in addressing the region's public health priorities, which include child and adolescent preventive services, educational outcomes, care transitions, opiate addiction, smoking, mental health, elder care, palliative care, obesity, chronic disease, and oral health.

The State of Vermont has long demonstrated a deep commitment to providing better quality care and to reduce healthcare cost growth. In 2011 the State enacted a law establishing the first state-level single-payer health care system in the United States. However, full implementation was delayed, as the State adjusted its plans to federally mandated changes in health care. This past September, Vermont received tentative federal approval to establish an all-payer reimbursement system for healthcare providers in the state starting January 2017. The Green Mountain Care Board has since voted to approve the all-payer waiver, which will require all insurers, whether private, Medicare or Medicaid to pay similar rates for services. When implemented, Vermont would become the first state in the nation to have an all-payer system that would cover all providers through an ACO-type structure.

With nearly all health care providers in the state already part of OneCare Vermont, regardless of what happens to the Affordable Care Act under the new administration, Vermont's unwavering commitment to its goals will mean unparalleled opportunities in health services research, especially as it relates to rural health. It is in this context, and with more than \$24 million in extramural funding supporting current health services research, that the COM, and the UVMMG are making significant investments to establish this new Health Services Research Center. Already more than \$3.5 million have been committed to start-up funding for this initiative.

The above funding for health services research includes \$18.5 million awarded in August 2015 from the **Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI)** to study integrated primary care and behavioral health. This five-year research project to determine if patients with both medical and behavioral health problems do better when their primary care physicians work in combination with behavioral health professionals including psychologists and social workers, will involve sub-contracted collaborators across the country.

UVM has a wide range of additional resources to support its health services research activity. The COM's **Bioinformatics Shared Resource** offers services related to genomic sequence and expression, and the **Biostatistics Unit** is a service unit providing capabilities in biostatistics, statistical genetics, epidemiology, randomized clinical trials, experimental design, data management and processing, and survey research. The COM has recently committed \$2.5 million to further expand biostatistics and bioinformatics capabilities. The COM will be partnering with the **College of Engineering and Mathematical Sciences** on joint faculty recruitments as part of this investment. Integral to these efforts will be the **Vermont Complex Systems Center**, an interdisciplinary program established in 2009 to study the patterns common to complex systems, be they physical, biological, social or synthetic. The Complex Systems Center will be a lead partner collaborating in the new Health Services Research Center's activities. The **UVM College of Nursing and Health Sciences** is another key collaborative partner that is active in health services research. A new collaborative opportunity will be presented by the pending UVMHN recruitment of a Director of Population Health and Chief Quality Officer for the health network.

The **UVM Cancer Center**, founded in 1974, represents over 200 faculty and staff at UVM and UVMMC, as well as community partners, involved in advancing cancer research, clinical care, education and advocacy in Vermont and beyond. Member research spans a continuum from mechanisms of disease development to disease progression and cancer control and population health—all in concert with diverse clinical research program. A strength of the Center's research portfolio is strong interdisciplinary collaborations between basic scientists, behaviorists, and clinicians to advance research that has clinical relevance to patients in the region and beyond. The Center provides significant support to its members, including internal research funding, core facilities, grant support, continuing education, and more in support of the Center's overall

mission to improve the lives of cancer patients through an integrated and innovative approach to research, education, and compassionate patient care.

Founded in 2002, the **Cardiovascular Research Institute of Vermont (CVRI-VT)** is dedicated to reducing the incidence, morbidity, and mortality of heart and vascular diseases through improving prevention, diagnosis, and treatment. CVRI-VT is broadly inclusive of collaborating investigators at UVM and UVMHC who are pursuing cardiovascular research and its key objectives are to improve communication, particularly across disciplines, departments, and colleges; increase collaboration; increase funding to support cardiovascular research; and advance and highlight excellence in research nationally and internationally.

The COM has a very successful record of Center of Biomedical Research Excellence (COBRE) grant awards including the **Vermont Lung Center**, the **Neuroscience Center of Biomedical Research Excellence**, the **Vermont Center for Immunobiology and Infectious Diseases**, and the **Vermont Center on Behavior and Health**. These major grants have brought considerable new resources to the COM in these specific domains. Another COBRE proposal is now being submitted for a **Translational Global Infectious Disease Research Center**.

**Vermont's Area Health Education Centers (AHEC)** is a statewide network of community and academic partners working together and consists of a program office at UVM and three regional centers, each a separate 501(c)(3), non-profit organization capable of providing support for community healthcare systems. AHEC's efforts focus on achieving a well-trained healthcare workforce so that all Vermonters have access to quality care, including those who live in the Vermont's most rural areas and Vermont's underserved populations. In addition to workforce development, AHEC brings educational and quality improvement programming to Vermont's primary care practices and supports community-based health education across the state.

**Vermont's Child Health Improvement Partnership (VCHIP)**, a population-based maternal and child health services research and quality improvement program of the University of Vermont, was formally established in 1999. Its mission is to optimize the health of children and families by initiating and supporting measurement-based efforts to enhance private and public child health practice. VCHIP also provides leadership to the National Improvement Partnership Network (NIPN) - a network of over 20 states that has developed Improvement Partnerships to advance quality and transform healthcare for children and their families.

A Center for the Study of Aging was established at UVM in 1992 and in 2008, with an endowment of \$5 million from Lois McClure, became the **Center on Aging**. The mission of this Center is to forge an ongoing collaboration among faculty, students, staff, and programs within UVM, the UVMHC, and the Vermont community to promote a sense of wellbeing and a high quality of life for older adults. Each year an annual Armin Grams Memorial Research Award funds pilot research programs with the overall goal of increasing funded research on aging at the university. In 2016, two projects were funded, and included recipients from both the COM and the UVMHC.

The mission of the COM's **Office of Health Promotion Research** is to further knowledge and understanding of health promotion and disease prevention through the development of theory-based, rigorously controlled research in health education and health promotion. Current research is primarily focused on the promotion and surveillance of effective breast cancer screening through the Vermont Breast Cancer Surveillance System. Earlier research activity focused on tobacco control through smoking prevention and smoking cessation, AIDS prevention, diabetes prevention, and reducing alcohol use by youth.

In addition to OneCare Vermont and the Vermont Department of Health, the COM works closely with a number of key partners on its wide-ranging health services activities research activity, including:

**The Jeffords Institute for Quality and Effectiveness** supports research endeavors directed towards improving the quality of care, patient safety, and operational efficiency at the UVMHC and its affiliated partners. This program strives to stimulate a priori thinking and planning for conducting hypothesis-driven and scientifically-sound research that generates knowledge that will improve clinical outcomes for populations. Together with existing research infrastructure at UVM, the Jeffords Institute facilitates analysis of electronic record data and provides consultation that supports the research process from idea conception to implementation and dissemination.

**The Vermont Blueprint for Health** is a state-led, nationally-recognized public-private partnership that helps health care providers meet the medical and social needs of people in their communities. Medical Homes are the foundation of the Blueprint, along with Practice Facilitators who help them continuously improve care, and Community Health Teams who expand available services to include free care coordination, counseling, substance abuse treatment support, health coaching, and more. The Blueprint also helps design innovative interventions, like Support and Services at Home (SASH) for elders and Hub & Spoke Medication Assisted Therapy for individuals battling opioid addiction. All Blueprint work is closely integrated with health and human service organizations through Community Collaboratives that guide care delivery and payment reforms at the local level.

Created in 2011 by the Vermont State Legislature, the **Green Mountain Care Board (GMCB)** is charged with reducing the rate of health care cost growth in Vermont while ensuring that the State maintains a high quality, accessible health care system. The Legislature assigned the GMCB three main responsibilities: regulation, innovation, and evaluation. The GMCB regulates not only health insurance rates, but also hospital budgets and major capital expenditures. The Board also innovates, testing new ways to pay for and deliver health care as part of its role in building a new system. In addition, the Board evaluates innovation projects proposals for what benefits should be included in Vermont's new health system, proposals for funding the new system, and the effect of the new system on Vermont's economy. The Vermont all-payer claims dataset also resides with the GMCB.

## **THE ROLE**

The Founding Director of the UVM David Larner, MD College of Medicine's new Health Services Research Center will hold a faculty appointment in a department appropriate to expertise and interests. S/he will report to the department chair, and to the COM's Senior Associate Dean for Research, Gordon Jensen, MD, PhD, who joined UVM January 2016. Jensen also serves as professor of medicine and professor of nutrition and food sciences in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. Jensen came to UVM from Penn State University, where he was professor and head of the Department of Nutritional Sciences, as well as professor of medicine at the Penn State College of Medicine. Prior to that he served as professor of medicine at Vanderbilt University Medical College and director of the Vanderbilt Center for Human Nutrition.

The Director of the Center, serving as convener and facilitator will lead and grow health services research activity at UVM, promoting a collaborative, interdisciplinary program focused on evaluating the impact of innovative healthcare delivery models, chronic disease prevention and management, organization and financing of health care, integrated health information systems,

health policy, or other health service domains. Over time, the Center will become the go-to resource, a clearinghouse and hub for health services research at the university, in the state, and in the region.

In launching this initiative, the new Director will be charged with developing and implementing the overall plan for operationalizing the Center, which will be physically located in brand new offices at the COM. This will include defining the organizational structure and initial staffing. Critical to the Director's success, and that of the Center, will be the development of a strategic plan to define short- and long-term goals working in close collaboration and consultation with internal and external resources and partners.

Key priorities for the Director in leading the new Health Services Research Center at UVM will be the development and implementation of strategies to:

- Increase collaboration and enhance communication related to existing and new health services research activities and opportunities on campus, and with partners across the state and region, as well as nationally and internationally.
- Identify means to incentivize new health services research activity.
- Diversify and increase funding for health services research, including the cultivation of innovative funding sources and greater foundation and philanthropic support.
- Facilitate health services data access, including UVMHC and UVMHN electronic records data. A longer-term goal is to promote development of a statewide Vermont health data resource that includes integration of clinical records with universal insurance claims, Vermont public health data, patient registries, and other available healthcare databases.
- In collaboration with UVM research service cores and partners, promote access to design, data management, and analytic consultation resources for collaborating investigators and trainees.
- Foster an environment that supports education and training and engages, educates, and mentors faculty and student trainees in health services research.
- Promote the Health Services Research Center as a resource at the state, regional, and national levels on healthcare policy and delivery around access, quality, safety, outcomes, and cost.

## **THE IDEAL CANDIDATE**

The Founding Director of the UVM Health Services Research Center will join the College at an exciting yet challenging time, with the nation's health care system in a state of flux. This environment of uncertainty will require a proven health services researcher and leader who is nimble, adaptable, and resourceful, and who has deep interest in helping to shape the evolving landscape of health care at a state and national level.

The successful candidate will be an accomplished scientist with an MD, PhD, MD/PhD or equivalent terminal degree with a record of funding and scholarly activity to qualify for appointment to a tenured discipline at the Associate or Full Professor rank at the David Larner, MD College of Medicine at the University of Vermont. More specifically, the ideal candidate will bring many of the following experiences, skills, and qualities:

- Expertise in health services research that is nationally and internationally recognized.

- A strong record of scholarly peer-reviewed publications and extramural funding in health services research or related fields.
- Experience in the use of large healthcare databases for research purposes.
- Demonstrated success and creativity in fostering research collaborations across disciplines, and proven ability to lead, coordinate, and facilitate interdisciplinary research teams.
- Experience or demonstrated interest in research related to health services in rural settings.
- Exceptional planning and organizational skills, superb follow-through, and timely task completion.
- Proven ability to effectively balance administrative/leadership, research, and departmental responsibilities.
- Excellent interpersonal skills and proven capacity to build and maintain relationships internally and externally; accessible to faculty and administrative colleagues, as well as to government agency, foundation, and industry leaders.
- Strong leadership skills with the proven ability to foster a spirit of collaboration.
- Excellent oral and written communication skills.
- A commitment to transparency.
- Proven experience in the effective allocation of resources.
- Demonstrated commitment to valuing and actively promoting an inclusive, diverse culture.
- Uncompromising standards of excellence, with the highest standards of integrity.
- Persuasive, patient, flexible, adaptable, tenacious, resilient, and a sense of humor.

## **COMPENSATION**

Salary will be competitive and commensurate with academic qualifications and experience.

## **TO APPLY**

Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, has been retained to assist in this search. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled. The University of Vermont is especially interested in candidates who can contribute to the diversity and excellence of the academic community through research, teaching, and/or service.

Please direct all inquiries, nominations, referrals, or CVs with cover letters describing how you would further the University of Vermont's goal of inclusive excellence, in confidence to:

Sarah Herman and Phillip Petree  
 Isaacson, Miller  
 263 Summer Street, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor  
 Boston, MA 02210  
[www.imsearch.com/5995](http://www.imsearch.com/5995)

Electronic submission of materials is strongly encouraged.

*The University of Vermont is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity employer. The University is committed to increasing faculty diversity and welcomes applications from women, veterans and underrepresented ethnic, racial and cultural groups and from people with disabilities. Women and those from diverse racial, ethnic and cultural backgrounds are encouraged to apply.*