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March 08, 2004

**MEMORANDUM**

To: Committee on Educational Planning, Policies and Programs  
From: Molly Corbett Broad *Molly Broad*  
Subject: Name, Status, and Mission Change of ECU Cardiovascular Center

**Introduction**

The East Carolina Cardiovascular Center was established in 1992 as a Public Service Center of the UNC system. Since its formation, the Cardiovascular Center has focused on consolidating and improving the delivery of clinical services to the people of eastern North Carolina. Cardiovascular disease (CVD) is the leading cause of premature mortality in the United States, with nearly 40% of all deaths attributable to CVD-related illness. The eastern region of North Carolina represents the largest indigenous population of patients suffering from CVD and throughout North Carolina, cardiovascular diseases represent a six billion dollar economic drain due to the costs of healthcare and loss of worker productivity.

Over the past decade, the Center has been highly successful in its efforts to expand cardiovascular care in eastern North Carolina. Now, in light of the projects currently underway to enhance cardiovascular healthcare facilities at ECU, the Center proposes the following changes to better align itself with the current needs of ECU and the eastern North Carolina community. The following section summarizes the information provided by ECU to satisfy the requirements for major changes in the budget, status, mission, or goals, as detailed in the UNC Policy Manual (Chapter 1200.6 [R]).

**Proposed Changes to Name, Status, and Mission**

***Name Change***

The East Carolina Cardiovascular Center seeks designation as the Eastern Carolina Cardiovascular Institute (ECCVI). This change will reflect its close relationship with the teaching hospital, the University Health Systems of Eastern Carolina/Pitt County Memorial Hospital (UHS/PCMH), as well as the proposed research-focused mission of the Center. Dr. W. Randolph Chitwood, Sr., Associate Vice Chancellor of Health Sciences at ECU, will continue to serve as director of the ECCVI.

***Change in Mission***

While the ECCVI will continue its three-fold educational, clinical, and research efforts, the Institute proposes the following new mission to articulate more clearly its research focus and to accurately reflect current and future activities:

*The mission of the Eastern Carolina Cardiovascular Institute (ECCVI) is to improve cardiovascular health of North Carolinians and to promote improvements in care through basic science and clinical research, as well as to educate students, physicians, healthcare workers, the citizenry, and direct provision of cardiovascular healthcare.*

*Translational research will be a keystone for developing new treatment methods. The current primary care mission will be expanded through collaboration of primary care physicians and cardiovascular specialists. New technology initiatives will spawn working arrangements with other system Universities. Through treatment, prevention, and new scientific discoveries, the ECCVI will become the progenitor of new cardiovascular technology, an expanded workforce, economic development, and “wellness” in North Carolinians.*

***Status Change***

The ECCVI will shift its focus from the delivery of clinical services, to the integration of research efforts with patient care by collaborating with clinicians and researchers across UNC to develop new technologies and therapies aimed at CVD prevention. To better reflect its role in improving healthcare and wellness among the citizens of North Carolina, the ECCVI proposes a formal change in status from a Public Service designation to that of a UNC Research Center.

***Facilities and Budget***

The ECCVI will provide facilities for clinical and scholarly programs dedicated to cardiovascular research and development, including multi-investigator and multi-center projects and clinical trials. UHS/PCMH is embarking on the construction of a \$150 million cardiovascular hospital, funded from private dollars, which will be a key component of the ECCVI's clinical operations. The research and education component of the ECCVI will cost \$60 million dollars and funds for this project are before the North Carolina General Assembly. These facilities will house basic science research, clinical research, statisticians for database development, as well as special equipment such as robotics and laboratories, basic research, and preventative medicine research. ECU has committed \$150,000 toward planning for the research center and UHS/PCMH has committed \$1 million toward the planning of the cardiovascular hospital. Once established, the on-going operations of the ECCVI will be financed through grant funding and clinical revenue streams.

***Recommendation***

It is recommended that ECU be authorized to formally adopt the name “Eastern Carolina Cardiovascular Institute.” The ECCVI should be granted permission to make the stated changes to its mission and to operate primarily as a Research unit of the University of North Carolina.