OPTIMIZING LIFE-LONG HEALTH
STRATEGIC PLAN 2011-2021

In January 2011, the Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry at Western University launched a strategic planning process. The result was a bold new vision which integrates the School’s existing and emerging strengths with several areas targeted for future growth and investment.

This vision recognizes the challenges of the growing Schulich Medicine & Dentistry collegium, leverages its strengths, better integrates and coordinates its capabilities, and builds upon existing relationships with our community to continue to make a positive impact on life-long health.

Our Strategic Plan reinforces the importance of research and innovation on healthy development and aging across the life span, from pre-conception to end-of-life. It promotes increased translation across research domains, knowledge exchange between practitioners and researchers, and an enriched curriculum which prepares health professionals and scientists to better incorporate public and population health perspectives.

Most significantly, this future destination for the School will be an ongoing, collaborative and dynamic experience within the Southwestern Ontario community. New models of care, research discoveries, and advances in education will be developed, applied and evaluated. In 10 years, the School will have demonstrated the effectiveness of this community-based model of integrated education, research and clinical care with a number of clear examples where shared priorities and collaborative efforts have resulted in optimized health.

OUR VISION

The Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry will be a global leader in optimizing life-long health through innovations in research, education and active engagement with our communities.

We will lead in:

• Creating knowledge in healthy development and aging across the life span from pre-conception to end-of-life, examining the underlying mechanisms of development and aging and how it is influenced by genetics and environment.

• Translating knowledge across the research domains of basic, clinical, health services, policy, and population health and in partnership with the communities of Southwestern Ontario, to benefit global health.

• Embedding the science of healthy and successful development and aging into the education curriculum.
The past year has been one of tremendous achievement for the Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry. Collectively, the School’s faculty and staff have worked together on major initiatives and goals mapped out in the 10-year Strategic Plan.

Work has been completed on nearly every strategic direction, with great progress made on many goals and deliverables across all six of the directions.

Throughout the 2013-2014 fiscal year, the School saw the launch of the new Collaborative Research Seed Grant program, the official establishment of the Southwestern Academic Health Network (SWAHN), and the opening of The Western Centre for Public Health and Family Medicine, and General Anesthetic Suite. We also welcomed the first class to the Master of Public Health Program, aligned our brand with that of Western University, and increased communication across the School.

The Finance Team, working with the research and education programs, clinical and basic departments, as well as support units, has implemented a number of new initiatives to ensure the School remains in a strong financial position. These initiatives include the establishment of a transparent budget process and more formally, implementation of ABB.

The budget process focused on the requirements that all budgets are to be balanced and are to follow the zero-based budgeting methodology. With the hiring of a Financial Analysts, the Finance Team was able to work with departments to develop budgets that reflect the actual cost of running each department. This new position also allowed the Team to monitor the budgets for all units across the School.

On the clinical side, a new funding model was introduced using specific metrics to allocate funding, and is the basis of funding for the 2014-2015 fiscal year.

The Human Resources Team continues to modify processes where possible. In the past year the Team has initiated the use of the OneForm, which is now fully utilized to streamline the hiring process for staff.

A number of structural changes were also implemented in the Human Resources area. Two supervisory positions are now in place, controlling the staff and faculty aspects of the business. The Team is also piloting a new service delivery model which sees the use of a hybrid Human Resources Consultant position responsible for a specific block of business related to both staff and faculty issues. A new Director, Organizational Effectiveness will also be hired, completing the director portfolio for the School.
Strategic Direction #1
Create knowledge in the science of healthy and successful development and aging across the life span

Advance the recommendations of the Research Review Task Force.

Completed
- Reorganization and rebuilding of the Research Office staff complement.

In progress
- Increased focus on research in CIHR pillars 2, 3 and 4.

Create new research centres in areas related to the science of healthy development and aging.

In progress
- Significant efforts are being directed toward facilitating new groups and teams devoted to the science of healthy development and aging.

Establish research infrastructure to assist faculty to be successful in research funding opportunities from individual operating grants to interdisciplinary team grants.

In progress
- Collaborative Research Seed Grant program has been initiated to encourage new interdisciplinary research teams, and to build up a portfolio of translational research projects.
- An internal peer review/grant development initiative is being created.
- Extended support for Gap/Bridge and Seed funding is being offered as faculty match for Western Strategic Support for tri-council success programs.

Enrich the orientation and focus on research areas across all levels including graduate students, postdoctoral trainees, and undergraduate and postgraduate medical and dental trainees.

Completed
- Research opportunities for students at Schulich Medicine & Dentistry - Windsor Program have been created.

In progress
- Development of a new training model for all clinician-scientists at Schulich Medicine & Dentistry.
- The Summer Research Training Program and Schulich Research Opportunities Program is being expanded.
- Planning is underway to embed research into educational programs including undergraduate and postgraduate medicine.

Strategic Direction #2
Strengthen knowledge translation to achieve health benefits for individuals and populations

Promote an interdisciplinary research environment which moves knowledge among the four research domains.

In progress
- Regular meetings with counterparts across the University, the city and the region are ongoing, including participation with the Southwestern Ontario Academic Health Network (SWAHN) and its Research Subcommittee.

Foster interactions between researchers and knowledge users.

In progress
- Meetings are being conducted between Schulich Medicine & Dentistry and Western Research Offices with industry, non-profit, government and international researchers and agencies.

Facilitate connections with private sector partners to translate research findings into improved health products and technologies.

In progress
- Meetings with private sector partners are ongoing with new linkages and connections being developed.
Strategically invest in developing educational programs in public health and in embedding public health knowledge and the science of healthy and successful aging across the educational curriculum at Schulich Medicine & Dentistry.

Completed

- The construction of The Western Centre for Public Health and Family Medicine has been completed, and the building is now home to 32 students in the first class of the Master of Public Health Program.

Position our distributed education models as leading programs in Canada.

Completed

- The e-learning system OWL is widely used for on-demand learning in dentistry, medicine and BMSc courses.

In progress

- Pilot tests of new web and desktop conferencing programs including Blackboard Collaborate, Vidyo and livestreaming are occurring across the School.
- Support is available for faculty and staff leaders, facilitating the implementation of the new Distributed Education Model.

Advance our undergraduate, graduate, postgraduate, postdoctoral and continuing education programs through increased enrolment, enhanced student/trainee support, innovative and interdisciplinary/interprofessional curriculum, strengthening research orientation in the curricula.

Completed

- The introduction of the Learner Equity & Wellness office. The Office offers continuing support to students at Schulich Medicine & Dentistry. The students also receive support through a number of other initiatives around the School.
- The General Anesthetic Suite for Schulich Dentistry is completed and will accept its first patients in spring 2014.
- Virtual desktops were introduced into the Valberg Educational Research Centre, offering a better experience for undergraduate students across all programs at the School.

In progress

- Testing of my-Portfolio software for Undergraduate Medical Education students is ongoing.
- The streamlining of various operations allowing for better delivery of the education mandate.
- Work continues to establish a longitudinal clerkship program.
- A number of new, innovative methods are being used to deliver educational material including augmented reality and 3D animation.
Strategic Direction #4
Develop sustainable partnerships, networks and global initiatives

Strategically invest with partners to formalize an Academic Health Sciences Network in Southwestern Ontario.

Completed
- A strategic plan for SWAHN has been finished.

In progress
- Work to establish a SWAHN office is ongoing.

Nurture partnerships with health sector providers, agencies and policy stakeholders to actively engage in health innovation projects.

In progress
- Areas within Schulich Medicine & Dentistry continue to provide support for the LMIC Network initiative.
- Meetings between the Schulich Medicine & Dentistry Research Office and various health sector providers and agencies are ongoing.

Expand outreach with industry, as well as municipal, regional and provincial governments to support the School and the academic network’s research, innovation and knowledge exchange.

In progress
- Support is offered to School departments and areas for the coordination of governance structure, business planning, FedDev grant application, stakeholder meetings and relationship building with partners.
- SWAHN and Schulich Medicine & Dentistry Research Office are working together to expand the School’s outreach.

Advance targeted initiatives related to global health and internationalization.

Completed
- Schulich Medicine & Dentistry hosted delegation visits from Kenya, Rwanda and China.
- The Office of Global Health hosted workshops that fostered relationships with key funding organizations.

In progress
- Dr. John Denstedt, Special Advisor to the Dean for Health Globalization, Internationalization and Simulation, continues work to create partnerships in the Middle East, Brazil and China.
- Research programs have been initiated in East Africa, Peru and Brazil.
Strategic Direction #5
Lead in programs that foster growth and success of faculty and staff

Strategically grow faculty and staff development programs with particular focus on developing capacity in health leadership.

Completed
• A document outlining all leadership courses available to faculty members, entitled Professional Leadership Competencies, is now available.

In progress
• Workshops on standardizing Standard Operating Procedures were delivered throughout the School.
• ‘Focus’ workshops, demonstrating the value of managing an organization through process for efficiency were delivered.
• Training on all technology used in the delivery of education programs has been offered to all faculty.

Enhance the processes and support for adjunct and community faculty.

In progress
• Distributed medical education faculty have been invited to participate in the Talent Management Program, and currently, one Windsor Program faculty member sits on the Talent Management Steering Committee.
• Work continues to streamline the application process for community preceptors to apply to Clinical Faculty appointments at the School.

Target faculty recruitment and retention to build interdisciplinary teams that address needs/gaps to advance the science of the spectrum of aging.

Completed
• The Joint Professional Staff Human Resource Committee will now address faculty and basic scientists at partner hospital facilities. Denise Figlewicz, Vice Dean, Research & Innovation, is now a member of the committee.
• The Master of Public Health program has new faculty from a variety of backgrounds.

Advance the talent management initiatives for School faculty and staff to build leadership competencies, management skills and succession planning.

Completed
• The Talent Management Pilot Program saw five participants complete the program.
• A Talent Management Conference was initiated and will run annually.
• A number of mentorship activities, including a course on mentorship as part of the Teaching Certificate Program offered through CPD, have been initiated. Mentorship workshops are also being held on a regular basis.
• A Human Resources Coordinator role to manage both faculty and staff related activities, was created.

In progress
• The second cohort is currently completing the Talent Management Program.
• A learning community is being developed for those who have completed the Talent Management Program.
• Leadership Competencies are being included in the Clinical Faculty Career Development Plan.
• Suggestions from various Departmental Operations Reviews are being implemented, including the development of performance management standards for administrative staff, and a Leadership Development Program.
Create a branding strategy that aligns with Western and positions the School as an international leader in health research, education.

**Completed**
- The School’s brand is now aligned with the Western brand as all School materials use the same fonts, colours, formats and logo placement as other faculties across the University.
- Web and social media standards are aligned with Western, increasing the School’s online reputation.
- The Integrated Communications Strategy for the School is written and complete.
- Key messages have been developed for the School and will be rolled out throughout spring 2014.

**In progress**
- The migration of the School’s website to Cascade, the web content management system used by Western, continues.

Develop a robust, multi-faceted communications strategy that reaches across the School, the region and distributed network, and fosters a sense of belonging within the Schulich Medicine & Dentistry community.

**In progress**
- An enhanced culture of communicating and celebrating work and initiatives across the School, creating a sense of pride and belonging for all. This is being done through the creation of a comprehensive social media program, the establishment of five monthly newsletters for faculty, staff and students, a quarterly newsletter for alumni, an annual faculty and staff barbecue, and the Commitment to the Community program. Work has also been done on recognition programs including a thank you card campaign and the installation of new signage for Awards of Excellence winners. Additionally, a new “Celebrating our Culture” plan has been developed to be implemented in 2014-2015.
- Better tools and vehicles to communicate among faculty, staff, students and trainees are being introduced locally and regionally. This includes a new blog for UME students, the use of a new platform for e-newsletters resulting in more professional and engaging material, and the monthly Curriculum Committee Report.
- Fostering an active online community for the School overall, and for individual programs and interests.
- Work continues on a project to allow people from partner organizations to access the School’s WiFi networks when on campus to foster better connectivity and communications.
- New web and desktop conferencing technologies continue to be investigated to find a more effective and efficient form of remote communication.
- Work on establishing an active online community for the School as a whole, as well as individual programs continues.

Increase national and international media stories.

**In progress**
- The profile of the Media Relations Office within the School continues to rise with broad communications of School activities featured in the media.