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Terence R. Flotte, MD
Celia and Isaac Haidak Professor of Medical Education
Dean, Provost and Executive Deputy Chancellor
University of Massachusetts Medical School

May 1, 2017

Dear Dr. Shulkin,

This letter is in response to your letter to the AAMC Council of Deans, of March 24, 2017.

The University of Massachusetts Medical School (UMMS) is a free-standing health sciences university, and the only public medical school in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Our community includes 1,300 full-time faculty and approximately 1,100 students in three graduate schools. Current research grant funding is \$288 million, of which \$148 million was funding from the National Institutes of Health. In 2017, U.S. News & World Report ranked UMMS best in New England for primary care education and among the top 50 medical schools in the country for research.

Our faculty are world-renowned, and we count among our ranks a Nobel Laureate, five members of the National Academy of Sciences, seven investigators of the Howard Hughes Medical Institute and one Lasker awardee. Our major strengths include primary care, RNA biology, innate immunity and neuroscience.

In 2010, UMMS established a collaboration with the VA Central Western Massachusetts Healthcare System to create an academic, community-oriented, patient-centered environment for the care of local veterans. Our collaboration consists of academic partnerships, a VA/UMMS Grand Rounds forum and clinical services. Clinical service offerings are being implemented in three phases: During phase I in 2015, a specialty clinic offering podiatry, audiology and optometry services opened in our biotech park, located across the street from the Medical School.

In March 2017, phase II marked the beginning of behavioral health services for veterans in the Ambulatory Care Center on the Medical School campus. Behavioral health teams are working with veterans around issues of depression, suicide and homelessness. In addition, a cardiac clinic offering specialty cardiology services has moved into this space from its former location elsewhere in Worcester; and we look forward to adding an orthopedics clinic in the future.

The final third phase is a proposed VA community-based outpatient clinic (CBOC), which would result in the VA having an expanded footprint on campus and allow greater sharing of physicians and ancillaries. This new building will provide an ideal learning environment for medical students, residents and nurses.

We would hope in the future to be able to partner more flexibly with the VACWMA. This might include initiating wrap around services that would be provided by our clinical partner (UMass Memorial Health Care) to the families of veterans and to women veterans. The VACWMA Healthcare System does not include a large, central acute care hospital so the services we are well-equipped to provide are often those

not already available in our region. Importantly, partnerships such as those we have outlined improve access to and quality of care for veterans, helping them to receive specialty care closer to where they live, thereby avoiding costly - both in time and financial expense - trips to VA facilities in Boston.

In the past our joint initiatives have enjoyed strong support from our congressional delegation (particularly Congressman James McGovern) and from the government of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts of which we, as a public medical school, are a part.

We sincerely hope that greater flexibility would allow us to work together with VA and the state agencies to provide the best possible care, right here in Central and Western Massachusetts

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Terence R. Flotte', written in a cursive style.

Terence R. Flotte, MD
Celia and Isaac Haidak Professor of Medical Education
Dean, Provost and Executive Deputy Chancellor
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