Planning for Institute for Health and Healing Underway

Integrative health — which accounts for the comprehensive physical, emotional, mental, social, spiritual and environmental needs of the patient — combines the very best of conventional medicine, complementary healing and patient-centered care. The UVM Medical Center, The UVM College of Nursing and Health Sciences, the UVM College of Medicine and The Laura Mann Center for Integrative Health are working together to launch a comprehensive Institute for Health and Healing, allowing UVM and its partners to enrich the lives of patients throughout the region.

This effort, led by the College of Nursing and Health Sciences, recognizes a growing body of evidence showing that integrative medicine improves outcomes for patients across the spectrum. It also recognizes that, here in Vermont, many people already understand the importance of complementary medicine.

“This effort addresses a real need — one that has been expressed by our patients and our clinicians. It also meshes with our patient- and family-centered care approach.”

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DEAN OF THE COLLEGE OF NURSING AND HEALTH SCIENCES

creating the Institute is to build on the success of the existing program and employ a more coordinated approach to the practice of integrative health.

Over the past year, a collaborative team from the institutions involved has been working to bring this project to fruition. Achievements include:

• A case statement for the Institute will be presented in the fall as part of an extensive approval process.

• A steering committee with representation from the Medical Center, the College of Nursing and Health Sciences, the College of Medicine and the Laura Mann Center is overseeing four working groups including those with a clinical, education, research and outreach focus.

• The Education team is working on creating a minor, undergraduate certificate and a postgraduate certificate in integrative health. The Laura Mann Integrative Healthcare lecture series will continue to bring in national leaders to share best practices and latest research and innovations in the field. The Laura Mann Integrative Community Practitioner forum has been established to provide an ongoing structure for local health care providers to learn from and network with each other.

• A few physicians who have been trained in Integrative Health are consulting with primary care physicians.

• Tara Pacy, director of Clinical Support Services, and Chief Medical Officer Steve Leffler are working with specific areas to initiate feasibility studies for integrative practices.

“This has been a wonderful collaboration,” said Dr. Leffler, “and all the institutions involved are very excited about what it means — for our hospital and our community.”