

Press Release—Grant-funded Pilot Project in Functional Medicine

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The Institute for Functional Medicine (IFM) is excited to announce that IFM will be collaborating with the Tallahassee Memorial Family Medicine Residency Program (**FMRP**), Tallahassee, Florida to integrate functional medicine/nutrition into its curriculum and clinical activities.

The work will be funded by a \$1.2 million grant, acquired through the TMH (Tallahassee Memorial Hospital) Foundation, from the Agency for Health Care Administration, to **FMRP** faculty member Cathy Snapp, PhD, Director of Behavioral Medicine. In addition to Dr. Snapp, the team directing this initiative includes Narayanan Krishnamurthy, MD; Phillip Treadwell, PharmD; Dean Watson, MD; Ruth DeBusk, PhD, RD, IFM's lead faculty member for its functional nutrition course; and Rich Panico, MD and Michael Stone, MD, MS, consultants and IFM faculty members.

The pilot project will establish a Medical Symptom Reduction Clinic (**MSRC**) utilizing the functional medicine model and a chronic-care team approach for patient care. The **MSRC** will focus on patients refractory to standard medical care by addressing genetic vulnerability, diet and nutrition, lifestyle modification, and psychological and spiritual beliefs. Eligible patients with targeted chronic diseases such as diabetes, congestive heart failure (CHF), and COPD/asthma will be evaluated by residents, trained faculty preceptors, and experienced consultants who will personalize a treatment program of intensive lifestyle changes and polypharmacy modifications where feasible. Patients may then be referred to any of several treatment venues within the residency structure: nutritional counseling, lifestyle coaching, pharmaco-therapy management, therapeutic yoga, meditation, expressive writing, Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction, and cognitive behavioral/positive psychology treatment.

The **MSRC** will allow faculty and residents to gain expertise in designing personalized care utilizing a comprehensive assessment strategy for identifying and treating the fundamental causes of disease. Expensive drugs and other treatments are beyond the financial reach of many uninsured or underinsured patients. The senior on a fixed income, the CHF patient already paying hundreds of dollars a month for drugs, or the itinerant farm worker on a day wage all need to have safe and effective treatments that are affordable. This clinic will serve as a working laboratory where faculty, residents, and patients partner together to attain whole-person healing and wellness at lower cost.

A second important initiative in the grant is the development of a Transition Center (**TC**) with a focus on personalized care for individuals with chronic disease, particularly for vulnerable patients recently discharged from the hospital. One of the important outcome measures for the **TC** will be reductions in ER usage and hospitalizations.

Both new services will offer not only individual visits with healthcare providers, but also group visits, educational groups, free access to medications, medication counseling, nutritional assessment, psychiatric assessment, stress reduction, and integrative, individually designed lifestyle plans that address each patient's mind, body, and systems of meaning.

These changes to TMH's residency training program will provide settings in which physicians can spend more time with patients, listen fully to their histories, and look for interactions among genetic and environmental factors that can affect long-term health. They will also continue to provide immediate relief with established protocols for CHF, diabetes, and COPD/asthma.

IFM is uniquely suited to this collaboration. As the global leader in functional medicine education, IFM has trained thousands of clinicians in the science of interconnected systems and the value of the therapeutic partnership that, together, represent the heart of functional medicine. IFM publishes textbooks and monographs, offers accredited continuing medical education courses, delivers frequent webinars to clinicians around the globe, and has now enrolled its first group of practitioners seeking certification in functional medicine. Additional information about IFM is available at www.functionalmedicine.org.