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For immediate release

## **Patient safety center wins national education honor**

SAN ANTONIO (April 4, 2011) — A patient safety/clinical quality center at The University of Texas Health Science Center San Antonio is receiving national attention.

The Center for Patient Safety and Health Policy, established three years ago, received the 2011 Outstanding Educational Program award from the Association for Prevention Teaching and Research.

Jan E. Patterson, M.D., director of the center and professor of medicine, infectious diseases, and pathology at the Health Science Center, accepted the award March 18 in Washington, D.C. Dr. Patterson is associate dean for quality and lifelong learning in the School of Medicine and is with UT Medicine San Antonio, the practice of School of Medicine physicians.

The award recognizes innovation that advances undergraduate or graduate education in prevention and public health, specifically furthering student interest in the profession. The Center for Patient Safety and Health Policy concentrated its initial efforts on faculty, who would then become leaders in teaching quality and patient safety to students.

**Fostering everyday excellence**

The center's goals are to:

- increase safety and quality of everyday clinical care
- share best practices across health science centers in The University of Texas System and beyond
- train the next generation of health professionals in quality and safety

"We've increased the number of our faculty who are educated in quality improvement and patient safety systems, and we are building a critical mass of clinical leaders who are improving the quality and safety of care and sharing their ideas," Dr. Patterson said.

### **Dr. Shine's vision**

In 2008 Kenneth I. Shine, M.D., executive vice chancellor for health affairs of the UT System, called for the implementation of quality and safety education at every UT health institution. "It was Dr. Shine's vision that each UT health center would offer a course in quality improvement and clinical safety for faculty and staff. His vision was the genesis of the Center for Patient Safety and Health Policy," Dr. Patterson said.

In 2008 the center introduced a clinical safety and effectiveness course at the Health Science Center and led a team to implement it in the other UT System academic health centers. The UT M.D. Anderson Cancer Center previously piloted the course within the UT System.

### **Immunization, cancer, HIV projects**

"We have taught quality improvement and patient safety to key clinical leaders at the Health Science Center through this course," Dr. Patterson said. "To date we have educated 82 clinical leaders who have conducted 35 quality improvement projects. These projects include improving immunization rates in outpatients and hospital patients, reducing treatment times for cancer and increasing health literacy in our HIV clinic."

The Center for Clinical Safety and Health Policy also developed an inter-professional elective in HIV care that is open to nursing, medical, pharmacy, public health, health professions and other students. Three-dozen students have completed the elective.

### **Medical and nursing students**

Another project introduced quality and safety concepts into the standard curriculum for medical and nursing students. This year, all second-year medical students and upper-division nursing students are receiving the training. Dr. Patterson credits Suzanne Yarbrough, Ph.D., and M. Danet Lapiz Bluhm, Ph.D., of the School of Nursing and Kristy Kosub, M.D., and Mysti Schott, M.D., of the School of Medicine for their excellent work on this activity. The School of Medicine and School of Nursing received an award for this innovation and collaboration from the Institute for Healthcare Improvement Open School at its annual National Forum in December 2010.

### **Focus on prevention**

In accepting the award from the Association for Prevention Teaching and Research, Dr. Patterson said the following:

“I believe, as I know you do, that our medical and health professions training must increasingly emphasize wellness, prevention, quality and safety, and not just treatment of diseases. I am encouraged by the efforts of health care reform that will begin to incentivize health homes, accountable care, and quality and safety.”

The Center for Patient Safety and Health Policy was nominated for the award by Francisco González-Scarano, M.D., dean of the School of Medicine and vice president for medical affairs at the Health Science Center.

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Jan E. Patterson, M.D.