

SOUTHWESTERN NEWS

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GENERAL CLINICAL RESEARCH CENTER AT UT SOUTHWESTERN RECEIVES \$15.8 MILLION GOVERNMENT GRANT

DALLAS – March 25, 1998 –The General Clinical Research Center (GCRC) at UT Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas has been awarded a five-year, \$15.8 million renewal grant by The National Institutes of Health (NIH).

The GCRC, now in its 26th year of NIH funding, provides a setting for controlled patient-oriented investigations at the university. It relies on NIH funding to support a wide variety of cost-intensive inpatient and outpatient studies.

With 11 inpatient beds, an outpatient clinic that receives more than 5,000 visits annually, a specialized nursing staff, computer facility and laboratory, the center is available to UT Southwestern faculty members, residents and fellows who need a controlled environment for their investigations. The GCRC also offers a metabolic kitchen and research dietitian for studies that require special dietary needs.

NIH site investigators visited the GCRC to determine its eligibility for grant renewal. The center, which is in Parkland Memorial Hospital, was evaluated for the diversity and quality of research studies and strength of support services.

"We're very proud of the GCRC and the strides we've made here," said Dr. Khashayar Sakhaee, UT Southwestern professor of internal medicine and GCRC program director. "The latest grant confirms what we already knew — the center is an invaluable medical resource for the university and the country. The continued support of the NIH will enable us to meet the challenges of molecular biology and translate our findings into patient care."

Sakhaee holds the BeutiControl Cosmetics Inc. Professorship in Mineral Metabolism.

A significant portion of the grant will pay for upgrading the center's computer and

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laboratory equipment, said Carol Parcel, the GCRC's nurse administrator. Staffers also hope to establish a new lymphocyte-transformation lab, which would allow investigators to have blood cells immortalized to provide a continuous source of DNA and RNA for genetic studies.

"The possibilities are very exciting," said Dr. Charles Pak, the center's principal investigator and UT Southwestern's chief of mineral metabolism. "One of our primary goals at the GCRC is to create an environment conducive to first-rate research. By backing us in such a significant way, the NIH has acknowledged the scientific and humanitarian merit of what we're doing here."

Pak, the Donald W. Seldin Professor in Clinical Investigation, holds the Distinguished Chair in Mineral Metabolism and the Alfred L. and Muriel Rabiner Distinguished Academic Chair in Mineral Metabolism. He also directs the Robert T. Hayes Center for Mineral Metabolism Research.

Other primary investigators at the GCRC include Dr. Ponciano Cruz, professor of dermatology; Dr. Burton Combes, professor of internal medicine and the Mr. and Mrs. Bruce G. Brookshire Professor in Medicine; Dr. Abhimanyu Garg, associate professor of internal medicine; Dr. Scott Grundy, director of UT Southwestern's Center for Human Nutrition and holder of the Distinguished Chair in Human Nutrition; Dr. Robert Star, associate professor of internal medicine; and Dr. Ronald G. Victor, chief of hypertension.

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