

**Testimony Before the House Committee on Government Efficiency and Technology
Thursday, February 7, 2008
3:30 pm, Room 526-South, Kansas Statehouse
by
Bob Page, President and CEO, University of Kansas Hospital
and
Barbara Atkinson, MD, Executive Vice Chancellor, University of Kansas Medical
Center and Executive Dean, University of Kansas School of Medicine**

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

It is our pleasure to appear before you today at the request of Chairman Morrison to provide you with an update on the progress that has been achieved in forging a new affiliation agreement between the University of Kansas Hospital and the University of Kansas Medical Center.

During the 2007 Legislative Session this committee took a keen interest in the affiliation issue. We appreciated the concerns you shared then and we believe we have been responsive to those concerns in crafting our new partnership. We share your belief that both the University of Kansas Medical Center and the University of Kansas Hospital are vital to meeting the health needs of our state and its citizens. Together, as the state's only academic medical center, we are committed to providing exceptional patient care, excellent educational opportunities, strategic outreach and leading edge biomedical research. The agreement reached last month between the university and hospital provides a sound foundation upon which we can achieve even more together.

Throughout our negotiations we confronted many challenging and complex issues. With the commitment of a dedicated team of professionals our campus ultimately came together around an agreement we believe enhances our ability to fulfill our shared mission of improving the health of Kansans.

A new affiliation agreement has been approved by the University of Kansas Hospital Authority Board of Directors and the Kansas Board of Regents. This agreement replaces the previous agreement that was put in place nearly a decade ago. Our purpose in appearing before you today is to share with you the essence of this new agreement and why we believe it represents a "win-win" for all involved.

In addition to our institutions, Kansas University Physicians, Inc., our physician practice group, is a party to the new agreement. KUPI represents a valued partner in clinical care, education and research and their participation enhances the outcome achieved. Kirk Benson, MD, President of KUPI, could not join us today as he was previously scheduled to preside at a meeting of the KUPI Board of Directors this afternoon. We want to commend his valuable participation in the negotiations which resulted in the new agreement.

We hope Kansans justifiably take pride in the excellence that has been achieved at both the University of Kansas Hospital and the University of Kansas Medical Center. These agreements allow us to build on that success.

The agreement enhances the University's quest to achieve National Cancer Institute designation for the KU Cancer Center, it expands the number of physicians trained at KU by increasing the number of residents at the KU Hospital, it provides for expanded use of enhanced electronic medical records, it provides for a new building for outpatient care, and it better aligns the clinical enterprise across all three institutions. It provides more opportunities for Kansas students, it enhances support for research and it puts the patient first.

Importantly, it also creates a framework for collaborative joint planning giving us a tool to agree upon shared priorities and how best to fund those priorities. We are confident the new affiliation agreement provides a promising foundation upon which we can together achieve even more for our patients, students and state.

We recognize that at this point the agreement is just words on a page. We must now go about the work of giving the agreements life. We stand committed to work together to implement these agreements in a way that allows us to achieve their full promise. With your continued support we are confident Kansans will continue to look to their academic medical center as a valued source of hope and healing.

For this briefing we will rely on the power point presentation attached to this testimony.