

MEMO – Dean’s Office Review Update

March 27, 2014

To: Faculty of Medicine - Dean’s Office

From: Dr. Gavin C.E. Stuart, Dean, Faculty of Medicine and Vice Provost Health, UBC

Re: Update 5 - Administrative and Operational Review of the Dean’s Office

I, together with the Dean’s Executive Team and the Dean’s Office Review Steering Committee, have now received the Phase 1 report of the administrative and operational review of the Dean’s Office. We have had a chance to consider the report and would like to share key findings, and the report as a whole, with you.

This review was conducted between May and November 2013 by independent consultant Blake Hanna and Dave Shorthouse, Director of Strategic Initiatives, Office of VP Academic. When we engaged in the review process, we were seeking feedback on how the Dean’s Office is providing administrative and operational services to the entire Faculty and in doing so, point out both opportunities for improvement and the areas of success. Over the past 10 years, the emphasis and effort has been focused on expansion of our undergraduate, postgraduate and health professional programs across the province as well as our research enterprise, it was felt that this review was both timely and necessary.

Built upon input offered during the information-gathering stage from faculty and staff across the Faculty of Medicine, including within the Dean’s Office, comments and concerns were categorized under three high-level areas: Culture, Complexity and Communication. As the review did not include specific comments made, I believe that at a high level this is telling us that we could be doing a better job ensuring that we have a client focused approach, that there is a lack of clarity about the different service areas and operations within the Dean’s Office, and that the people we support need to be able to know what they can expect from us.

I have no hesitation in committing to continue making improvements in all of these areas. As a first step, I will be asking for a meeting with all Directors within the Dean’s Office to discuss the report in more detail and ask for their, and your, active participation in identifying opportunities for change. I will also be discussing the review with other leadership groups within the Faculty to ensure that we use this as a springboard for identifying ways we can focus our energy and resources to better support our units to achieve the academic mission of the Faculty of Medicine.

This report did not provide a specific blueprint on how to “fix” the way the Faculty is supported for administrative and operational purposes. It did, however, recommend that further work be

done to better understand the strengths, the gaps, the steps we can take to seek an optimal operating model for the Dean's Office and the potential implications for this. One approach to that is to engage with another consulting firm to look at each area of the Dean's Office more thoroughly and systematically. Before considering this approach further, I would like to work with the Directors of the Dean's Office and other leaders in the Faculty to understand the issues more clearly, and look to external assistance in specific areas if it is determined that is necessary.

The report did identify a number of immediate actions and quick wins. The immediate actions included communicating the results of this review broadly, launch an immediate effort to document and validate the current financial baseline, and reconsider the leadership structure currently in place within the Dean's Office. Progress has been made in each of these areas, in particular we have made great strides in better understanding both the Dean's Office and Faculty wide financial picture, which has enabled much more transparent and in-depth conversations around our financial situation across the Faculty. We have also spent the last three months reviewing the leadership roles within the Dean's Executive Team to ensure we have a model that can appropriately support this organization. I can also report that we are extending the current interim reporting relationship of MedIT leadership to UBC Chief Information Officer, Oliver Grüter – Andrew, beyond March 31, 2014. This ongoing and mutually-supportive relationship with the University's central information technology area benefits the Faculty as we continue the conversation about our future IT resource needs.

In terms of quick wins, the review identified some "pain points" across the Faculty, where specific attention in the short term would have significant benefits. Those included clinical faculty payments, clarification of the financial picture and various funding sources, improvements to the Promotion and Tenure process, and applying a proven change management approach to "in-flight" initiatives such as the financial realignment. Again, I'm very pleased that work was being done in each of those areas even while the review was being done and I believe significant progress has been made. The "Teaching, Tracking and Payment project" that has been underway for over a year has focused directly on mechanisms for clinical faculty payments. We are at the final stages of choosing a vendor and moving forward with that project, and I am confident that the system being created will substantively decrease the amount of manual effort required by each unit to get their clinical faculty paid for the important services they provide us. As stated above, we are still in the process of understanding the full financial picture, but are significantly further ahead than we were even three months ago and I am very pleased with the progress being made in this area. Finally, while the process for promotion and tenure reviews is largely mandated by the collective agreement, we have made a number of important changes to the pieces within our control, mainly the Dean's Office review of the files. This has including restructuring the faculty HR team to better distribute the workload, and to have Department Heads and School Directors present files directly to the Faculty Appointments, Promotion and Tenure Committee. Both of these changes have had a dramatic impact on the length of time it takes the Committee to see and make a decision on a file, and subsequently the entire process has been shortened by weeks if not months. Finally, we have now successfully moved finance staff into the cluster

structure, which was an effort that required support both from various Dean's Office units for the procedural elements, but also from each unit within the Faculty that was impacted by the change.

At its heart, the Faculty of Medicine contributes to the health of individuals and communities locally, nationally, and internationally by fostering excellence, innovation and scholarship in education, research, and care. It is also a large and increasingly complex organization that demands discipline and attention to administrative detail, just like any other institution endowed with public funds and the public's trust.

I am most grateful to each of you for the contributions you make to the Faculty every day and for your efforts to uphold our four key values: Excellence, Mutual Respect, Caring and Integrity. This review process, and the measures that will flow from it, will help us improve our effectiveness in supporting a respected and vital Faculty of Medicine. I look forward to advancing this initiative with you.

Thank you.