

## Palomar Pomerado Health, UC San Diego Medical School Partnership Improves North County Access to Clinical Trial

November 10, 2008 |

**P**alomar Pomerado Health (PPH) and the University of California, San Diego (UC San Diego) School of Medicine have entered into an innovative partnership that enhances options for patients needing leading-edge therapy, expands clinical research at UC San Diego and strengthens the clinical research program at PPH.

The new agreement creates greater coordination between the Institutional Review Boards (IRBs) – committees that review and approve research trials of promising new therapies and procedures – at the two institutions. More than 400 open clinical trials include studies for complex diseases like Alzheimer’s disease, arthritis, cancer, diabetes, heart disease, stroke, and many more. IRB approval of clinical research is required before any study can begin.

“We are excited about this new relationship with Palomar Pomerado Health, a leading provider in North County, because it will increase access for patients at both institutions to promising new approaches to preventing and treating disease and injury,” said Gary S. Firestein, M.D., Dean of Translational Medicine and Professor of Medicine at UC San Diego School of Medicine. “We are also enthusiastic about the new opportunities for collaboration with an outstanding group of health care providers.”

Under this agreement, a study approved at one institution can also be performed at the other. This dramatically decreases administrative delays for collaborative studies between UC San Diego and PPH without sacrificing safety and oversight. Thus, PPH patients will have greater access to UCSD clinical trials and vice versa. As a result, it will be easier for patients in North County to receive novel therapies for diseases for which existing options are inadequate.

Richard Just, M.D., Medical Director of the PPH Research Institute and Chairman of the Investigational Review Committee at Palomar Pomerado Health, and Chief Executive Officer and Medical Director of the Research Department at San Diego Pacific Oncology & Hematology Associates, Inc., has led the effort to bring high-caliber clinical research activities to the community hospital setting.

“Traditionally, community physicians have had little involvement in clinical trials, yet medical knowledge and therefore medical care only progress through research,” said Just. “We’re pleased to join forces with UCSD in the quest to advance medical knowledge while increasing the number of patients who will have access to important and potentially lifesaving investigational therapies.”

The agreement also enhances educational programs in which UC San Diego provides training and symposia for PPH physicians and staff in all aspects of clinical research. It will provide access to the university’s core facilities and other important research resources such as sophisticated imaging methods, and analysis of patient samples (such as blood) with leading-edge technology to monitor the treatment for safety and effectiveness.

### **About Palomar Pomerado Health**

Palomar Pomerado Health, California's largest public health district, is North County's most comprehensive health-care delivery system, nationally recognized for clinical excellence in cardiac care, women's services, cancer, orthopedics, trauma, rehabilitation and behavioral health services. As the largest employer in Inland North County, with

more than 3,600 employees and 700 physicians, Palomar Pomerado Health was named San Diego County's Best Place to Work in 2006. Facilities include Palomar Medical Center, Pomerado Hospital, Villa Pomerado, Palomar Continuing Care Center and the Jean McLaughlin Women's Center and expresscare retail health centers inside Albertsons. Please visit [www.pph.org](http://www.pph.org) for more information on our comprehensive services and facilities.

### **About UC San Diego Health Sciences**

UC San Diego Health Sciences encompasses the School of Medicine, the Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, and UCSD Medical Center – the system of patient services provided at UCSD Medical Center-Hillcrest; UCSD Thornton Hospital-La Jolla; Shiley Eye Center, and the Moores UCSD Cancer Center, one of 41 centers in the United States to hold a National Cancer Institute (NCI) designation as a Comprehensive Cancer Center. As a top-ranked academic medical institution, the role of UC San Diego Health Sciences is to consistently provide both local and global leadership in improving health through innovative research, education and patient care.

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