

Dr. Dilip Jeste Named Director Of UCSD's Stein Institute For Research On Aging

March 19, 2004

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Dilip Jeste, M.D., professor of psychiatry and neurosciences at the University of California, San Diego (UCSD) School of Medicine, and Estelle and Edgar Levi Chair in Aging, has been named director of UCSD's Sam and Rose Stein Institute for Research on Aging (SIRA).

An organized research unit at UCSD since 1983, SIRA's goal is to foster healthy aging by supporting advances in patient care through innovative research, training and education. Under the SIRA umbrella, investigators study the causes of common diseases of late life, with the ultimate objective of identifying and developing improved methods of prevention and treatment. SIRA also offers monthly free public lectures on various health topics, distributes an informative newsletter, provides a Faculty Collaborative Grant Program, and is active in the recruitment of students into the field of aging.

Edward W. Holmes, M.D., UCSD vice chancellor of health sciences and dean of the UCSD School of Medicine, noted that "Dr. Jeste is the perfect individual to head our aging institute in a time when people over age 65 are the fastest growing segment of the population. His enthusiasm, outstanding research background, academic leadership and professional experience in working with older individuals, will enhance SIRA's role in research, education and training."

"I am particularly interested in furthering research in successful aging," Jeste said. "Today, one can see people in their eighties and nineties who are functioning remarkably well. This should become a rule rather than an exception. Indeed, equally important to increasing longevity, is the issue of improving the functioning and quality of life in older age."

A specialist in geriatric psychiatry, Jeste has been widely honored for his leadership in psychiatric research, education, and clinical care. A member of the UCSD faculty since 1986, he serves as chief of the UCSD Division of Geriatric Psychiatry, which includes the Senior Behavioral Health Program, offering inpatient and outpatient services for older patients with mental health needs. Jeste started the geriatric psychiatry research program at UCSD. Today it is one of the largest such programs in the country, with more than 70 members including faculty, trainees, and staff.

Also a geriatric psychiatrist with the Veterans Affairs San Diego Healthcare System, Jeste is involved in numerous programs that reach out into the San Diego Community. Among these is his role as principal investigator of the Advanced Center for Interventions and Services Research, which focuses on older people with schizophrenia and other psychotic disorders. This \$7.5 million effort funded by the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), takes place in partnership with the San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency's Adult Mental Health Services. Its goal is to develop and test effective new therapies for middle-aged and elderly people with schizophrenia and other chronic psychotic disorders.

Jeste is also the principal investigator of a research fellowship program at UCSD that was recently renewed by the NIMH with a perfect priority score of 100 - a very rare occurrence in the funding of federal grants. In addition,

he leads two innovative national research training grants in geriatric mental health, one for post-doctoral fellows and junior faculty, and another one for undergraduate, graduate, and medical students. These programs have been highly successful in the training of the next generation of the scientists in the field.

Jeste earned his D.P.M. from the College of Physicians and Surgeons in Bombay, and his M.D. from the University of Bombay. He completed his residency in psychiatry at the Cornell Medical Center and his neurology residency at George Washington University Medical Center. Prior to joining the UCSD faculty he held positions in the Neuropsychiatry Branch of the NIMH, Saint Elizabeth Hospital; and at the George Washington University Medical Center.

Jeste was the lead author of the widely cited 1999 report, "Consensus Statement on the Upcoming Crisis in Geriatric Mental Health: Research Agenda for the Next Two Decades," published in the Archives of General Psychiatry. He has received honors and awards from various national organizations including the American Psychiatric Association, the Society for Biological Psychiatry, the Institute of Living, the American Association for Geriatric Psychiatry, the NIMH, and the VA. He has published six books and over 400 papers. Jeste has been the founding president of the International College of Geriatric Psychoneuropharmacology and has also served as president of the American Association for Geriatric Psychiatry and the West Coast College of Biological Psychiatry.

He is listed by the Institute of Scientific Information (ISI) as one of the world's most cited authors, comprising less than 0.5% of all the publishing researchers of the last two decades. He was appointed the editor-in-chief of the American Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry in 2001. Last year, the journal was named by the ISI as the most improved journal among all the psychiatry and psychology journals in terms of increase in the number of citations.

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