

UC San Diego Announces New Center for Migration and Health

Part of UC Institute to Address Global Health

November 9, 2009

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The University of California, San Diego will lead a new Center of Expertise on Migration and Health as one of three multi-campus initiatives launched by the University of California system under the auspices of the new UC Global Health Institute.

The new center is headed by Steffanie Strathdee, PhD, Harold Simon Professor, Associate Dean of Global Health Sciences and chief of the UCSD's Division of Global Public Health, and Marc Schenker, MD, MPH, public health sciences professor at UC Davis, with partner campuses Berkeley, Irvine, UCLA, Merced, Riverside, UCSD, Santa Barbara and Santa Cruz. Co-directors are Wayne Cornelius, Professor Emeritus of Political Science at UCSD and Xochitl Castaneda from UC Berkeley.

Migration is a global phenomenon involving hundreds of millions of people, with major social and economic impacts on both countries of origin and destinations. In the U.S., California is by far the most affected by these population movements. The new Center of Expertise on Migration and Health will be the first multidisciplinary, university-based program in the world devoted to systematically studying the health consequences of international population movements and developing more effective strategies to address them.

"Such a program will serve the needs of migrants and refugees in California and around the world, by harnessing the wealth of knowledge and experience of migration and health researchers from various disciplines across all the UC campuses," said Strathdee, who will lead the Southern hub of the Center. Strathdee was the recent recipient of a grant for \$100,000 over two years from The Fogarty International Center at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to support development of the new Center.

The research agenda at the Center of Expertise on Migration and Health will focus on four key areas: behavioral and socio-economic determinants of health, health outcomes in migrants' communities of origin and destination, child health, and health care delivery and policy. Forty scholars at ten UC campuses have agreed to serve as the Center's initial core faculty.

After more than two years of system-wide planning, the UC Global Health Institute will be officially launched on November 9 with a conference hosted by UCSF Global Health Sciences and the Center for Strategic and International Studies. A report titled "The Importance of the Global Health Sector in California: An Evaluation of the Economic Impact" (<http://ucghi.universityofcalifornia.edu/news/eir/>), conducted at UC Riverside, will also be released at that time.

Global health represents a \$75 billion impact on the California economy, according to the report, an impact that includes an estimated \$59.8 billion in revenue generated each year by California companies addressing global health needs, and an additional \$8 billion in tax revenue - roughly seven percent of total state taxes.

Among the top five priorities of the NIH, global health is also an increasingly popular focus for students in the UC system. The UCSD Center will also help develop a system-wide master's degree in Global Health, according to Cornelius.

"Training the next generation of health care researchers and practitioners to understand and deal more effectively with California's immigrant and refugee communities is a vital necessity," said Cornelius, who is Director Emeritus of UCSD's Center for Comparative Immigration Studies. "Bringing social scientists and public health specialists together to provide this training is the best way to do it."

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