

June 1, 2010

deShazo to step down as chair of the Department of Medicine

JACKSON, Miss. – Dr. Richard D. deShazo, professor of medicine and pediatrics and Billy S. Guyton Distinguished Professor at University of Mississippi Medical Center, will step down as chair of the Department of Medicine July 1, 2010. Dr. Shirley Schlessinger, professor of medicine and associate dean for graduate medical education, will serve as interim chair.

Dr. James E. Keeton, UMMC vice chancellor for health affairs and dean of the medical school, made the announcement Monday.

Dr. deShazo will retain his faculty appointments in medicine and pediatrics and continue to see patients. He will also work on a number of special projects both in the Department of Medicine and on behalf of the vice chancellor's office, including a health literacy effort focused on the Mississippi Delta and public outreach through Mississippi Public Broadcasting.

Keeton said Dr. deShazo served with distinction as chair for 12 years and was previously chair of medicine at the University of South Alabama. During this period, he has served on the American Board of Internal Medicine, American Board of Allergy and Immunology, American Board of Medical Specialists, and as president of the Association of Professors of Medicine, the national group of chairs of departments of medicine. During his tenure at UMMC, the Department of Medicine has tripled its size, extramural support, publications and clinical productivity. He has served as a member of the Council of Academic Societies of the Association of American Medical Colleges for many years and will continue to be active in that organization.

"I want to thank Dr. deShazo for his leadership and Dr. Schlessinger for her service in this interim role," said Keeton.