

From the University of Mississippi Medical Center Division of Public Affairs

UMMC REDUCING STAFFING BY 115 EMPLOYEES

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JACKSON, Miss. – The University of Mississippi Medical Center is reducing the size of its workforce by approximately 115 employees today.

Coupled with a decision to not fill 90 vacant positions, the UMMC workforce will be about 2 percent smaller than it was at the end of 2011, according to Dr. James E. Keeton, vice chancellor for health affairs.

Keeton said a number of factors combined to cause the cutbacks in staffing, but the most compelling are the poor economy and the increase in uninsured and underinsured patients. Weak economic conditions have dampened demand for clinical services and increased the ranks of the state's unemployed, who often lose their health insurance along with their jobs.

"This is a very tough decision but it is imperative that we align our costs with our revenues," Keeton said. "I am truly sorry for the people who are affected but we have no other option."

In addition to the poor economy, UMMC has been contending with the considerable costs of implementing an electronic health record in order to comply with federal regulations.

Affected employees include administrators, technicians, nurses and support staff.

"Health care is facing many unknowns at the local, state and federal levels and we have to take precautions to respond to that uncertainty," Keeton said. "Over the long term, the need for health care and the health professionals we're training to provide it will only grow."

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The University of Mississippi Medical Center, located in Jackson, is the state's only academic medical center. University of Mississippi Health Care represents the clinical programs of the Medical Center and includes University Hospitals and Health System and University Physicians, the faculty group practice. UMMC encompasses five health science schools, including medicine, nursing, health related professions, dentistry and graduate studies, as well as the site where University of Mississippi pharmacy students do their clinical training. The Medical Center's threefold mission is to educate tomorrow's health-care professionals, conduct innovative research to improve human health, and to provide the highest quality care available to the state's citizens. A major goal of the Medical Center is the improvement of the health of Mississippians and the elimination of health disparities. For more information, contact the Division of Public Affairs at 601-984-1100 or visit us on the Web at <http://publicaffairs.umc.edu/>

