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## **Vidant Health and East Carolina University sign agreement to integrate physician practices**

**GREENVILLE, N.C.** – East Carolina University (ECU) and Vidant Health today announced the signing of a formal agreement to integrate [ECU Physicians](#), the clinical practice of The Brody School of Medicine at ECU, with [Vidant Medical Group](#), Vidant’s multi-specialty physician group subsidiary into the new entity created last year.

The new organization will focus on creating innovative systems and processes that reduce the cost for patients, increase access to new therapies and technologies, reduce the impact of chronic disease in the area and expand the training sites available for medical students. Another goal is to increase the opportunity for clinical trials that benefit rural areas. The combined expertise from the two organizations brings the medical research capabilities and faculty expertise unique to ECU together with specialized clinical expertise and operational capabilities at Vidant Health in all of the communities it serves.

The announcement comes after months of collaboration and work by the two entities. The terms of the agreement meet the parameters set forth by the University of North Carolina Board of Governors.

“The hard work and commitment of generations of leaders, combined with the visionary thinking and persistence of so many who serve this area today has borne fruit,” said ECU Chancellor Cecil Staton. “This is an agreement forged from one idea, that together we can create a better way to deliver health care to even the most rural areas of eastern North Carolina. The combination of skills from both organizations into one new entity flows naturally from a longstanding partnership. It also mirrors similar developments at other health care institutions across the country in response to significant changes in the health care landscape.”

“We have set ambitious goals to coordinate access, education, research and clinical trials that further enhance the missions of these two acclaimed organizations,” said Vidant Chief Executive Officer Dr. Michael Waldrum. “Our shared vision is to be the national model for rural health and wellness by creating a premier, trusted academic delivery system for the benefit of the people of eastern North Carolina.”

Both ECU and Vidant believe the new clinically-integrated entity will be better able—through its combined expertise—to respond to the changing health care environment.

“Health care across the country is experiencing incredible change, and with that change comes a lot of uncertainty. Regardless of what happens on the national landscape, we are better positioned to care for patients, their families and the communities we serve if we do this important work together,” said Waldrum. “The mission of both organizations, and the mission of the newly formed integrated physician entity, is about rural health care leadership, and we believe today’s announcement is a major step forward in ensuring we provide the very best care at the most affordable price.”

The new company's board, chaired by the dean of the medical school, includes six members appointed by Vidant and five by ECU. While financial risk and responsibility for the new entity rest with Vidant, the new entity is legally structured to operate in support of the mission of Brody School of Medicine. The medical school’s relationship with the UNC System and the state of North Carolina remains unchanged.

As part of the agreement, Vidant will make an initial \$35 million payment to ECU and an annual \$14.25 million mission support payment to Brody School of Medicine for the next 30 years. The new organization is expected to begin operations in 2018.

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#### **About Vidant Health**

Vidant Health is a mission-driven, 1,447-bed health system that annually serves more than 1.4 million people in 29 eastern North Carolina counties. The not-for-profit system is made up of 12,000 employees, eight hospitals, home health, hospice, wellness centers, and Vidant Medical Group, a multi-specialty physician and provider group with more than 420 providers in more than 80 practice sites in eastern North Carolina. Vidant is affiliated with The Brody School of Medicine at East Carolina University. As a major resource for health services and education, Vidant has a mission to improve the health and well-being of eastern North Carolina. For more information, visit [www.vidanthealth.com](http://www.vidanthealth.com).

#### **About East Carolina University**

East Carolina University, or ECU as it’s best known, offers more than 85 bachelor’s, 72 master’s and 19 doctoral degrees to nearly 29,000 students on its Greenville, North Carolina, campus and through an acclaimed online learning program. The university’s school of medicine is recognized nationally for producing primary care physicians, cardiovascular research, advanced robotic surgery as well as obesity and diabetes breakthroughs. ECU also boasts the largest business school enrollment and largest number of new nurses and education professionals produced by a four-year North Carolina university, in addition to the largest studio art program in the state. Located near Atlantic coast harbors where pirates once roamed, ECU adopted the “Pirates” mascot in 1934 for its athletics program and competes in NCAA Division 1. The university has a globally recognized academic underwater archaeology program and enjoys a supportive relationship with the U.S. military services.