

Six Children's Hospitals, Including Diamond Children's, Unite to Improve Pediatric Health

TUCSON, Ariz. – Six leading children's hospitals have signed an agreement to form the Sanford Children's Genomic Medicine Consortium, a cutting-edge collaboration of children's hospitals inspired by the vision of philanthropist Denny Sanford.

Founding members include Sanford Children's, Children's Hospital Los Angeles, Rady Children's Hospital-San Diego, Children's Hospital Colorado, Children's Hospitals and Clinics of Minnesota and Banner Children's at Diamond Children's Medical Center in Tucson.

"Bringing all of these great facilities and brilliant minds together is a major step in improving treatments and finding cures for what ails kids," said Sanford. "There is clear value in bringing these teams together with unified goals and my hope is that it will speed up necessary advancements so children won't have to suffer."

The consortium is committed to the betterment of the health of all children through the integration of genomic medicine into pediatric care. Genomic medicine focuses on the use of genetic and genomic information to personalize care for each child, allowing for improved treatment outcomes in a host of common and rare childhood diseases.

"This groundbreaking collaboration among premier children's hospitals and leaders in genomic and pediatric care will help set the standard for sharing resources and collaborating in research and education in personalized medicine for children," said Gene Hoyme, MD, medical director for the Sanford Children's Genomic Medicine Consortium and a clinical professor in the Division of Genetics and Behavioral Pediatrics at the [University of Arizona Department of Pediatrics](#).

"As a pediatric clinical geneticist, I'm excited about the improved clinical outcomes that the consortium's cutting-edge genomic medical innovations will bring to the millions of young patients served by our members," said Dr. Hoyme, who also serves as senior adviser to the [Center for Applied Genetics and Genomic Medicine](#) at the University of Arizona Health Sciences (UAHS).

Dr. Hoyme, Tom Dickson, CEO of Banner – University Medicine Center Tucson and South and Kenneth Ramos, MD, PhD, PharmB, director of the UAHS Center for Applied Genetics and Genomic Medicine, associate vice president for precision health sciences and interim dean of the UA College of Medicine – Phoenix, are part of the executive committee of the consortium.

"Banner Children's is pleased to be a part of this innovative effort to give hope to children and families throughout the nation. The agreement will create innovative joint research programs and combine research capabilities to expedite genetic and genomic discoveries that will save lives," Dickson said.

"We are excited to contribute the precision medicine resources of the UAHS Center for Applied Genetics and Genomic Medicine and its director Dr. Ramos, in partnership with Banner and Dr. Hoyme and the affiliated hospitals to advance precision medicine into research and discovery for the clinical and preventative care of children," said Joe G.N. "Skip" Garcia, MD, senior vice president for Health Sciences at the University of Arizona.

"The Children's Genomic Medicine Consortium will make history by bringing genomic medicine into primary and subspecialty care for children and improving the quality of pediatric health care in the nation," said Kenneth S. Ramos, MD, PhD, director of the UAHS Center.

In addition to setting a new standard for the clinical practice of personalized medicine in children, the consortium also will improve pediatric care through innovative joint research programs and genomic health care workforce development. The combined research capabilities of the member hospitals will expedite genetic and genomic discovery through economies of scale and access to a large and racially and ethnically diverse population. The consortium serves as a focal point for developing relationships with industry and governmental entities and provides for shared training opportunities for physicians, genetic counselors, nurses and other health professionals.

The consortium also has established an external scientific advisory board with representation from industry leaders such as the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American College of Medical Genetics and Genomics and the National Human Genome Research Institute to provide guidance on the scientific direction of the group's efforts. Sanford Health is providing administrative staffing for the consortium.

About Sanford Health

Sanford Health is an integrated health system headquartered in the Dakotas. It is one of the largest health systems in the nation with 43 hospitals and nearly 250 clinics in nine states and four countries. Sanford Health's 27,000 employees, including 1,400 physicians, make it the largest employer in the Dakotas. Nearly \$1 billion in gifts from philanthropist Denny Sanford have allowed for several initiatives, including global children's clinics, genomic medicine and specialized centers researching cures for type 1 diabetes, breast cancer and other diseases. For more information, visit sanfordhealth.org.

About Banner Children's at Diamond Children's Medical Center

Banner Children's at Diamond Children's Medical Center provides pediatric care for children, from newborns to teens. Services include emergency care, heart disorders, traumatic brain injury, autism and developmental disorders, cancer, diabetes and endocrinology, gastrointestinal and nutritional disorders, neurological problems, orthopedics, intensive care needs and more. It is the only pediatric medical facility in Arizona connected to an academic research facility — the University of Arizona Steele Children's Research Center — where physician-scientists conduct groundbreaking basic science and translational research to advance children's health. For more information, visit www.BannerChildrens.com/DiamondChildrens.

About the University of Arizona Health Sciences

The University of Arizona Health Sciences is the statewide leader in biomedical research and health professions training. The UA Health Sciences includes the UA Colleges of Medicine (Phoenix and Tucson), Nursing, Pharmacy and Mel and Enid Zuckerman College of Public Health, with main campus locations in Tucson and the growing Phoenix Biomedical Campus in downtown Phoenix. From these vantage points, the UA Health Sciences reaches across the state of Arizona and the greater Southwest to provide cutting-edge health education, research, patient care and community outreach services. A major economic engine, the UA Health Sciences employs almost 5,000 people, has nearly 1,000 faculty members and garners more than \$126 million in research grants and contracts annually. For more information: <http://uahs.arizona.edu>.

<http://bannerhealth.mediaroom.com/Six-Childrens-Hospitals-Including-Diamond-Childrens-Unite-to-Improve-Pediatric-Health>