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## **Uniformed Services University and National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute Launch Collaborative Health Initiative Research Program**

**Bethesda, Md** – Research on the causes, prevention, mitigation and treatment of heart, lung, and blood diseases, and sleep disorders – all of which affect the readiness of the uniformed services and the health of military families – is the impetus for a new partnership between the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU) and the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI), National Institutes of Health.

The Collaborative Health Initiative Research Program, or CHIRP, is headed by Director and principal investigator Harvey B. Pollard, M.D., Ph.D., chair of USU's Department of Anatomy, Physiology and Genetics, and Deputy Director David Scott, M.D., professor and vice chair for Research, USU Department of Medicine, with representatives from the NHLBI and other USU members serving on the Executive Steering Committee.

CHIRP will initially support pilot research proposals that focus on diseases and disorders of particular relevance to the U.S. military health system—trauma, sepsis, transfusion emergency care, and health promotion—and key concerns of the NHLBI such as asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), sickle cell disease, and various cardiovascular conditions that affect all Americans, including those in the military.

To examine these research priorities, CHIRP may integrate clinical epidemiology databases with whole genome sequencing and possibly other “-omics”, such as proteomics or metabolomics. This may help researchers identify better predictors of disease onset and outcomes, as well as assess treatment responses. Projects will be supported by multiple research cores at USU, including Sequencing and other –Omics, Data Storage, Data Commons, and Informatics Cores.

Because service members and their families have access to universal health care without economic barriers, this initiative also presents an opportunity to examine diseases of importance to under-represented populations without the complication introduced by disparate access to care.

“CHIRP is an exciting opportunity for the NHLBI and USU to combine our strengths—including systems biology, large cohort studies, and clinical outcomes database experience—to advance priority health questions with an eye toward precision medicine,” said NHLBI Director Gary H. Gibbons, M.D. “Precision medicine offers an approach to disease prevention and treatment that considers the unique genes and environment of each patient with the ultimate goal of delivering the right treatment, at the right time, to the right patient.”

“President Obama has recognized the enormous potential that precision medicine offers to cure or ameliorate diseases which have thwarted our best efforts up until now,” said Rice. “USU is pleased to play our part in answering the President’s challenge through this important initiative.”

## *Learning to Care for Those in Harm's Way*

### **About the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences**

The Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, founded by an act of Congress in 1972, is the nation's federal health sciences university and the academic heart of the Military Health System. USU students are primarily active duty uniformed officers in the Army, Navy, Air Force and Public Health Service who receive specialized education in tropical and infectious diseases, TBI and PTSD, disaster response and humanitarian assistance, global health, and acute trauma care. A large percentage of the university's more than 5,200 physician and 1,000 advanced practice nursing alumni are supporting operations around the world, offering their leadership and expertise. USU also has graduate programs in biomedical sciences and public health committed to excellence in research, and in oral biology. The University's research program covers a wide range of clinical and other topics important to both the military and public health. For more information about USU and its programs, visit [www.usuhs.edu](http://www.usuhs.edu).