



Vice Chair of Research
Department of Pediatrics
University of Oklahoma College of Medicine
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

THE SEARCH

The University of Oklahoma Department of Pediatrics in the College of Medicine and Oklahoma Children's OU Health seek an inaugural Vice Chair of Research at a pivotal moment of academic advancement. This role offers an accomplished investigator and academic leader the opportunity to shape the direction of pediatric research at the state's only tertiary and quaternary pediatric system and to play a central role in the University's broader effort to elevate its research enterprise. The position carries meaningful scope, visibility, and influence and is designed for a leader motivated to build, integrate, and scale research programs with lasting impact.

The [University of Oklahoma Health Campus](#) is the state's comprehensive academic health campus, home to seven health-related colleges and a large, growing biomedical research enterprise. The [Department of Pediatrics](#) is the largest department in the [College of Medicine](#), encompassing 18 specialty sections and more than 220 faculty members who serve as the primary medical staff for Oklahoma Children's outpatient services and the hospital. The department benefits from strong institutional and philanthropic support and a foundation of productive research programs across multiple pediatric subspecialties.

The creation of the Vice Chair of Research role reflects a clear institutional mandate to strengthen and scale pediatric research as part of a broader effort to position the Department of Pediatrics and Oklahoma Children's as a nationally recognized Children's Health organization and a leading provider of pediatric specialty care in the South Central United States. The University is investing heavily in research growth, including Project 200, an ambitious initiative to recruit 200 research-intensive faculty across the University system, with a significant concentration at the Health Campus. Pediatrics is expected to play a central role in this expansion.

Reporting to the Chair of Pediatrics, the Vice Chair of Research will lead this next phase by articulating and executing a cohesive research vision; strengthening and coordinating infrastructure, including improving pre- and post-award processes, clinical research support, and investigator development pathways; expanding clinical and translational research; and fostering collaboration across pediatric sections and with adult departments and institutional partners. The role is supported by a robust institutional ecosystem and is backed by a clear commitment to space, resources, and authority to enable success.

The ideal candidate will bring experience, a strong mentoring record, and demonstrated success building programs, teams, or research enterprises. The successful candidate will be motivated by recruiting and mentoring the next generation of pediatric investigators, including physician-scientists, and by building sustainable research teams aligned with institutional growth initiatives. For a leader motivated to build something enduring, this role offers the opportunity to shape an evolving academic culture, elevate pediatric research, and influence the health of children and future providers across Oklahoma.

Applicants should hold an M.D., D.O., Ph.D., or equivalent degree; be eligible for appointment at the associate or full professor level; be board-certified in Pediatrics (if applicable); and demonstrate a nationally recognized record of accomplishment, including sustained external funding and leadership in collaborative research programs.

The University of Oklahoma College of Medicine has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to assist with this search. Inquiries, nominations, and applications will be treated confidentially and should be directed to the firm as indicated at the end of this document.

ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT OF PEDIATRICS

The Department of Pediatrics serves as the academic home for [Oklahoma Children's](#) OU Health and anchors children's care across the state. It is the largest department in the College of Medicine, encompassing 18 pediatric specialty sections and more than 220 faculty who collectively support a comprehensive clinical, research, education, and advocacy mission.

The department's research enterprise spans the full spectrum of pediatric investigation, including discovery and innovation, translational science, clinical trials, and health services research. Areas of active research include neonatology, endocrinology, hematology and oncology, genetics, and a vibrant body of clinician-led research across multiple sub-specialities alongside additional areas of opportunity that reflect the department's clinical breadth and statewide mission.

Clinically, the department supports a rapidly expanding children's outpatient and hospital platform with increasing patient volume, complexity, and geographic reach. This environment offers substantial opportunities to strengthen clinical and translational research, including investigator-initiated studies and clinical trials, while maintaining a strong focus on education and training.

Research, education, and advocacy are longstanding pillars of the department's identity. Pediatrics attracts residents, fellows, and students from across the country and maintains active partnerships with community and tribal stakeholders that inform care delivery and scholarly priorities across Oklahoma.

The Department of Pediatrics benefits from sustained institutional and philanthropic support from the University, the College of Medicine, OU Health, and community partners. Together, these resources support a department of significant scale and complexity and underscore the need for centralized, strategic leadership to guide its research enterprise.

ROLE OF THE VICE CHAIR OF RESEARCH

The Vice Chair of Research will be a central academic leader within the Department of Pediatrics. Reporting to and partnering closely with the Chair of Pediatrics and institutional research leadership, the Vice Chair will develop and execute a department-wide research strategy that advances growth, coordination, and impact. This includes responsibility for research across discovery and innovation, translational investigation, clinical trials, and health services research, in alignment with departmental and institutional priorities.

The Vice Chair will align research priorities across sections, strengthen shared infrastructure, and oversee research administration within pediatrics, including pre-award and post-award coordination, clinical research operations, and research governance. The role includes defined authority over research infrastructure planning and a close partnership with the Chair to guide strategic decisions on faculty recruitment, protected time, space, and investment in core resources.

This role is designed for a research leader motivated to build at scale, define strategy, and develop the infrastructure required for sustained growth. The Vice Chair will shape faculty recruitment and development, expand clinical and translational research activity, and elevate pediatrics as a nationally visible contributor within a growing academic health enterprise.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE VICE CHAIR OF RESEARCH

Create a unifying research strategy and collaborative culture

The Department of Pediatrics includes multiple areas of established and emerging research strength, providing a strong foundation for growth. At the same time, research activity has largely developed at the section level, creating an opportunity to move toward a more cohesive, aligned enterprise. The Vice Chair of Research will be responsible for articulating and executing a unifying research strategy that connects basic, clinical, translational, and population-based research; aligns section priorities with departmental and institutional goals; and positions pediatrics as a more integrated contributor to campus-wide initiatives. This work will include setting shared priorities, aligning incentives and resources, and helping the department make deliberate choices about where to focus collective effort.

In this role, the Vice Chair will serve as a connector and convener, strengthening collaboration across pediatric sections and with adult departments, reducing silos, and creating shared purpose around research priorities and investment decisions.

Build scalable infrastructure to enable growth

Research productivity in pediatrics has been driven by strong individual investigators and locally organized efforts. The next phase of growth requires infrastructure that is more centralized, scalable, and sustainable. Key priorities include strengthening pre-award and post-award support, expanding clinical research operations, and clarifying research governance and processes across the department. Much of this work currently falls to individual investigators, creating inefficiencies and limiting the department's ability to scale clinical and translational research.

By balancing centralized support with section-level strengths, the Vice Chair of Research will reduce administrative burden, improve competitiveness for extramural funding, expand clinical trial activity, including the development of shared clinical research teams and support functions, and ensure that growth is supported by efficient and transparent systems.

Strengthen faculty recruitment, development, and mentorship

The department includes a growing cohort of junior and mid-career faculty motivated to expand their research programs, alongside established investigators who serve as internal models of success. The Vice Chair of Research will play a central role in recruiting research-active faculty, particularly physician-scientists and team-based investigators aligned with departmental priorities, while also strengthening retention and long-term sustainability.

A key opportunity is the development of clear, department-wide research career pathways that support progression from early scholarly engagement to independent funding and research leadership. This includes strengthening mentorship structures, aligning expectations and resources, and supporting protected-time strategies that enable faculty to succeed across diverse research trajectories.

The Vice Chair will also help expand meaningful research engagement for residents, fellows, and trainees, supporting a durable pipeline of future investigators. This work will require close partnership with departmental and college leadership to align recruitment, space, and resource decisions with long-term research strategy.

Increase visibility, strategic insight, and national positioning

As the research enterprise grows, there is an opportunity to improve visibility into the department's research portfolio, areas of expertise, and ongoing activity. Strengthening internal insight, including clearer data on funding, productivity, and emerging strengths, will support strategic planning, targeted recruitment, and more intentional investment decisions. This will include identifying and elevating areas of collective strength, aligning external engagement with institutional priorities, and ensuring that pediatrics is clearly and consistently positioned in national research, funding, and partnership conversations.

Externally, the Vice Chair of Research will help elevate the national profile of pediatric research at OU by strengthening partnerships with peer institutions, industry, and funding agencies and by increasing participation in multicenter and network-based research efforts, positioning pediatrics as a visible contributor to the institution's broader academic aspirations.

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

- MD, DO, PhD, or equivalent degree with board certification and license eligibility in Oklahoma if applicable
- Experience across clinical and translational research, with the scientific fluency to bridge basic and clinical research communities; candidates from any pediatric specialty background are welcome

- Demonstrated strength as a mentor, with a track record of developing investigators across career stages and fostering a collaborative research culture
- Applicants with a strong record of developing clinician-scientists are also welcomed and encouraged to apply
- Ability to build and lead teams, programs, or centers
- Systems-oriented leader who can design infrastructure, processes, and governance
- Experience partnering with department chairs, division leaders, and health system leadership to support faculty recruitment, retention, and development in environments where authority is distributed and success depends on collaboration and influence
- Experience working across institutional, disciplinary, and community boundaries, with a demonstrated ability to build effective partnerships beyond traditional academic settings
- Demonstrated vision, a results-oriented approach, the highest level of integrity, and evidence of timely and principled decision-making

OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA

Oklahoma City, the capital and largest city in the state, anchors a growing metropolitan area of more than 1.4 million residents and offers a rare combination of momentum, livability, and affordability. The region enjoys a mild climate with abundant sunshine and long spring and fall seasons that support year-round outdoor activity, complemented by more than 75,000 acres of parks and trails and the nationally recognized Oklahoma River corridor for rowing, kayaking, cycling, and major sporting events.

Over the past two decades, Oklahoma City has experienced sustained civic and economic transformation driven by long-term public investment and population growth. With a collaborative culture, expanding research and innovation ecosystem, and continued investment in infrastructure, Oklahoma City offers an appealing environment for academic leaders seeking both professional opportunity and livability.

For more information on Oklahoma City please visit:

<https://www.okcchamber.com/>

www.visitokc.com/

www.abetterlifeokc.com/

APPLICATIONS, INQUIRIES, AND NOMINATIONS

Screening of complete applications will begin immediately and continue until the completion of the search process. Inquiries, nominations, referrals, and CVs with cover letters should be sent via the Isaacson, Miller website: <https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/university-oklahoma-health-sciences-college-medicine/vice-chair-research-department>. Electronic submission of materials is strongly encouraged.

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The University, in compliance with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations, does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, genetic information, gender identity/expression (consistent with applicable law), age (40 or older), religion, disability, political beliefs, or status as a veteran in any of its policies, practices, or procedures. This includes but is not limited to admissions, employment, housing, financial aid, and educational services.

Why You Belong at the University of Oklahoma:

The University of Oklahoma values our community's unique talents, perspectives, and experiences. At OU, we aspire to harness our innovation, creativity, and collaboration for the advancement of people everywhere. You Belong Here!

Mission of the University of Oklahoma:

The Mission of the University of Oklahoma is to provide the best possible educational experience for our students through excellence in teaching, research and creative activity, and service to the state and society.

This document has been prepared based on the information provided by University of Oklahoma College of Medicine and OU Health. The material presented in this leadership profile should be relied on for informational purposes only. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this information, the original source documents and information provided by OUHSC supercedes any conflicting information in this document.

APPENDIX: INSTITUTIONAL AND RESEARCH CONTEXT

OU Research Profile and Priorities

The University of Oklahoma College of Medicine holds the largest portfolio of National Institutes of Health funding in the state, with \$72.3 million in annual NIH support following a recent increase of more than \$5 million. The College is currently ranked 65th in the Blue Ridge Rankings and is pursuing continued growth in extramural funding and national visibility.

Priority research areas include cancer, diabetes and metabolic disease, neuroscience and vision, and infectious diseases and immunology. As part of the IDeA (Institutional Development Award) state network, OUCOM has three Center of Biomedical Research Excellence (CoBRE) grants in the areas of cancer, geroscience, and microbiology, in addition to an IDeA Network of Biomedical Research Excellence (INBRE) grant to develop research across the state of Oklahoma. Additionally, there are T32 training grants in geroscience from the National Institute on Aging (NIA) and vision from the National Eye Institute (NEI). The site is also a [Nathan Shock Center of Excellence in Geroscience](#).

College of Medicine: Academic and Research Overview

The College of Medicine includes nearly 1,350 faculty members, with approximately 1,000 full-time faculty and 218 endowed chairs and professorships. The College encompasses 21 academic departments across clinical and basic science disciplines, with campuses in Oklahoma City and Tulsa.

The College supports 83 residency and fellowship programs and trains 766 residents and fellows annually. More than 51 percent of physicians who complete residency training in Oklahoma remain in the state, reflecting the College's role in workforce development.

Institutional strategy emphasizes continued growth in extramural funding, expansion of clinical trials, and coordinated recruitment of research-active faculty aligned with campus-wide priorities.

Research Infrastructure and Shared Resources

The [Office of Research Administration](#) provides centralized pre- and post-award support, compliance oversight, and administrative guidance to investigators across the Oklahoma City and Tulsa campuses.

[Oklahoma Shared Clinical and Translational Resources](#) (OSCTR) supports clinical and translational research through expertise in biostatistics, epidemiology, research design, clinical operations, professional development, and community engagement.

The [University Research Park](#) includes more than 700,000 square feet of biomedical research laboratory and office space and supports both academic research and commercialization efforts.

Together, these resources provide a foundation for the continued expansion of clinical and translational research across the Health Campus.

Clinical and Academic Environment

OU Health is Oklahoma's only comprehensive academic health system, employing approximately 10,000 staff and more than 1,300 physicians and advanced practice providers. The system supports nearly one million patient visits annually.

Key clinical and research assets include:

- Oklahoma Children's Hospital, the state's only dedicated free-standing children's hospital
- The [University of Oklahoma Medical Center](#), the state's only Level 1 Trauma Center
- The [OU Health Harold Hamm Diabetes Center](#)
- The [OU Health Stephenson Cancer Center](#), the state's only National Cancer Institute-designated cancer center
- The [OU Health Dean McGee Eye Institute](#)

OU Health also maintains affiliations with the Oklahoma City Veterans Affairs Medical Center and additional regional partners.

The health system is led by Richard P. Lofgren, MD, MPH, President and CEO, who will be retiring in June, 2026. Chief Operating Officer, Jonathan Curtright, MBA, MHA, will succeed him effective July 1, 2026. The President and CEO oversees strategic direction, clinical integration, quality, and system growth.

University of Oklahoma Health Campus

The University of Oklahoma Health Campus brings together the Colleges of Medicine, Allied Health, Dentistry, Nursing, Pharmacy, Public Health, and the Graduate College, alongside major research and clinical centers including the Harold Hamm Diabetes Center and the Stephenson Cancer Center.

The Health Campus operates with an annual budget of approximately \$900 million and includes more than 800 full time faculty and 4,000 staff. The campus supports a broad academic and clinical enterprise and educates nearly 4,000 students and approximately 1,000 residents, fellows, and postdoctoral trainees.

The Health Campus is led by Gary E. Raskob, PhD, Senior Vice President and Provost, who oversees academic and research programs across the seven colleges and provides strategic leadership for campus wide research initiatives.

The College of Medicine is led by Ian F. Dunn, MD, who serves as Executive Dean, Chief Academic Officer, and Chief Physician Executive of OU Health. Under his leadership, the College anchors the research enterprise of the Health Campus and has prioritized growth in diabetes and metabolic disease, cancer, neuroscience, and population health.