

# Toward a Healthier Rhode Island

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**Brown to play a key role in an integrated academic health system that will improve patient care and fuel the economy with research innovation**

Brown is poised to play a key role in transforming health care delivery in Rhode Island, thanks to a new collaboration that promises to enhance patient care, accelerate biomedical research, spur economic growth and improve population health.

The University and its Warren Alpert Medical School have signed an agreement with Lifespan and Care New England, the state's two largest health care systems, to establish a world-class integrated academic health system—bringing a long-sought vision closer

to reality. Brown has committed at least \$125 million over five years to support its development.

"We are excited for this opportunity to create an integrated academic health system that will offer excellent, coordinated care to patients and fuel discovery and treatments," says Brown President Christina H. Paxson. "The system will capitalize on our complementary strengths and promote industry partnerships that bring employment and economic vitality to the region."

The collaboration — the first of its kind in Rhode Island — will combine leading-edge research and medical education from the Warren Alpert Medical School with a larger health care system formed by a planned merger of Lifespan and Care New England, which together boast eight premier teaching hospitals: Lifespan's Rhode Island, Miriam, Hasbro Children's, Newport and Bradley hospitals, and Care New England's Women & Infants, Kent and Butler hospitals. The merger and Brown affiliation depend on regulatory approval.

Brown has long advocated for establishing an integrated academic health system, like those serving Boston, Pittsburgh, Cleveland and Chicago, to offer high-quality patient care across the state and surrounding regions. In June 2019, after unsuccessful previous attempts, then-Rhode Island Governor Gina Raimondo urged Care New England, Lifespan and Brown to reconsider allying. The challenges posed by COVID-19 underscored the value of cooperation, and the organizations announced the planned health system merger and partnership with Brown in February 2021.

## Multiple Benefits

Brown's medical school and School of Public Health will help achieve the integrated system's goals, which include:

- » Attracting and retaining top physician-scientists in Rhode Island
  - » Continuing to educate outstanding future medical and public health practitioners
  - » Enabling faculty to better compete for critical research grant funding
  - » Creating an economic nexus based on biomedical discovery and industry partnerships.
- A key aim, says medical school Dean Jack A. Elias, is to build a world-class academic engine that generates new knowledge and fosters innovation. "One of my dreams," he says, "is that future deans will look out and see Providence's Jewelry District [where the medical school resides] filled with biotech companies spun off from discoveries that take place at Brown, Lifespan and Care New England."
- Brown Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology B. Star Hampton believes integrating the region's now-fragmented health care system will benefit patients, providers and overall health. "We need to coordinate our resources to better serve our communities," she says. "This partnership is going to help us do that."
- » Expanding patients' access to the best possible individualized and coordinated medical care
  - » Applying cutting-edge research and innovation to offer new treatments and therapies in such areas as cancer, women's health and brain diseases like Alzheimer's
  - » Improving population health while lowering costs by applying data-informed strategies developed by Brown researchers
  - » Reducing racial and ethnic health disparities and chronic health conditions among area residents

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