



UPDATE:

The latest news on the Rutgers School of Medicine integration from Deans Amy P. Murtha, MD, and Robert L. Johnson, MD, FAAP

Answering Your Frequently Asked Questions...

“
Is the merger a "done deal," and what is the timeline?
”

The decision to integrate the two medical schools is complete. We are now in the next phase of the process, which is to seek combined accreditation. It is anticipated that the first class of the new "Rutgers School of Medicine" will be enrolled in the 2028 academic year. Over the next five years, we will be aligning our work to achieve accreditation from the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME). Our work will be conducted in a way that promotes equitable representation and allows opportunities for all medical school community members to contribute to the vision.

“
Why is medical school integration being pursued?
”

First, a single medical school accreditation within Rutgers will create a stronger, more innovative institution that offers enhanced educational and research opportunities. By aligning and not competing, we create a hub of biomedical and health sciences education, research, and clinical care that will allow us to better serve our communities. With one Rutgers School of Medicine, we can expand academic programs, improve infrastructure, and enrich learning environments.

In the past, the two medical schools have been competitors for talent and resources. Now, we can be allies in attracting students, grants, and faculty who are pioneers in their fields. We are already leveraging opportunities for philanthropic support of our vision.

Next, as the state university, Rutgers and now Rutgers School of Medicine, we have an obligation to the residents of New Jersey to lead in transformative healthcare delivery. Through the creation of Rutgers School of Medicine, with campuses in Newark and New Brunswick, we will have an academic healthcare delivery enterprise that will better serve all New Jersey communities. Our residents must receive the highest quality of healthcare.

“
What are the benefits to integration?
”

We must be together, and aligned, to accomplish this mission. Together, we are greater than the sum of our parts. Together we can have even greater influence over the provision of health education in our state. An integrated model of medical education will position Rutgers School of Medicine as a leading public medical school nationally.

- **First**, it will enhance our ability to attract top talent with an enhanced national reputation and elevated ranking.
- **Second**, by leveraging research opportunities, the Rutgers School of Medicine will become a leader in innovation and attract more federal and industry funding for competitive clinical trials.
- **Third**, it will allow Rutgers to expand specialty hospital care and offer more patient services to reduce healthcare inequities. Aligned medical schools will expand opportunities for students, providing innovative experiences on both campuses.

It also will enhance **opportunities for development and fundraising** as a single medical school under the Rutgers brand in support of our missions.

“What will integration mean for our day-to-day lives, and will resources be moved from one school to the detriment of the other?”

The integration will continue with the same day-to-day commitment to Research, Patient Care, Leadership in Education, and Community Service on both campuses of Rutgers School of Medicine.

- We are not moving NJMS to New Brunswick, or vice versa, nor are we moving resources.
- We are not minimizing patient care at the hospitals we serve in Newark and New Brunswick.
- We will not move or allocate inequitably resources from either medical school or force students to attend one campus over another.
- We will not compromise on excellence for our learners and communities.
- We will not force students to rotate to other campuses for clerkships.

“What would an integrated school look like?”

Rutgers School of Medicine envisions a single LCME accreditation, which will take several years to accomplish. In the years leading up to the LCME accreditation, we will work under a co-Dean model but anticipate that this leadership structure will be revisited. While Rutgers School of Medicine would have common goals and objectives for the medical education program, each campus could have different curricula and would be able to preserve local culture and values and academic strengths. Each campus would remain committed to their communities. We would look to combine only those components of each medical school that yield a positive outcome for all, enhancing collaboration. Growth and investment in clinical care, research, and education is the priority.

Each school would maintain the current affiliation with their principal teaching hospitals. Decisions about departmental structure and leadership would be based on the size and complexity of the departments, and we would seek input from the communities they serve.

“What will the relationships be like with University Hospital and Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital?”

Our commitment to University Hospital in Newark and RWJUH in New Brunswick remains strong, and our relationship with these institutions will remain unchanged. University Hospital will continue as the principal teaching hospital of NJMS (the Newark campus). Similarly, RWJMS will maintain its ties with Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital and remain the principal teaching hospital of RWJMS (the New Brunswick campus). The integration will only enhance our community impact in Newark and New Brunswick.



“How will admissions and curricula be handled? Will classes be pass/fail?”

The specific implementation of the medical schools requires more detailed planning about admissions, curriculum, campus culture, accreditation, residency placements, governance, and fiscal matters. There will be additional planning and faculty committee work, consultations with LCME and AAMC (Association of American Medical Colleges), and consultation with the University Senate, faculty, staff, residents, students, the community, and alumni.

“Will the medical school location be affected by the merger?”

The physical locations of the medical schools will remain the same, with two coequal campuses in Newark and New Brunswick. No one campus will be subordinate to the other.

“ How will students be affected by the integration? ”

Benefits for students include:

- **Broader and more consistent educational experiences** - Medical students will have access to a wider array of clinical electives and types of patient experiences. Graduate Medical Education (GME) is already integrated. Larger, stronger, and more uniform programs will be created to offer broader clinical experiences to trainees.
- **Enhanced learning opportunities** - Our expert faculty can share their expertise to students on both campuses.
- **Enhancement of MD/PhD programs** - Over time, the individual programs could be combined, taking advantage of the scientific strengths of both schools and access to more faculty and funding, becoming more visible nationally and competitive for grants.
- **Developing and sharing best practices** - There will be an enhanced opportunity for innovation in education across both campuses.

With an estimated integration finishing in the fall of 2028, current medical school students will not be impacted by the integration.

“ How will the integration affect the faculty and staff of both medical schools? ”

The integration aims to retain and integrate the talented faculty and staff from both institutions. The combined expertise is valued and will foster collaboration and a supportive academic environment.

“ Will residency placements be more limited? ”

This is an important question, as the success of our combined medical school is dependent on the success of our medical students. First, the results of the data collected by Rutgers Health and ECG consulting firm indicate that the risk of negatively impacting student placement is low. In this process, they collected and reviewed detailed residency match data for NJMS and RWJMS graduates for 2018 through 2022 and surveyed GME programs. Given this initial review, integrating NJMS and RWJMS in and of itself would not limit GME opportunities for graduating medical students. Despite this review, we share this as a priority area that will need to be considered as we create the structure of the medical school.

The bottom line is that competition for students graduating from U.S.-based allopathic schools is fierce and focused on individual qualifications, with no explicit or implicit limits on the number of residents selected from a given school.

We would engage with you, our community stakeholders, to create a structure that would minimize this concern and modify as necessary with stakeholder input.

“ How can students, faculty, staff, and community members stay informed and engaged in the integration process? ”

Regular updates regarding the integration will be provided through official channels, including email notifications, the school websites and integration website, and town hall meetings. There will also be numerous opportunities to provide feedback through surveys and focus groups. We are also interested in understanding how you would like to receive information and updates. This will help to inform communications strategies going forward.

Learn more about the journey toward Rutgers School of Medicine at the Envisioning the Future of Academic Medicine website:

<https://rutgershealth.org/envisioning-future-academic-medicine>