PREDICTING YOUR FUTURE HEALTH: DIGITAL TWINS

WORLD-CLASS HEART CARE IN THE HEART OF TEXAS

DRIVING CANCER DISCOVERY ACROSS DISCIPLINES

The Future of Health

Annual Philanthropy Impact Report 2024

Table of Contents

Welcome

Chris Higgins

Associate Vice President for Development, Dell Medical School and UT Health Austin

Ten years ago, The University of Texas and the people of Austin banded together to build a new medical school in the heart of Texas. Dell Medical School began with a pledge to provide care for all Central Texans, to bring the best minds in medicine to our city, and to "rethink everything."

In that decade, we've graduated 250 med students and nearly 900 residents and fellows, who have provided Central Texans like you with hundreds of thousands of hours of care. Many of the doctors who taught them came here for the rare opportunity that Dell Med and UT Austin provide: to work at a leading research university where clinicians and scientists come together to make groundbreaking discoveries with real impact for our patients and our community. The pull of that opportunity has brought 450 new doctors to Austin since 2014.

That was just the beginning. And Chapter 2 is unlike anything Austin has ever seen. With the announcement of The University of Texas Medical Center, we're setting our sights even higher. Set to open in 2030, this world-class academic medical center and system of care anchored by Dell Medical School will transform health and health care delivery. And just like 10 years ago, we have the advantage of building something from the ground up.

This bold vision means that the quarter of Central Texans who travel outside the area for complex specialty care can get that care here in town, at a UT Austin specialty hospital and MD Anderson Cancer Center. You will receive integrated, coordinated care where your patient information follows you to every provider you see. Together, top clinicians and scientists will bring you the latest health innovations in data science and AI, developed right here.

Together, we built the first new medical school at a Tier 1 research university in almost 50 years, and together we can start the next chapter. Together is how we improve health for everyone in Central Texas and beyond. Together is how we make Austin the best it can be. Together is how we redefine the future of health.

The University of Texas Medical Center:

Building the Health System Austin Deserves

A quarter of Central Texans needing complex specialty health care seek those services outside the city. Meanwhile, the care that is available here is fragmented and difficult to navigate. But that is about to change. The newly announced University of Texas Medical Center, anchored by Dell Medical School, presents an opportunity to transform health care in Central Texas and beyond, redefining the future of health — right here, right now.

As the nation's 10th-largest city, Austin deserves a world-class, integrated academic medical center. This center will combine the power of a leading research university with a patient-centered care model, leveraging critical advances in technology and data. It will attract the best and brightest physicians and researchers, ensuring that complex care is available locally.

Together, we are building an integrated system of care around the hospital of the future, where people will remain the focus of everything we do.

An academic medical center is much more than bricks and mortar. World-class academic medicine requires exceptional talent as well as state-of-the-art facilities. Here and in labs across campus, the synergy between front-line clinicians and innovative scientists will enable us to tackle society's most significant health challenges with unprecedented speed.

As we lay the foundation for this new institution, we are developing novel technology, data, AI and digital capabilities to drive innovation. These advances will enhance patient experiences and outcomes, creating a data infrastructure that ensures people receive the proper care from the right provider at the right time, all within a unified care system. Integrated scheduling will streamline visits, procedures and diagnostics.

Our researchers will leverage aggregate data to answer some of society's greatest health questions, from advancing precision medicine to detecting disease clusters and exploring new ways AI can support medical teams. AI will also help identify disparities in health care access and outcomes among different populations. By highlighting these gaps, AI can guide targeted interventions to improve health equity, helping focus our ongoing work in the community. UT Austin's research and computing power will help solve long-standing health challenges and uncover answers to questions we haven't yet imagined.

We create a uniquely dynamic environment by connecting a hospital and outpatient clinics with a university and medical school. Here, the skills and creativity of a diverse range of medical professionals come together to treat, train and discover. The educational mission of academic medical centers complements our research and patient care, bringing the latest advances to both patients and learners.

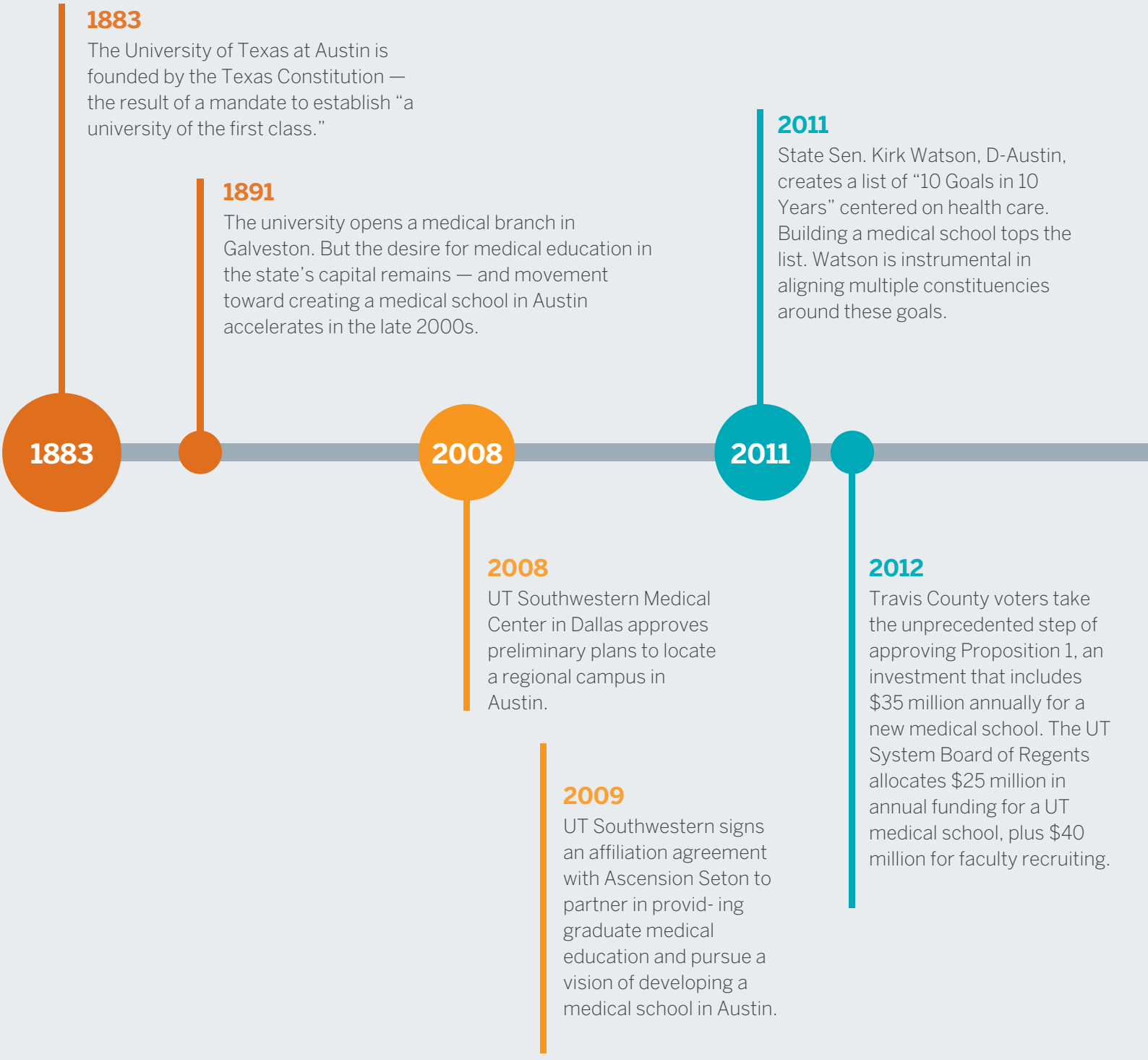
Findings have shown that receiving care at a community hospital in a market with Academic Medical Center (AMC) presence was associated with lower mortality and a greater number of healthy days at home. (JAMA Network)

For surgical patients, outcomes were better at AMCs than at nonteaching hospitals for both medium- and high-severity patients. (Association of Medical Colleges Study)

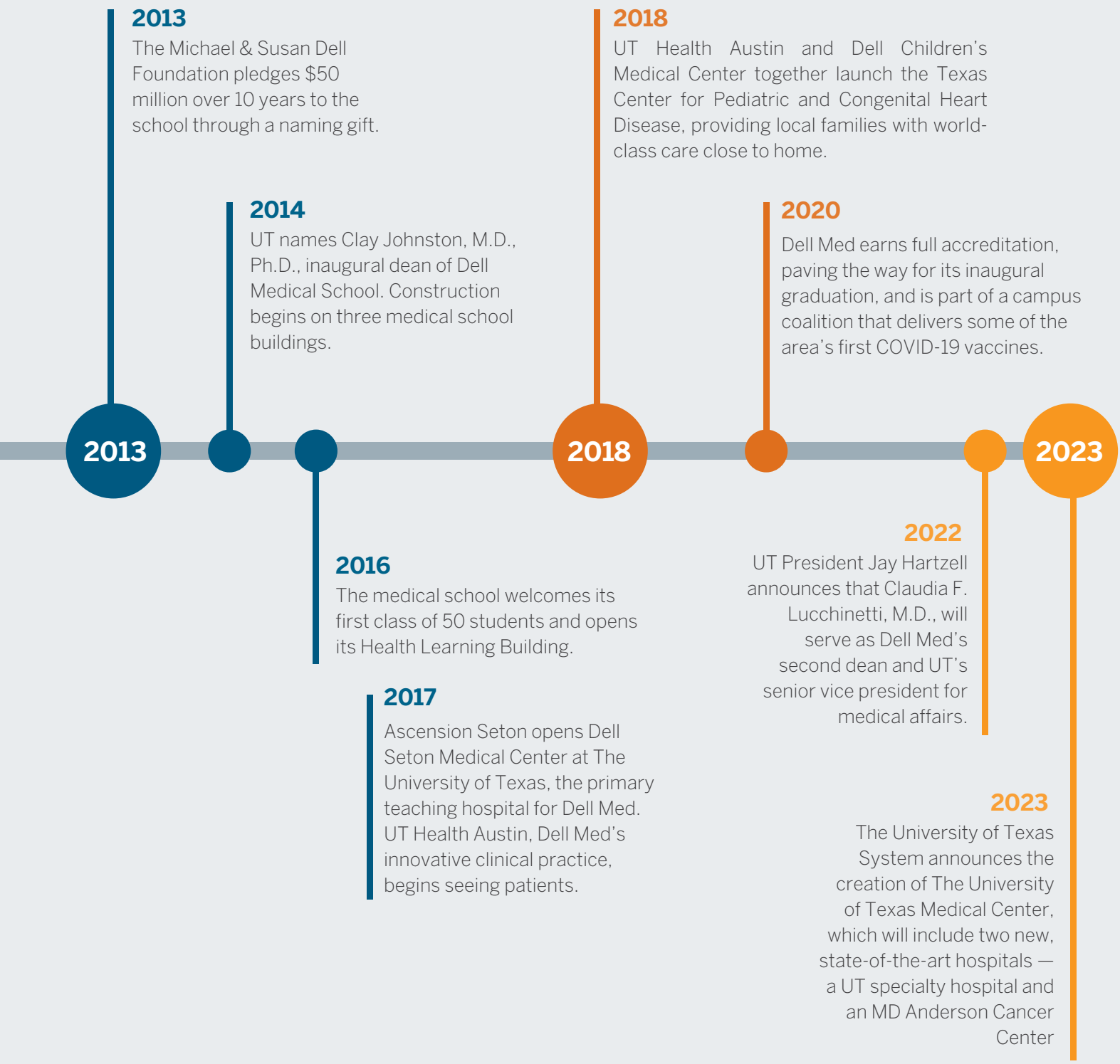
> We have an opportunity that is unique in Texas and only possible at a few places in the world — to build an academic medical center that is linked to a top research university and that is driven by innovations in technology, digital health, data science, artificial intelligence, robotics, materials science and more."

JAY HARTZELL, PH.D., President, The University of Texas at Austin

THROUGH THE YEARS: THE RISE OF AN ACADEMIC MEDICAL CENTER



An academic medical center is a milestone more than a century in the making. What began in 1883 as a charge to build a "university of the first class" is now coming full circle with the creation of a world-class integrated academic medical center that promises to transform UT, Austin and beyond.



World-Class Heart Care in the Heart of Texas

To achieve excellence, you need the best talent. At Dell Medical School, the journey toward developing better cardiac care in Central Texas began in 2018 with the recruitment of renowned heart surgeon Charles D. Fraser, Jr., M.D. His mission — to develop the Institute for Cardiovascular Health in Austin, improving Central Texans' access to specialty heart care.

Fraser recognized the critical importance of recruiting top leaders in cardiac care and surgery. When medical centers recruit experts, they gain a wealth of specialized knowledge and experience, enabling them to provide insights and solutions that drive innovation, enhance efficiency, and optimize patient experiences. Furthermore, these experts can mentor and train existing staff, elevating the skill level and competence of the entire team. Their presence often enhances the organization's credibility and reputation, attracting clients, investors and top talent.

Charles Fraser, M.D. and George Arnaoutakis, M.D.

Thanks to the support of generous donors, more than a dozen preeminent surgeons and specialists have joined Dell Medical School and its clinical practice, UT Health Austin. They are now part of an integrated, comprehensive adult cardiovascular institute, contributing to its development and success.

One of these additions is a pioneer in cardiac care, George Arnaoutakis, M.D. Arnaoutakis, a world-renowned cardiothoracic surgeon, was brought on to establish the Adult Division of Cardiovascular and Thoracic Surgery at Dell Medical School and provide care at the Institute for Cardiovascular Health, a clinical partnership between Ascension Seton and UT Health Austin.

George Arnaoutakis, M.D.

> “There is nobody in this part of the world that does what he does. Patients fly all over the world for him.”
>
> Charles Fraser Jr., M.D.

Since joining the team in January 2023, Arnaoutakis has demonstrated why he is a globally recognized leader in aortic surgery. Stories of lifesaving procedures for Central Texas patients have multiplied since Arnaoutakis’ arrival. Without prompt surgery, 90% of patients who experience aortic dissection die within weeks. Under his leadership, thoracic aortic procedures have increased by over 400%, and key quality metrics have significantly improved. These improvements include lower mortality rates, reduced ventilator time after heart surgery, a lower risk of kidney failure, and fewer hospital readmissions.

Patients no longer need to travel long distances to find a specialist, and emergency care can be sought right here in Austin. Having care so close results in saving precious time, a must for critical conditions like these.

Arnaoutakis also brings access to cutting-edge clinical trials, opening new opportunities for safer, more effective surgeries for Central Texans. A national leader in clinical trials for cardiac devices, Arnaoutakis is renowned for his early use of a dual-branch aortic endograft, which enables surgeons to repair aortic aneurysms without open heart surgery. He has implanted more of these devices than any other surgeon in the U.S.

“Being part of Dell Medical School is key to making this program what it is,” Arnaoutakis said. “With our academic partners, we’re very focused on and already taking advantage of the opportunity to open trials, including feasibility studies — the earliest phase of technology evaluation for devices. These are opportunities that did not exist with any widespread opportunity for cardiac surgery in Central Texas previously, and we now have a team of national leaders who can support a wide range of innovations at Dell Med.”

Currently, up to **25%** of patients travel outside Central Texas to receive complex specialty care.

The Firefly Fund

Shining a Light on Austin's Rare Disease Community

In February, Chris and Pam Andrews of Firefly Fund pledged $5 million to Dell Medical School to help launch the Center for Rare Disease. The center will serve the Austin community and beyond through next-generation research, diagnostics and treatments for patients with rare disease.

For close to three years, Pam Andrews spent each night scouring the internet for what could be causing these symptoms in her daughter Belle: Tripping and falling. Low platelets. Enlarged spleen. Search.

"I would wake my husband up and say, 'What about this disease? What about Frederick's Ataxia? What about Gaucher disease?' All these random possibilities," Pam said.

The Andrewses' search for answers began when Belle was 3½ years old, after multiple falls and two broken noses led the family to eight specialists across the country over nearly three years, all while Belle's condition continued to decline.

"That began what the rare disease community would call our 'diagnostic odyssey,'" Pam said.

It takes patients with rare diseases an average of six to seven years to get an accurate diagnosis. For Belle, that was Niemann Pick Type C (NPC), a rare genetic disease estimated to affect 1 in 250,000 people. Though asymptomatic, Pam and Chris's younger daughter, Abby, also tested positive for the causal gene, and both daughters began treatment immediately.

This long, taxing quest made Pam and her husband, Chris, painfully aware of our health care system's shortcomings in pediatric genomics and rare diseases. In 2017, the couple founded Firefly Fund, which offers resources and support to families experiencing a diagnosis of NPC or other rare neurodegenerative genetic diseases.

"They are amazing ambassadors for children with rare diseases," said Z. Leah Harris, M.D., chair of Dell Medical School's Department of Pediatrics. "When you're a parent of a child with a rare disease, especially when it's not yet diagnosed, finding a community and having hope that help is out there becomes really important."

That network of knowledge, supporters and solutions is the vision behind the Firefly Fund's gift to Dell Med. As part of the University of Texas Medical Center, the Center for Rare Disease will provide a hub for best-in-class care for Central Texas patients and families living with rare diseases.

"Every person I've spoken to in the rare disease community has had that experience where they truly did not know what to do next," Chris Andrews said. "Why can't the place where diagnosis occurs also connect you to experts in treating that disease, clinical trials and a community of people who understand the despair of this awful diagnostic journey?"

Steve Ekker, Ph.D., director of the center, says that rare disease research often translates to a range of other illnesses, rare, genetic, or not.

"There are core biological issues that span and impact many different diseases," Ekker said. "By treating the absolute rarest diseases, we learn more about the central processes that impact everyone."

"We believe that the pathway to curing diseases like Alzheimer's and Parkinson's is through treatments of rare disease," Chris said. "Nobody knows the cause of Alzheimer's. But in rare disease, we know the cause. If you are able to find treatments for conditions that mimic more prevalent ones, those treatments will transfer over into those larger diseases."

Like many genetic diseases, the progression of Niemann Pick C can be stopped but not reversed. Thanks to her early diagnosis and treatment, Abby remains completely without symptoms while Belle will never walk or speak again.

"This gift is in their honor," Pam said. "It's a legacy for them, to give something back to the community that has given so much to us. So that the children who come behind them who are diagnosed with rare diseases don't have to suffer through their own diagnostic odysseys."

Claudia Lucchinetti

"This Center for Rare Disease will provide hope to children and parents for years to come. By investing in cutting-edge research, we aim to support patients and their families as we find new ways to treat and, one day, hope to cure many of these diseases."

Claudia Lucchinetti
Dean, Dell Medical School
Senior vice president for medical affairs,
The University of Texas at Austin

Driving Cancer Discovery Across Disciplines

Cancer is the leading cause of death in Austin — and the brightest minds on UT's campus are working together to beat it.

Dell Medical School's clinical practice, UT Health Austin, already takes a multidisciplinary approach to care, where patients benefit from a team of providers across a spectrum of specialties. But that holistic model also extends to our ever-growing research collaborations with partners from across the Forty Acres, where front-line clinicians and innovative scientists are tackling society's biggest health challenges at a speed only possible in academic medicine.

Bill Matsui knows firsthand the impact physician-researchers have on their patients. A practicing oncologist who also serves as Dell Medical School's vice dean of research, Matsui has spent his career studying cancer in the lab and applying that work to his patient care. Now, ongoing collaborations with campus partners like UT's Cockrell School of Engineering and Oden Institute for Computational Engineering and Sciences are expanding Dell Med's research capabilities and translating innovation to care in record time.

Bill Matsui, M.D.

> "Cancer touches everyone's life at some point."
>
> Jennifer Maynard, Ph.D.

Jennifer Maynard, Ph.D.

Informing today's medicine with tomorrow's technology

Medical oncology has come a long way since the advent of chemotherapy, with promising discoveries like antibody therapy and cancer stem cells offering a variety of additional treatment options. And that's just the beginning. Leveraging UT Austin's capabilities in data science, engineering and artificial intelligence now allows for the development of precise, personalized medicine.

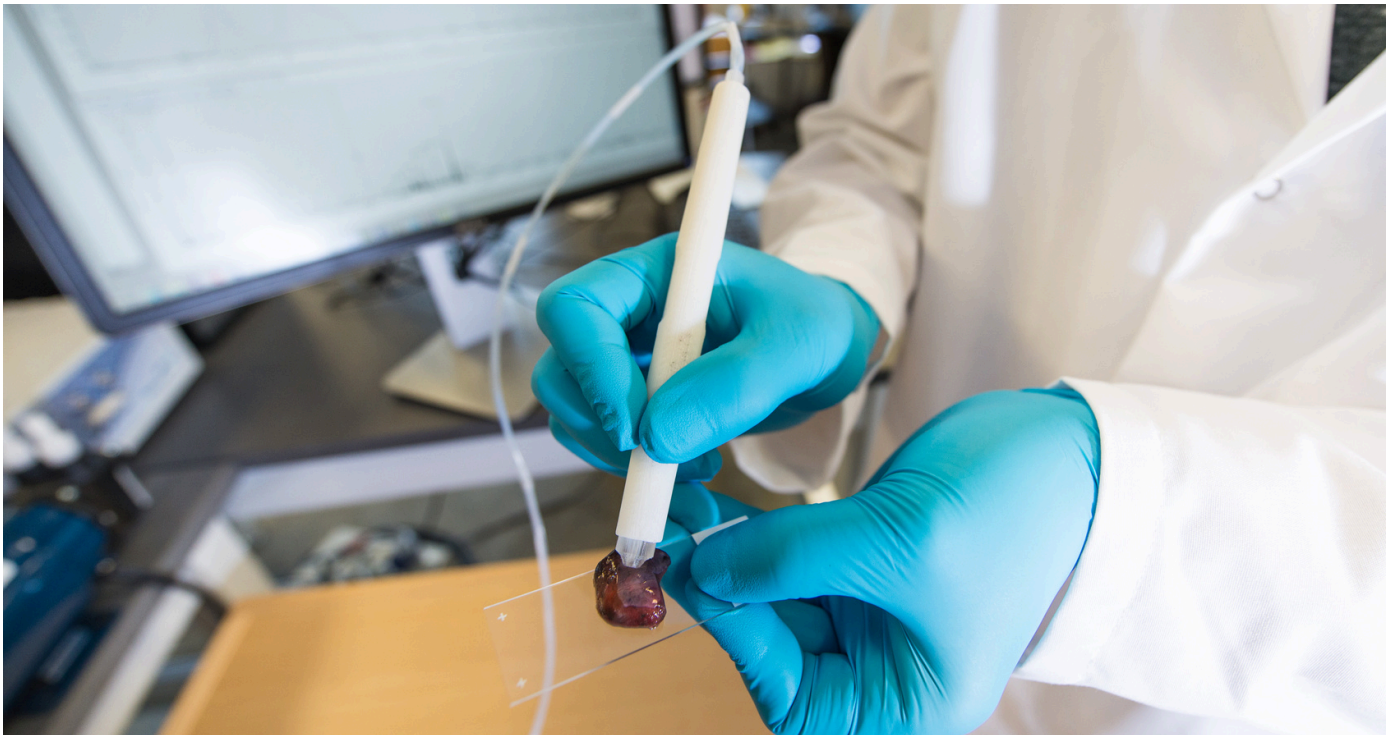
Matsui and Jennifer Maynard, Ph.D., a professor in the McKetta Department of Chemical Engineering, are using Maynard's expertise in producing highly tailored molecules to target not just tumor cells but the cells of a specific cancer type. Their current focus, pancreatic cancer, is particularly deadly because of how quickly it spreads.

"People have been targeting cancers with antibodies for years. But drilling down to the specific subtype and going beyond the initial tumor to where the cells have spread is unique," Matsui says. "It ultimately means we could have much more flexibility to create different types of therapies for an infinite number of other very specific targets, even beyond cancer."

Another innovative partnership, between The University of Texas at Austin's Machine Learning Lab, Oden Institute for Computational Engineering and Sciences, and Dell Medical School, aims to speed up the lifesaving clinical breakthroughs that often require years of trial and error in the lab before reaching the patient.

UT's researchers are transforming cancer care through the burgeoning field of computational oncology. Computational oncology uses advanced mathematical and computational approaches to model tumors, calibrate patient-specific models, and simulate patient responses to potential treatment options. Currently, oncologists rely on trial and error to determine what treatments will be most effective — time many patients simply don't have. Machine learning and artificial intelligence help to not only exponentially speed up that process but also to tailor those treatments to individuals for maximum effectiveness.

"Academic medicine offers unique opportunities to both patients and clinicians," Matsui said. "But with that comes a responsibility to advance patient care, not just provide it. Clinical trials, research and new partnerships are how we transform cancer treatment."



Changing Eye Care in Central Texas

A Conversation with Jane Edmond, M.D.

> If you're not delivering that full holistic care, then you're not serving your patients. Care does not end at the clinic."

Jane Edmond, M.D.

The Mitchel and Shannon Wong Eye Institute has surpassed 25,000 appointments since opening its doors in November 2020. The clinic is also on track to complete 10,000 appointments this year alone. To what do you attribute that success?

Our faculty, staff and residents are passionate about caring for patients as whole humans, not just a pair of eyes, or even portions of an eye. Too often, specialists do not consider that eyes are attached to humans with lives, families, jobs, expectations, needs and desires. I am proud that our faculty, staff and residents approach patient care with this perspective. The faculty have also brought specialized ophthalmic skills and experience which are underrepresented in Austin's health care market, meaning fewer and fewer patients need to travel out of Austin for care.

Modern facilities and state-of-the art equipment support our care efforts, and we're committed to providing value-driven care to all our patients, including the underinsured and underserved. When our clinic opened, there were close to 900 people on a waiting list to get eye care, many of whom never had access to eye care before. Now, between 25% and 35% of visits to the Mitchel and Shannon Wong Eye Institute are with patients at or below the poverty line.

What are the biggest challenges in eye care facing Central Texas?

The No. 1 issue is access. For the underinsured, access to any eye care continues to be a challenge, which the eye institute is committed to continually addressing.

I also feel it is imperative that we address and expand the subspecialty areas of eye care that are underrepresented in our community. For example, low-vision eye services are limited in Central Texas. People with permanently impaired vision from diseases like glaucoma or macular degeneration benefit from low-vision services, which improve patients' ability to function with their level of vision impairment, People are living longer, and that means that more people will be suffering vision loss from chronic, age-related eye diseases. I would like to bring these services to the Mitchel and Shannon Wong Eye Institute, which will increase access to care for low vision patients, improving their quality of life.

My ultimate goal is that no Central Texan will feel the need to travel beyond Austin for specialized or complex eye care by attracting and hiring experienced faculty physicians practicing in our department and serving the residents of Austin so they don't need to leave town.

How has community support empowered you and your team?

Support from the Wong family made it possible to create the Department of Ophthalmology, our clinical practice and the residency program.

We also have great community partners in the form of our affiliate and private practice faculty. They are invaluable to every mission of our department, and they're vital for training our residents. They provide high-quality clinical and surgical education to our residents in their clinics, operating rooms and the classroom. In these experiences, our residents also learn the business of ophthalmology.

What is your vision for the Department of Ophthalmology and the eye institute in the next five years? What are you most excited about?

So far, I've had to focus on building out our clinical footprint and residency program, so research is the next chapter. We want to foster more collaborative efforts with main campus departments, such as bioengineering, pharmacy and molecular neuroscience. We want to expand our engagement in clinical trials, either with industry-sponsored trials or multicenter National Institutes of Health projects. We want clinician-scientists building out a research portfolio while providing care.

We also need to deepen the bench of faculty and continue to attract and match residents who are mission- and value-aligned with Dell Med and the eye institute.

The Department of Ophthalmology's residency program has been active for two years, with your third class of residents being onboarded this summer. Could you talk about the growth of the new residency program?

The residency program was one of my highest priorities when I joined Dell Med. The process for establishing a residency is complex; for us it took 2.5 years, and it was with the great help of Dr. John Shore, a member of faculty who's now retired.

The faculty are thrilled about the quality of the residents we have recruited and matched. These are knowledgeable, ethical, hardworking team players who provide compassionate care to our patients. Residents must take yearly exams to ensure they are building a solid foundation in ophthalmic knowledge — this year, our residents took the exam for the first time and scored far above the national average, with one even scoring above 90%. I never scored that well during any year of my residency, even as a graduating senior!

Residents are also required to provide an annual satisfaction score for their training program and faculty. According to this nationally administered survey, our residents scored the faculty and their education at 100%.

Each year, there is increased interest in applying to our residency. Last year, we received 680 applications to our residency, with a total of 815 physicians nationwide applying to ophthalmology residencies. That is pretty remarkable for a 3-year-old residency program!

66%

of doctors who complete a residency in Texas stay here to practice.

49.4%

percent of Texas medical school graduates remained in Texas for their GME.

58.9%

percent of physicians who completed their GME in Texas stayed in the state to practice.

Per DSHS of Texas, 2022

How has a residency program enhanced patient care at the Mitchel and Shannon Wong Eye Institute?

Residents have their own outpatient clinics in the Eye Institute, always supervised by one of the faculty. Each resident evaluates up to eight patients during each half-day clinic session. Not only are our residents academically gifted, but they are also emotionally gifted. This is evidenced by the overwhelmingly positive feedback their patients provide. I think our faculty are a bit jealous!

Residents also enhance the faculty. When you are a faculty member who is training a bright, engaged, energetic resident, it compels you to be a better physician, teacher, and frankly, a better human. We faculty are role models, and when you're a role model, you have to be at your best: in patient care, in staying current on important research and evidence-based care guidelines, but also in your interactions with your patients, your staff, being ethical and an active listener. The residents are forming their professional identity and this is influenced by their role models. For us faculty, I think we are better humans around residents and students.

You created the Jane Edmond and Randal Weber scholarship at Dell Med; what inspired you to do that?

Well, first of all, I am a UT Austin alum! In 1981, I graduated from UT Austin with a BA in Biology, and I am currently the only Dell Med chair who attended UT Austin as an undergrad. This is where my professional life began; I am indebted to UT Austin, so my husband and I wanted to "return the favor", so to speak, and provide the funding for a scholarship. Plus, we are doing incredible work in the department and med school. This is the greatest opportunity that could ever be granted to me. I'm deeply honored to be a professor and chair at my alma mater.

*Graduate medical education students previously earned a medical degree and are completing specialty training, such as a residency or fellowship.

> "Advocating for patients outside the clinic means physicians should become politically active."
>
> Jane Edmond, M.D.

Seeing the World from New Depths: a Patient's Experience

Imagine living in a world where your vision never feels quite right. You feel disoriented, struggle with everyday activities, and your eyes are constantly tired. Despite countless consultations, no one can pinpoint the cause of your discomfort.

This was the reality for Jane Edmond's patient Brent*. For nearly three decades, Brent, accompanied by his wife, Dolores, sought answers from one specialist after another. Despite their persistence and significant expense, no doctor could identify the root of Brent's symptoms.

Brent had almost resigned himself to the idea that his condition was undiagnosable. Then, on April 19, 2022, everything changed. During a second visit to Johns Hopkins, Brent was finally diagnosed with intermittent strabismus in both eyes.

Intermittent strabismus causes the eyes to turn inward (esotropia) or outward (exotropia), leading to a lack of depth perception, double vision, blurriness and eye fatigue. Its variable presentation — sudden or gradual onset, noticeable or subtle symptoms, and occurrence during specific activities — makes it challenging to diagnose.

Johns Hopkins referred Brent to UT Health Austin and Jane Edmond, M.D., a specialist in pediatric and adult strabismus, including medical and surgical management. With 50% of her cases involving adult strabismus, Edmond was the perfect surgeon to correct Brent's condition.

"The transformation is incredible. I now have amazing depth perception, and more than a year later, it continues to improve by leaps and bounds," Brent said. "I had no idea how differently I had been seeing the world before, and I would absolutely undergo the surgery again. It's nothing short of a miracle!"

Edmond and her team made Brent and Dolores feel at ease, taking extra care to diagnose him accurately and design a surgical plan tailored to his condition and lifestyle.

Brent and Dolores were deeply moved by the compassion and professionalism of Edmond and her entire team, from the receptionist to the nurses to the anesthesiologist. Edmond was there when Brent woke up in the recovery room and has been a constant source of support throughout his journey.

"She has such a great team that made me feel like an individual," Brent said. "I appreciate them and the depth perception I have gained. I am enjoying this great blessing and a second chance to the fullest."

> "We decided to make a donation to the Wong Eye Institute based on the amazing experience my husband had with Dr. Jane Edmond and her team at Dell Med at the Surgical Center. Dr. Edmond was able to diagnose and correct a problem that my husband had been trying to diagnose/correct for 30 years. She used her vast knowledge to diagnose his problem and clearly explained to us what the problem was and how to fix it. The result was nothing short of a miracle."

*Names changed to protect the patient's privacy.

Student Spotlight

Hung Le

Jane Edmond and Randal Weber Scholarship Recipient


Hung Le

Why Dell Med?

I am pursuing medical education because as a child, I saw my family members never get adequate access to health care. Most people in my family have health issues but could not afford to go see a physician and I would see the consequences. This brought me into medicine as I wanted to cure people from their ailments. What brought me to Dell Medical School was its unique emphasis on "changing the health care landscape," which often marginalized groups of individuals who did not have access to finances to offload medical costs.

The Future of Health

I aspire to specialize in plastic and reconstructive surgery, focusing on peripheral nerve and craniofacial reconstruction. My goal is to perform complex surgical operations that can significantly improve a person's life in just a day's work, such as providing a necessary muscle flap to help someone walk again or repairing a child's cleft palate.

Scholarship Impact

I am immensely grateful for the support provided by the Jane Edmond and Randal Weber Scholarship. As a first-generation college graduate, the ability to attend medical school without the constant stress of financial concerns allows me to excel. Thank you for this incredible opportunity to pursue graduate-level education at one of the best medical schools in the nation, without a financial burden on my family and me.

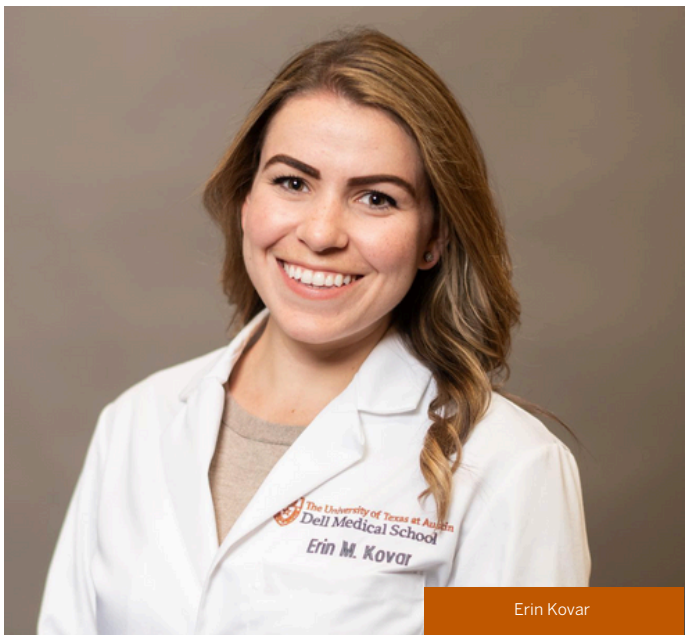
> "Because of your generosity, I have an opportunity to immerse myself in different specialty research groups, advocacy groups, and medical volunteering groups for those in need, and it has transformed my experiences. It has enhanced my desire to work with the underserved communities in which I will be practicing in the future."

When you give to Dell Med scholarships, you're giving future doctors access to a groundbreaking curriculum that prepares them to be as capable of taking on challenges in health as they are caring for individual patients.

Thanks to a generous donor, you can increase your impact and give medical students needing financial support the opportunity to attend Dell Med. Scholarship gifts of all sizes will help us reach a $500,000 goal that will unlock a $2.5 million gift.

Dell Medical School to Dell Med Residency

Where Passion and Compassion Combine



Erin Kovar

“The incredible curriculum at Dell Med, paired with extracurricular opportunities around the community, has shaped me into the type of physician I aspire to be. Here, compassion is viewed as a strength. We learn from leaders who prioritize caring alongside science. I am well equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to make critical changes in the health care system.”

In May 2024, Erin Kovar proudly walked across the commencement stage as a member of the fifth graduating class. This milestone was just one of many recent achievements for Erin.

A 2016 University of Texas at Austin undergraduate, Erin decided to follow her heart, pivot from a career in public relations, and apply to medical school. From the moment Erin interviewed at Dell Medical School, she knew it was the perfect fit. As it turns out, the feeling was mutual and she was accepted into the fifth graduating class in 2020.

Eager to serve the community and address health inequities in Austin and beyond, she found that her goals and interests aligned with Dell Med’s mission. While achieving her undergraduate medical education, she served on the student senate as co-president of the student body, the admissions team as a student ambassador, and the undergraduate medical education committee as a student representative.

In addition, Erin took on leadership roles with the environmental health interest group, the C.D. Doyle student-run free clinic for people experiencing homelessness in Austin, and the Health Careers Collaborative, a national organization pairing medical student mentors with high school students from communities underrepresented in medicine.

Erin had her first baby during her clinical rotations — and returned to her clinical rotations four months after her daughter was born. One of her first rotations was in pediatrics, where she cared for a patient almost the same age as her daughter. She immediately connected with the patient's mother, who was also a first-time mom, bonding over shared experiences of early parenthood. This connection solidified her passion for pursuing pediatrics.

"My rotation underscored the importance of taking the time to connect with patients and their families on a personal and vulnerable level. The human side of medicine can easily get lost in the hustle, but genuine connections can have a lasting impact that extends beyond the hospital walls."

In March 2024, Erin matched at Dell Med Pediatrics for her residency. As a new parent and recent graduate, she looks forward to applying her dedication to health equity, education and mentorship to provide patient-centered, compassionate care to children and their families right here in Austin.

"None of this would have been possible without the support of donors," she said. "Scholarships allowed me, and many of my peers, to pursue our goals without the financial strain of higher education."

> "Knowing that I have the support of such generous donors has motivated and inspired me to push through the rigors and challenges. Scholarships gave me the peace of mind allowed me to focus on my passion for working with children and connecting with their parents. After matching with Dell Med Pediatrics, I am excited to continue my journey as a pediatric resident, right here in Austin."
>
> Erin Kovar

168
physicians in training were announced to be coming to Texas during Match Day 2024

401
physicians in training (residents and fellows) who already call Dell Med home (a 55% increase since 2015)

895
residency and fellowship graduates since 2015

67%
practicing in Texas**

46%
practicing in Central Texas**

**of the 578 graduates immediately entering practice

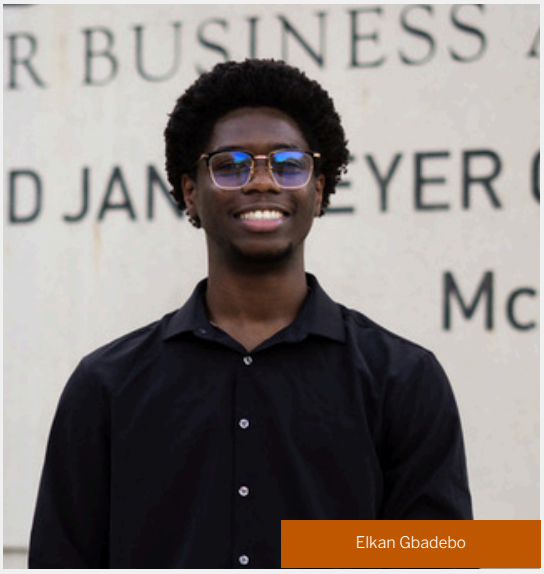
Class of 2028 Snapshot

Wadiah Khan
Hometown: Houston
Undergrad: Texas A&M University


Wadiah Khan

Why do you want to practice medicine?
"My interest in medicine is motivated by family experiences with health care in Bangladesh and the U.S. As a result, I hope to promote communication and accessibility of care as a physician."

What did your path to medical school look like?
"I received my B.S. in biology and psychology from Texas A&M in December. Texas Joint Admission Medical Program was incredibly supportive in my path to becoming a first-generation physician, and I highly recommend it for students looking to do the same!"


Elkan Gbadebo

Elkan Gbadebo
Hometown: Fulshear, Texas
Undergrad: Baylor University

Why do you want to practice medicine?
"Growing up obsessed with comics and superheroes, I saw physicians in the same light — as individuals who stood as leaders and recognized their gifts for advancing their communities. However, I never grew up seeing physicians who looked like me or advocated for people who came from a similar background. I pursued medicine so I could be that physician and advocate that I never had growing up. "

What should people know about you?
"I love the arts, from music to paintings to literature. I am always looking for new music to add, different interpretations of an artist's intent, and new ways to conceptualize art. If anyone ever wants to chat about art, contact me!"

Predicting Your Future Health:
The Power of Digital Twins

Imagine being able to foresee significant health problems before they occur, identify what aspects of your health need closer monitoring, and collaborate with your doctor to prevent serious medical events.

This vision is part of pioneering research led by David Paydarfar, M.D., chair of Dell Med's Department of Neurology and director of the Mulva Clinic for the Neurosciences. This groundbreaking project has united some of the brightest minds across the University of Texas campus, showcasing how cross-campus collaboration can accelerate health innovation.

This revolutionary concept is called "digital twins."

A digital twin is a sophisticated computational model that evolves over time, continuously changing along with an individual. Digital twins combine computational modeling, artificial intelligence, and machine learning with real-time clinical data, creating a dynamic and personalized health profile.

Traditional modeling techniques have relied on theoretical data, but a digital twin uses real clinical data from the individual patient. This enables models to be continually updated with new information — such as imaging, physiological or genetic data — enhancing accuracy and applicability in real-world health care settings.

"The difference between a digital twin model and a conventional model is its ability to be 'updatable' and utilized in clinical environments," said Michael Sacks, director of the James T. Willerson Center for Cardiovascular Modeling and Simulation at the Oden Institute for Computational Engineering and Sciences. "Updating the model with additional data as it becomes available is key."

Digital twins hold immense potential for transforming health care. At The University of Texas at Austin, researchers are developing methods and algorithms to create Predictive Digital Twins, aiming to identify and treat diseases or conditions before symptoms even manifest.

Digital twins involve interpreting large datasets and conducting complex simulations that can mimic patient cases, including intricate pathologies and scenarios. These simulations offer doctors, researchers and medical students' invaluable insights into personalized medicine and precision health. Mastering these skills becomes increasingly crucial as health care shifts toward more tailored approaches.

Dell Medical School students stand to benefit significantly from this cutting-edge technology. They will develop expertise in data analysis, pattern recognition, and drawing conclusions from simulated results — skills essential for evidence-based medicine. Moreover, they will practice diagnosing conditions based on symptoms, test results, and medical history, refining their clinical reasoning and problem-solving abilities in a risk-free environment.

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