

News Release

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Legislative Support Strengthens Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center's Efforts to Improve Rural Cancer Care

Support for Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC) continued in the 89th legislative session, including \$25 million to establish the Rural Cancer Collaborative. The one-time funding provided under House Bill 500 will help enhance TTUHSC's efforts to serve rural and underserved communities by increasing access to cancer prevention, treatment and research throughout Texas.

TTUHSC President Lori Rice-Spearman, Ph.D., said Texas ranks third nationwide for cancer cases and mortality. And in rural Texas, the stakes are even higher.

"We are deeply grateful for the state's investment in TTUHSC, which affirms our mission to improve lives through innovation in health care, education and research," Rice-Spearman said. "The legislature's support—particularly the \$25 million for our Rural Cancer Collaborative—helps us close the health gap for underserved communities across Texas. With this and other critical funding for research, academics and infrastructure, we are empowered to expand access to quality care and create meaningful, lasting impact in the communities we serve."

Rice-Spearman said the Rural Cancer Collaborative aims to ensure that where someone lives does not determine if or how they survive a cancer diagnosis. It focuses on making life-saving care accessible for all Texans, no matter their ZIP code.

"We are deeply grateful to our legislative leaders for recognizing the importance of these initiatives," Rice-Spearman said. "Their support makes it possible for us to advance critical work that directly benefits the communities that need it the most."

A cross-disciplinary team of TTUHSC school, institute and center leaders, together with the university's cancer investigators and clinicians, is working collaboratively to ensure this investment is directed toward sustainable, high-impact solutions that bring lifesaving care closer to home.

The legislature also invested in three additional key areas, awarding TTUHSC funding that supports:

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- Research growth — an increase in performance-based research funding to support TTUHSC's research enterprise, including investigator and trainee support, updated space, equipment, technology and research staffing, providing TTUHSC with the opportunity to secure additional external research funding.
- Academic mission — increased formula funding to support the university's continued enrollment growth and to further the academic mission.
- Campus infrastructure — increased investment in the Higher Education Fund for critical facilities and information technology infrastructure.