The compass is one of our oldest devices to help us find our way. Even when conditions change, a compass lets us orient ourselves. It helps guide us home. That’s why Vanderbilt University Medical Center uses the compass to describe our strategy for the future.

Over the past year, people from all parts of the medical center have developed a new “strategy compass.” This compass unifies our work across patient care, research and medical education.

These teams looked carefully at where we’ve been. They considered our unique strengths. They took into account all the changes – and opportunities – facing us today.

The compass begins with our aspiration as a medical center:

*Through the exceptional capabilities and caring spirit of its people, Vanderbilt will lead in improving the healthcare of individuals and communities regionally, nationally and internationally. We will combine our transformative learning programs, compelling scientific discoveries, and distinctive personalized care to foster the health of all people.*

Simply put, we have extraordinary people doing exceptional things. We are leading the way to improve the health of our communities, near and far. We can do this in a way few others can because we combine science, training of healthcare professionals and patient care.

Our compass also capitalizes on “distinctive capabilities.” These capabilities are strengths we have because we are an academic medical center comprised of a team of over 20,000 people, engaged with the community, and leveraging the strengths of Vanderbilt. These are the strengths we will leverage and grow:

- A collaborative culture
- Leadership in clinical care
- Basic and translational research
- Learning as a core competency
- Personalized medicine
- Population health

This compass identifies four “strategic directions” or themes. It allows us to adapt as we learn or as things change. It allows us to measure – and speed up – our progress. The four strategic directions are:

- Design for Patients and Families
- Discover, Learn and Share
- Make Diversity and Inclusion Intentional
- Amplify Innovation

For each strategic direction, the compass includes a brief description of the intent and importance, “capabilities to enhance”, “capabilities to develop” and examples. The capabilities to enhance highlight opportunities to build out aspects of VUMC’s distinctive capabilities. The capabilities to develop call out areas where building is required from the ground up. The examples provide a snapshot of work that is complete or underway.
I - Strategic Direction: Design for Patients and Families

We will care for people in a compassionate and personalized way, wherever they are, whenever they need us

Statement of Importance:

Historically, the processes of healthcare have been designed around the health care enterprise. It is clear that engagement and outcomes improve when the processes of healthcare are designed around the needs of patients and their lifestyles to create memorable experiences. We will iteratively redesign healthcare to touch our patients and their families continuously, whenever or wherever they need us, with the aim of addressing their needs within the flow of their daily lives. Furthermore, designing memorable experiences for our patients offers us a clear competitive advantage—it builds a reservoir of positive memories that over time can generate loyalty.

Capabilities to Enhance:

- Our collaborative culture to be inclusive and to express empathy and compassion in all interactions
- The structure of the Patient Care Centers to coordinate multidisciplinary care for conditions managed by VUMC
- Opportunities for patients to participate in research and learn how to improve their health and engage as partners in their care
- Personalized medicine to integrate social, behavioral and environmental factors with the full range of molecular characteristics
- Population health by engaging in cross-sector community partnerships to improve community health and well-being

Capabilities to Develop:

- Self-service tools for health improvement, access to care and engagement in care.
- A regionally integrated patient-centered and reliable health care system to bring Vanderbilt to people where they are
- Systems of primary care with the right levels of clinician and mode of interaction.
- Clinical integration across VHAN, including quality improvement, information technology connectivity and contracting
- Systems to measure and respond to social, behavioral, and environmental factors; individual values and goals; and outcomes that matter to patients and families
- Care systems engineered to provide a consistent high value experience based upon understanding patient and family
- Ways to engage all stakeholders to improve patient and family experience
Examples of Designing for Patients and Families:

- VUMC is working with the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to implement an Oncology Care Model that incorporates extended hours to care for patients, patient navigators to help guide patients through the health system, palliative care, psychosocial support, and hospice counseling.
- Vanderbilt Health On Call, a Medical Center innovation that uses a smartphone app allowing patients to order a $99 home visit from a Vanderbilt nurse practitioner.
- Walk-in and after hours clinics, conveniently located across the region we serve, with full access to VUMC patient records, and open evenings and weekends.
- Transition and grow some clinical services off-site where they will be more accessible and convenient to our patients and their families.
- The clinical enterprise has picked elimination of paper forms from the clinics and on-line of scheduling of return appointments as two Big Hairy Audacious Goals for Epic go-live.
- VHAN has launched the Health Information Exchange (HIE) and is piloting its use to reduce hospital admission. The HIE allows affiliates to share information across the network to help improve care.
- The Patient Care Center Medical Directors are inventorying outcomes, particularly Patient Reported Outcome Measures, they are already measuring as the first step toward systematically measuring outcomes that matter most to patients.
- Urology is piloting capture of outcomes that matter to patients with localized prostate cancer with funding from Movember using the standard metric set developed for that condition by the International Consortium for Health Outcomes Measurement.
- VUMC is implementing the pipeline for incorporating computable genetic data into StarChart, the Research Derivative and BioVU
II - Strategic Direction: Discover, Learn and Share

Our collaborative learning environment ensures we will remain nimble and distinctive as a national leader in biomedical discovery, healthcare and training. As we integrate expertise and data, we will expand and create new research capabilities to make discoveries and get them quickly to patients and our community.

Statement of Importance:

Vanderbilt is leading the charge in ushering in a new era of health and prevention, detection and treatment of disease. Progress that could not have been imagined a decade ago is now being realized with our research and reality for our patients and individuals in the community. We are transforming interventions away from a model in which we see people for the first time when they begin experiencing symptoms to one that detects, manages and perhaps eradicates disease before individuals even know they have them. The work is being driven by our pioneering discoveries in basic, translational, clinical and population research as well as learning systems. VUMC is engaging in new ways with our patients and community, through new prevention and treatment modalities in the form of interventional trials, as well as with new models of engagement, health care implementation and outcomes assessment—both here and through our affiliate hospitals and community in the Vanderbilt Health Affiliated Network.

Capabilities to Enhance:

- Our collaborative, inclusive and trans-disciplinary culture that promotes interactions across Vanderbilt and the community
- Efficiency of the overall research enterprise through improved capture and exchange of expertise, reagents and technologies
- Neuroscience and behavioral health research and translation
- Institutionally-supported research cores, facilities and tools
- Footprint and functionality of research space
- Transparency of data-sets and methods; reproducible research
- Programs and tools to advance learning opportunities and workforce engagement
- Personalized/precision medicine
- Focus on health disparities, outcome and policy; and implementation research

Capabilities to Develop:

- Dynamic process to develop, share and recognize the contributions of individuals and teams to discovery and learning
- Trans-institutional framework for infection, immunology, and inflammation research
- Systems that enable co-registration and bioinformatics mining of all forms of data across the research and clinical enterprise.
- Plan for computational science, information technology and data storage as required to meet the demands and advance basic, clinical and population research
- Pragmatic trials using broad scope clinical operations as a platform
- Systems to access and leverage clinical specimens at scale with appropriate database capabilities; specimens representative of a diverse population
- Workplace-based systems for Continuing Professional Development
- Systems to support learning-working teams
• Population health and discovery platform across the Vanderbilt Health Affiliate Network (VHAN) enabling research, community engagement and collaborative partnerships
• Health forecasting system; knowledge engine
Examples of Discovering, Learning and Sharing:

- Leveraging Vanderbilt’s Precision Medicine Initiative and data coordination center framework to advance robust clinically annotated, genomic data to support basic, clinical and population research; and, identify subsets of patients with distinct genetic causes for common disease and/or adverse drug reactions (many examples from which to choose relative to the audience).
- Systems to support learning-working teams – QuizTime, a smartphone application designed to improve decision-making processes. Piloting the application to deliver opioid training as part of continuing medical education (CME) activities. Goal is to better prepare learners across the continuum to practice medicine in a rapidly changing health care environment.
- The Medical Innovators Development Program (MIDP) is a new four-year PhD to MD training program tailored to engineers and applied scientists with existing PhD degrees. Fills an unmet need for applied physician-scientists who can solve clinical problems by translating discoveries in imaging, informatics and systems design, and/or medical devices into valuable innovation that will improve the lives of our patients. The MIDP learners will engage with faculty from each of these respective Vanderbilt schools, as well as from successful entrepreneurs from across the nation. The specialized training will allow graduates to generate impact spanning the spheres of academia, non-profits, government, and industry.
- The American health care system is shifting its focus from providing health care services to optimizing the health of individuals and communities. VUMC is focused on the development of new strategies for working with an increasingly diverse population and addressing disparities in etiology of disease, health care access and patient outcomes associated with factors such as race, gender, sexual orientation, primary language, and socioeconomic status.
- Expanding and further integrating neuroscience and behavioral health research across Vanderbilt, leveraging new commitments and leadership in Vanderbilt Kennedy Center, Vanderbilt Brain Institute, Departments of Neurology, Psychiatry, Pediatrics, and Pharmacology, and Vanderbilt University Institute of Imaging Science. In any picture of health, a core finding is that behavior is central to many, maybe to most of our nation’s leading health concerns, such as heart disease, stroke, lung disease, obesity, drug abuse, alcoholism, depression, neurological disorders and many others.
- Globalization has increased the spread of infectious disease and our ability to manage public health depends on scientific breakthroughs in the fields of microbiology and immunology, which are fields at the nexus of basic research, clinical care and population health. Advances in our understanding of the immune system are enabling the treatment of previously intractable diseases such as cancer and auto-immune-based disorders. We are developing a new trans-institutional framework for infection and immunology research including significant investments in microbiology/microbiome science and immunology.
III - Strategic Direction: Make Diversity and Inclusion Intentional

We will reflect the diversity of the populations we serve in our teams, programs and communications; and be inclusive in our processes and decisions.

Statement of Importance:

The populations we serve are increasingly diverse with growing health disparities, and the people working at Vanderbilt represent growing diversity. **Diversity and inclusion are fundamental to our success in reducing health disparities in the populations we serve.** Moreover, a workforce that is not only diverse, but also inclusive in nature, is more effective at crafting innovative solutions to the major challenges of health care and in executing on those solutions as a team.

Capabilities to Enhance:

- Our collaborative culture to be inclusive, and to reflect the diversity of the populations we serve
- Focus on health disparities in all programs
- Diversity of our teams, faculty and leadership
- Representation of our diversity in recognition and awards

Capabilities to Develop:

- Welcoming and inclusive environment where diverse cultures see themselves within the fabric of the organization
- Weave and integrate a consciousness to elements of diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Processes that ensure diverse voices and perspectives are included in decision making and communication at all levels
- Resources and coaching to help academic and clinical units promote and improve diversity and inclusion in all of their activities
Examples of Making Diversity and Inclusion Intentional:

- Established the VUMC Chief Diversity Officer position (Andre Churchwell) to provide leadership across mission areas.
- Adding portraits that reflect and celebrate the diverse nature of our community, faculty, students, and staff.
- Creating faculty and staff awards named after women and under-represented minorities.
- Developing D&I people pillar goals, beginning with inclusion of underrepresented minorities (URM) in applicant pool and retention of URM faculty, and continuing with patient satisfaction metrics sensitive to unconscious bias training.
- Training the entire VUMC enterprise on how to identify and respond to unconscious bias.
- Over 180 on-going Health Disparity Research projects in VUMC and VUSN.
IV - Strategic Direction: Amplify Innovation

We will amplify the impact of our innovative discoveries and services while broadening engagement in innovation.

Statement of Importance:

While VUMC has long been a center of innovation in its core activities (research, education, and clinical care), as a leading academic medical center, we have the responsibility and the capability to amplify innovation in the full range of services and activities connected to our missions. Seeking input and engaging our entire Vanderbilt community—patients, trainees, staff, and faculty—will also offer us the advantage of collecting the best ideas that can then be converted into innovative products or services.

Capabilities to Enhance:

- Our collaborative culture to convert ideas, discoveries, and services into meaningful innovation
- Methods & tools that improve quality, outcomes, and health
- BioVU and bi-directional methods to connect fundamental discovery to health and disease
- Systems to allow situationally-relevant learning
- Interventional trials in population cohorts

Capabilities to Develop:

- Alternate revenue streams leveraging our leading business services thereby growing our reputation and financial flexibility to support education and research
- Relationships that strengthen VHAN clinical programs, including joint ventures with clinicians and hospitals and next-generation insurance products
- Transdisciplinary teams to innovate learning, research, and healthcare
- Platforms for innovation incubators and accelerators
- Crowd sourcing methods and tools
Examples of Amplifying Innovation:

- VUMC is in the process of launching business to business services for supply chain, pharmacy and laboratory testing to support the medical center and VHAN.
- Telemedicine programs, such as Telestroke and others, are expanding into hospitals and clinicians in other areas.
- VUMC is participating in alternative payment models, e.g. the Oncology Care Model.
- The RadX Innovation Challenge is a pilot program sponsored in conjunction with Radiology, the Wond’ry, the Center for Technology Transfer and Commercialization, and the Evelyn Selby Stead Fund for Innovation. Its purpose is to engage the Vanderbilt community in generating viable new healthcare business concepts and to inspire a culture of innovation.
- Department of Anesthesiology is partnering with Systems Engineering undergraduate students to improve their faculty mentorship program.
- Exploring the use of Vanderbilt’s public and private partnerships to scale knowledge and impact related to the human immunome project.
- Piloting the Spigit crowd sourcing software platform to engage the Vanderbilt community in advancing the Strategic Directions.
- Design and launch a community facing web presence “one stop shop” with a suite of fundraising tools to: make immediate gifts to VUMC areas that interest them and share on social media; participate in existing events and share this experience; create their own fundraising events, recruit participants, promote and share this on social media; connect with celebrity partners though social media; find or sign up to receive additional VUMC content created to inform and excite; provide crowdfunding opportunities for VUMC researchers.