We are beginning to have greater clarity on the challenges and opportunities arising from the health care reform legislation. There should be no surprise that medicine collectively and laboratory sciences specifically will have to reduce costs and improve our ability to demonstrate the quality of our work. We are proceeding with the expectation to reduce costs five percent a year for each of the next three years. We are fortunate that our institution and our department are financially strong and that we are equipped to deal with challenges of this nature. While many of those phrases sound like business language, we must remember that our business is different from others in certain respects. We serve to improve the health of people and in most situations at our institution, our clients have diseases that are life threatening, defenses are down, family dynamics are stressed and tension is high. Not only do our laboratory services contribute to the majority of medical decisions, our research creates new therapies and diagnostic approaches to improve health care and our educational programs equip the next generation to accomplish what we do not. It is part of our nature to not only constantly improve, but also to drive the improvement process. Therefore, the effort to document quality and improve outcomes from efforts made by our department and institution should not deter anyone from happily carrying out their duties and pursuing our common goals and mission. We are a very diverse group of people with outstanding talents in the complex fields of pathology, microbiology and immunology. Given our resources and capabilities, we will succeed. While “Carpe Diem” captures the thought for addressing our medical opportunities, we must also keep in mind the phrase originated during one of our country’s most challenging times: “E Pluribus Unum”. - Dr. Steven H. Hinrichs, Chair

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