

From the University of Mississippi Medical Center Division of Public Affairs

## UMMC RECEIVES PERFECT PROPERTY AUDIT SCORE FROM STATE

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JACKSON, Miss. – Asset management at a major academic health science center is a challenging proposition at best.

Not only must property officers keep track of a multitude of supplies commonly found in most office environments, but they also must monitor medical equipment in clinical areas – from huge MRI scanners to items no larger than a pen – many of which move with patients from room to room and floor to floor.

All of which makes the Medical Center's recent property audit score from the Mississippi State Auditor's Office so extraordinary.

"The University Medical Center did an outstanding job during a recent property audit, having 100 percent of all inventoried items accounted for," said Stacey Pickering, state auditor. "The level of professionalism and accountability to the taxpayers of Mississippi is to be commended.

"It is very rare that we audit an agency of any size, much less the size of UMC, and have a perfect audit."

The Medical Center is audited approximately every 18 months by the State Department of Audit. All equipment valued at more than \$1,000 is tagged, and 25 percent of the tagged items are tracked for each audit.

"We are different than any other state agency since we are the state's only academic medical center," said Dr. David Powe, associate vice chancellor for administrative affairs. "Ours is perhaps the most complicated system to track these assets.

"We're diligently working to meet the letter of the law and being good stewards of state resources as we manage these property items."

At UMMC, 407 property officers monitor more than 39,000 items with a total value of approximately \$257 million. One-quarter of the items – representing 94 different departments – were audited this go-round. Powe credited Arty Girod, director of police and logistical services, and the property office team for making sure the institution's property assets were managed properly during the audit.

"Our responsibilities are to set the bar high, lead by example and provide the necessary support for surplus property, property control and all property officers to be successful," Girod said. "Our recent perfect audit is a positive reflection on the entire Medical Center family. The only way any of us can complete such a successful audit is with all components of the system working together as a team.

"Coming together is the beginning, working together is progress, staying together is success."

Preparation is the key for any successful audit. In 2009, self-audits of the entire Medical Center were conducted – part of the institution's annual 100-percent audit – and an

external auditor was brought in to run a second audit of the 94 departments scheduled to be audited by the state.

According to Powe, it was the UMMC staff's diligence throughout these audits, along with the institution's new radio-frequency identification system, that ultimately resulted in a perfect score.

"RFID is state-of-the-art technology in tracking the highly moveable items in real-time," he said. "Staff of property control do an outstanding job of providing training and support for property managers. In turn, they take their job very seriously in maintaining these assets, keeping up with inventory and providing good reports back to the Department of Audit as these items move to and fro throughout the institution.

"The perfect audit score shows the professional responsibility of all our employees to manage and keep track of the assets we have."

Pickering said UMMC's performance in the audit was so impressive that other state government agencies could refer to the Medical Center as a "best practice" model.

"This accomplishment was achieved by the property and inventory officials from UMC working with staff in the Property Audit Division of the State Auditor's Office to ensure an effective and manageable inventory audit plan was developed and executed.

"In my opinion, UMC can be looked to as a national standard for other research and training hospitals."

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The University of Mississippi Medical Center, located in Jackson, is the state's only academic medical center. University of Mississippi Health Care represents the clinical programs of the Medical Center and includes University Hospitals and Health System and University Physicians, the faculty group practice. UMMC encompasses five health science schools, including medicine, nursing, health related professions, dentistry and graduate studies, as well as the site where University of Mississippi pharmacy students do their clinical training. The Medical Center's threefold mission is to educate tomorrow's health-care professionals, conduct innovative research to improve human health, and to provide the highest quality care available to the state's citizens. A major goal of the Medical Center is the improvement of the health of Mississippians and the elimination of health disparities. For more information, contact the Division of Public Affairs at 601-984-1100 or visit us on the Web at <http://info.umc.edu/>.