

Integration of Rural Psychiatry and Family Medicine Residency Training



UTHealth

The University of Texas
Health Science Center at Tyler

Our Northeast Texas Journey...

Arunditi Xantus, MD
2021 Annual RTTC Meeting
April 9, 2021

Objectives



1. Identify the unique challenges of mental health care in rural areas and gain an understanding of why "if we build it they will come" concept may not always apply. Discuss how the importance of partnering with existing family medicine practitioners to gain "buy in" from the community is paramount.
2. Review the existing rural psychiatry residency training opportunities throughout the US. Discuss the development of a new rural psychiatry program in East Texas and identify the unifying characteristics of medical students applying to this novel program. Explore the relationship between exposure to rural medicine during clinical rotations in medical school, choice of residency programs, and eventual practice locations.
3. Discuss how integrated medical and psychiatric services are necessary to tackle mental illness in a rural community. Explore opportunities within a rural community to provide truly integrative care.

My Background



Born and raised in the Appalachian mountains of WV

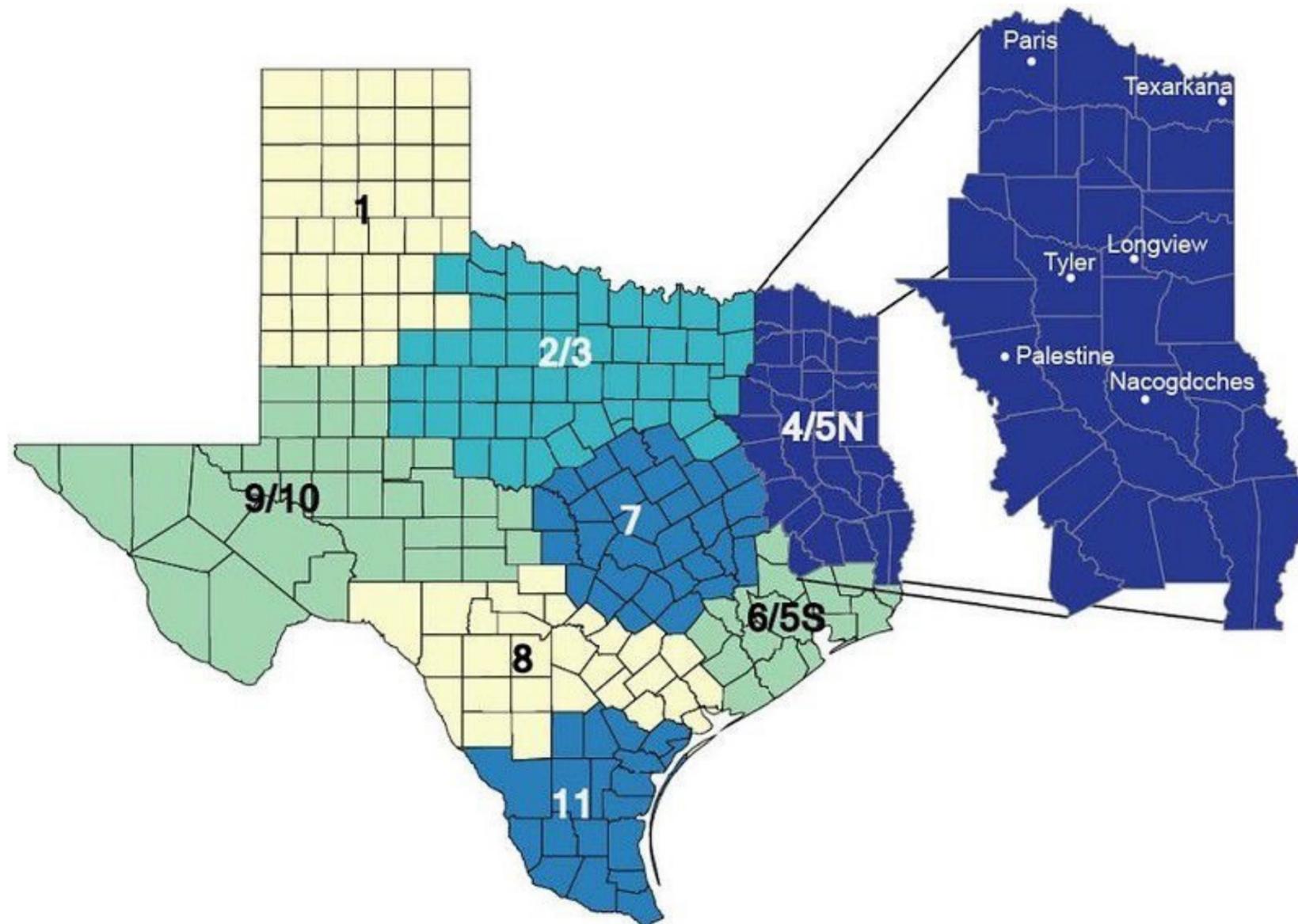
Father = rural general practitioner

Mother = nurse midwife

Afternoons/nights/weekends spent at "the clinic"



Northeast Texas



- 35-county area
- Covers more than than 25,000 square miles
- This health service region is similar in size to West Virginia
- More than half of the 1.5 million people are spread out in rural areas, where the greatest health disparities are seen

History of UTHSCT



History of UTHSCT



The only academic medical center in Northeast Texas

Originally "East Texas Tuberculosis Sanitarium," established in 1947 as a tuberculosis treatment facility

Later became a state hospital known as the East Texas Chest Hospital

Chartered in 1977 by the University of Texas System Board of Regents → became The University of Texas Health Science Center at Tyler (UTSHCT)

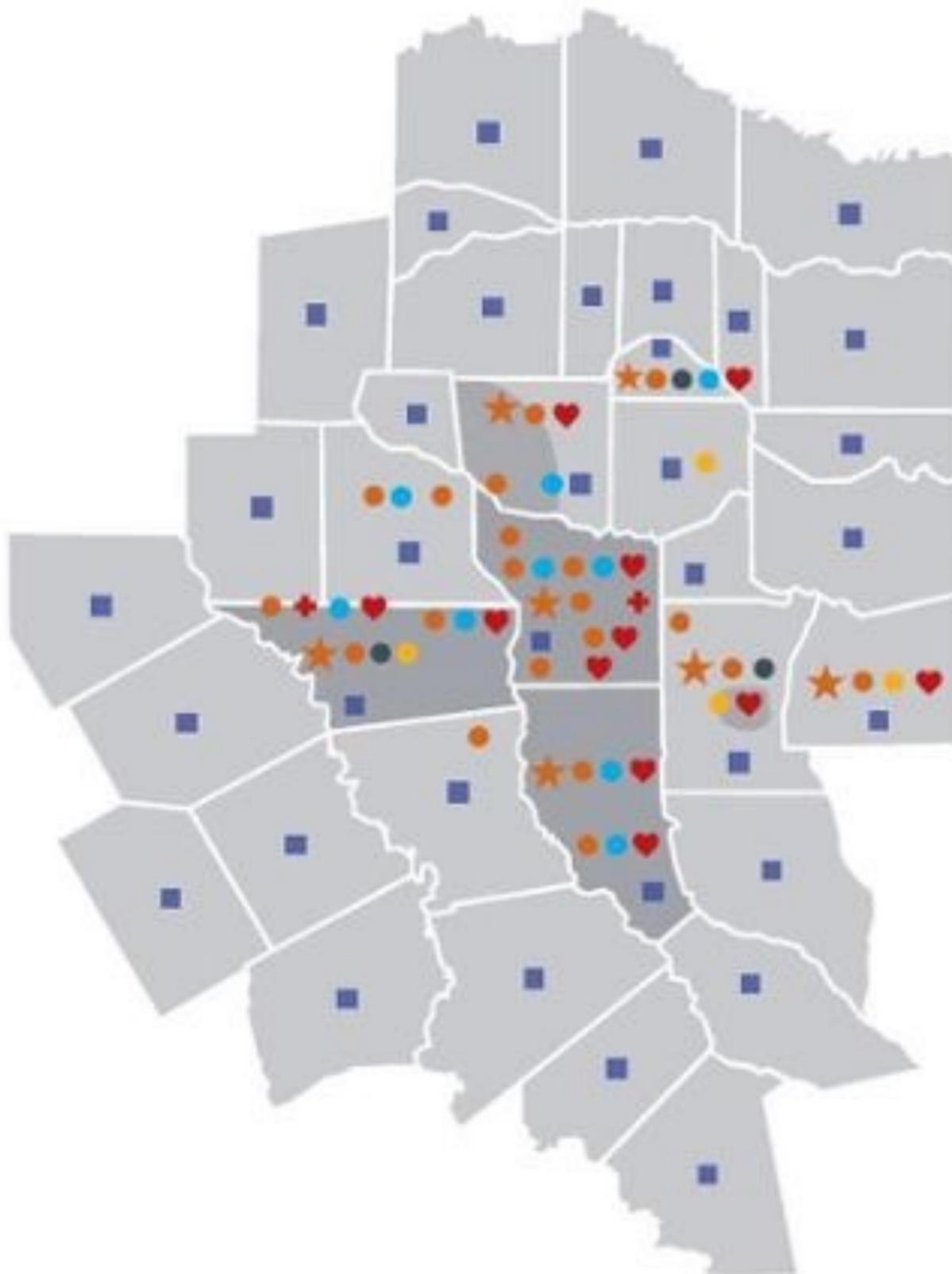
2018-- major expansion of clinical operations through a merger with the former East Texas Medical Center to form UT Health East Texas

The Impact of the Merger...



From a single campus to a network of hospitals, clinics, an EMS/Air 1 service, rehabilitation centers, freestanding emergency centers, urgent care facilities, fitness centers, and community based clinics.

- 10 hospitals
- 52 outpatient facilities



The UT Health East Texas family includes:

UT Health Tyler
(formerly ETMC Tyler)

UT Health North Campus Tyler
(formerly UT Health Northeast)

UT Health Athens
(formerly ETMC Athens)

UT Health Carthage
(formerly ETMC Carthage)

UT Health Henderson
(formerly ETMC Henderson)

UT Health Jacksonville
(formerly ETMC Jacksonville)

UT Health Pittsburg
(formerly ETMC Pittsburg)

UT Health Gultman
(formerly ETMC Gultman)

UT Health East Texas Behavioral Health Center
(formerly ETMC Behavioral Health Center)

UT Health East Texas Home Health
(formerly ETMC Home Health)

UT Health East Texas Rehabilitation Hospital
(formerly ETMC Rehabilitation Hospital)

UT Health East Texas Specialty Hospital
(formerly ETMC Specialty Hospital)



History of GME at UTHSCT

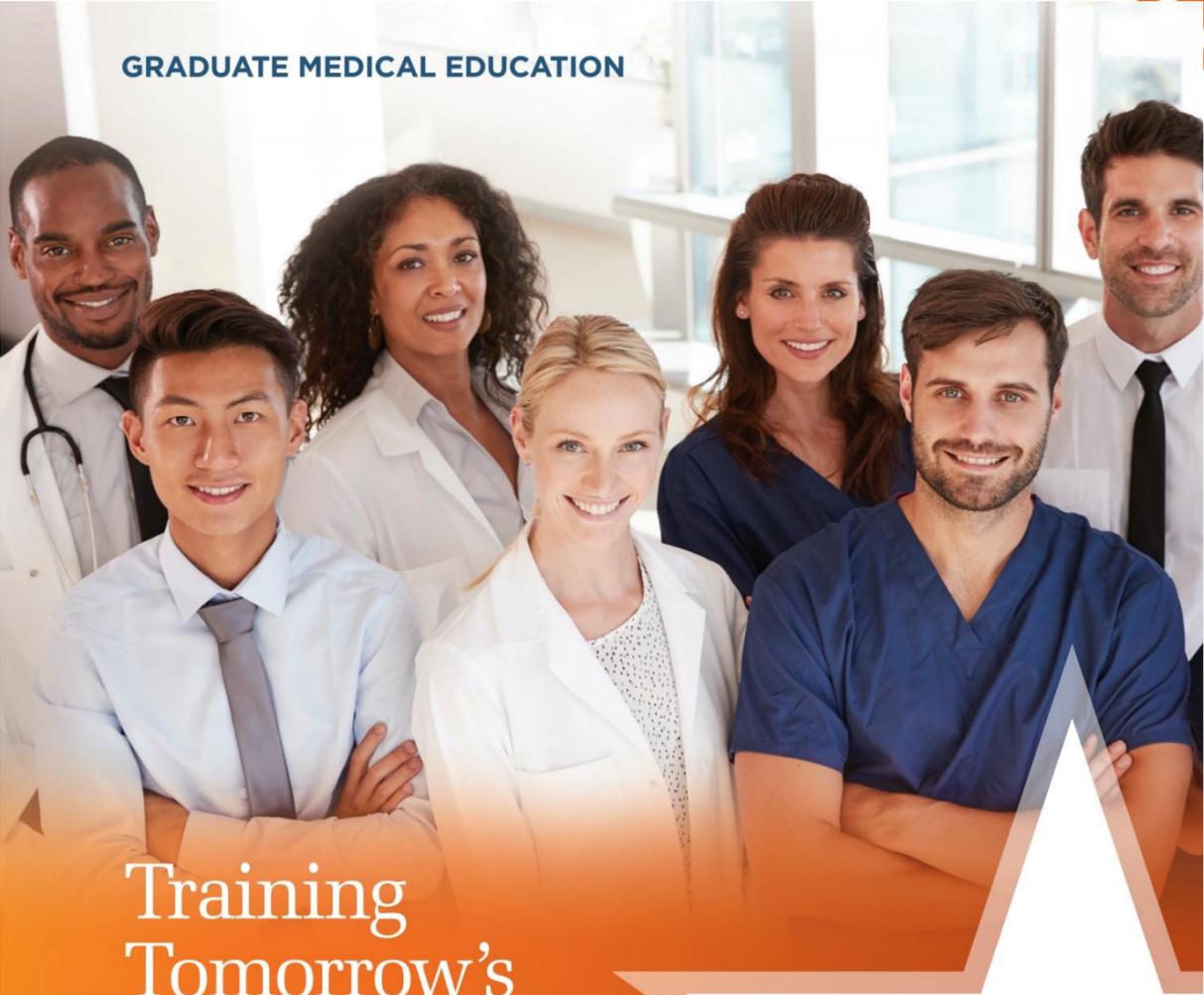


The family medicine residency at Tyler was developed in 1985 as the first graduate medical education training program in East Texas



Approximately 70 percent of our graduates over the years have chosen to stay in Texas

GRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION



Training
Tomorrow's
Leaders

in Healthcare and Medicine



Graduate Medical Education Expanded Rapidly



Residency Programs

Family Medicine – Tyler (1985)

Occupational Medicine– Tyler (1994)

Internal Medicine – Longview (2012)

Rural Family Medicine – Pittsburg (2016)

Psychiatry– Tyler (2017)

General Surgery– Tyler (2020)

Internal Medicine – Tyler (2020)

Rural Psychiatry– Pittsburg (2021)

Rural Family Medicine– Athens (2021)

Internships & Fellowships

Psychology Internship (2015)

Psychology Fellowship (2016)

Health Crisis in Northeast Texas



Tyler Morning Telegraph

The Health Status of Northeast Texas, 2016

A report spearheaded by The University of Texas System and UT Health Northeast showed if northeast Texas were a state, it would rank among the least healthy states to live

- 45th for its mortality rate from all causes of death
- 47th in chronic lower respiratory disease mortality
- 49th in heart disease mortality
- 50th in stroke mortality

Health Crisis in Northeast Texas



The Health
Status of
Northeast
Texas, 2016

East Texas
Community
Health Survey

**UT Health
Northeast
Population
Health
Strategic Plan:**

Goal 1
EDUCATION

Goal 2
COMMUNITY
SERVICE &
RESEARCH

Goal 3
CLINICAL
SERVICE

Mental Health Crisis in East Texas

East Texas Community Health Survey



Top 5 Health Problems Identified

Top 5 Community Populations in Need

Forum		Survey		Forum		Survey	
Diabetes	55%	Diabetes	39.1%	Uninsured/ Underinsured	48%	Low Income Groups	35.8%
Substance Abuse	51%	Obesity (Adult)	38.1%	Working Poor	43%	Working Poor	32.4%
Mental Health Problems	49%	Cancer	36.2%	Persons with Mental Illness	42%	Uninsured/ Underinsured	30.7%
Obesity (Adults)	46%	High Blood Pressure	32.5%	Substance Abuse Populations	37%	Persons with Mental Illness	30.5%
Heart Disease/Stroke	29%	Substance Abuse	32.2%	Low Income Groups	35%	Homeless	28.9%

Table 5. Comparison of the Top 5 Priorities of Forum and Survey Respondents



Mental health care emerges at UTHSCT

- ❖ Dept of Psychiatry & Behavioral Medicine- founded 2016
- ❖ First psychiatry resident class @ UTHSCT Tyler in 2017
- ❖ Initial funding
 - State-issued allocation of funds specifically for mental health workforce expansion in Northeast Texas— For residency start-up, recruitment of psychiatry faculty, and support of psychology initiatives
 - Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board-- Legislation “expresses the position of the Legislature that the state should prioritize a substantial increase in funding for graduate medical education (GME)”



Ahsan Balwa, DO
 Fourth Year
 A.T. Still University-Kirkcaldie
 College of Osteopathic Medicine



Cal Chen, DO
 Fourth Year
 The University of North Texas Health
 Science Center at Fort Worth
 Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine



Andrew Dabino, MD
 Fourth Year
 The University of Texas Health
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 Long School of Medicine
Chief Resident



Eyal "Joel" Terets, MD
 Fourth Year
 University of Oklahoma
 College of Medicine



Tabitha Trapasso, MD
 Fourth Year
 The University of Texas
 Medical Branch at Galveston
 School of Medicine



Benjamin Van Loenen, MD
 Fourth Year
 University of Miami
 Miller School of Medicine
Chief Resident



Jeremiah Duncan, DO
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 The University of North Texas Health
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 Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine



Albert "A.J." Glama, MD
 Third Year
 Texas A&M Health Science Center
 College of Medicine



Sayyeda "Tooba" Hasan, MD
 Third Year
 Texas Tech Health Sciences Center
 School of Medicine Odessa



Andrew Malcom, MD
 Third Year
 Texas Tech University
 Health Sciences Center
 School of Medicine



Kendall Smith, MD
 Third Year
 University of Arizona College
 of Medicine at Phoenix



Igal Tarash, DO
 Third Year
 Western University College
 of Osteopathic Medicine (CA)



Chitavi Chaudhary, MD
 Second Year
 The University of Texas
 Medical Branch at Galveston
 School of Medicine



Azad Jayanti, MD
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 First Year
 Arizona College of Osteopathic
 Medicine at Midwestern University



Joshua Morgan, MD
 First Year
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Haia Mounimne, DO
 First Year
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 Science Center at Fort Worth
 Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine



Nazrat Uddin, DO
 First Year
 William Carey University College
 of Osteopathic Medicine



Xilong Wu, MD
 First Year
 Texas A&M Health Science Center
 College of Medicine



Community Impact



- Dramatically improved access to child/adolescent/adult outpatient care— waitlist shrunk from nearly 1,000 individuals to < 100 within 3 mo.
- Improved campus mental health – uninsured UT Tyler students able to be seen at the Student Counseling Center
- Partnership with local substance abuse treatment center, Cenikor— awarded community partner of the year
- Community psychiatry partnership with local Mental Health Authority to provide increased coverage to un-and under-insured individuals

Community Impact



- Psychiatric ER and consultation services to provide increased support to multiple area hospitals (including telepsychiatry services to rural areas beginning in 2018)
- Involvement with local NAMI support groups
- Development of jail mental health program
- Texas Child Mental Health Care Consortium
 - Texas Child Health Access Through Telemedicine (TCHATT)
 - Child Psychiatry Access Network (CPAN)

Psychiatry and Family Medicine Integration



Shared Clinical Service

1st year psychiatry residents rotate with FM in outpatient, inpatient and ER settings

1st year FM residents rotate with psychiatry on C/L and inpatient services

FM residents provide medical care coverage to the various inpatient psychiatry units on weekends and afterhours

Warm hand-offs for all shared patients (ER, outpatient and inpatient setting)

Brief consultations (“curbsides”) throughout the health center, including inpatient medical floors, emergency room, and outpatient clinics



Psychiatry and Family Medicine Integration

Examples of Need-Based Clinical Collaborations

Covid Care Team

Covid Surge Team

Post-Covid Outpatient Clinic



Psychiatry and Family Medicine Integration



Shared Community Service and Research

Church Under the Bridge

Health Disparities Committee

Food insecurity screening in outpatient clinics

- East Texas Food Bank

Resident Quality and Safety Council

- Annual Resident Scholarly Activity Day

Psychiatry and Family Medicine Integration



Shared Educational Experiences

Didactics

- “Resident education coordinator” appointed from each program
- Fundamentals of psychiatric conditions/treatment is taught to the FM residents
- Dx and tx of routine outpatient medical conditions is taught to psychiatry

Grand Rounds– Psychiatry, FM and IM grand rounds

Patient Safety Conferences

Journal Club

Wellness Curriculum–

- Wellness Committee
- Resident Garden



We have made a huge impact in the Tyler and surrounding areas, but Northeast Texas is as big as West Virginia...

Rural Psychiatry Residency @ Pittsburg Inception



2019-- HHS awarded UTHSCT \$750,000 in grant funding as part of the Rural Residency Planning and Development Program (RRPD)

Funding over three years to develop a new rural residency program while achieving accreditation through ACGME

Part of \$20 million awarded to 21 different states by HHS for creating new rural residency programs in family medicine, internal medicine, and psychiatry



Only 9 Accredited Rural Psychiatry Programs in the US



5 Rurally Located Program

Unity Health-White County Medical Center
Indiana University SOM (Vincennes) Program
Colquitt Regional Medical Center Program
Adena Regional Medical Center Program
St. Luke's University Health Network Psychiatry

IRTT

University of Texas Health Science Center at Tyler
Rural Psychiatry
West Virginia University Psychiatry Residency
Maine Medical Center Psychiatry Residency

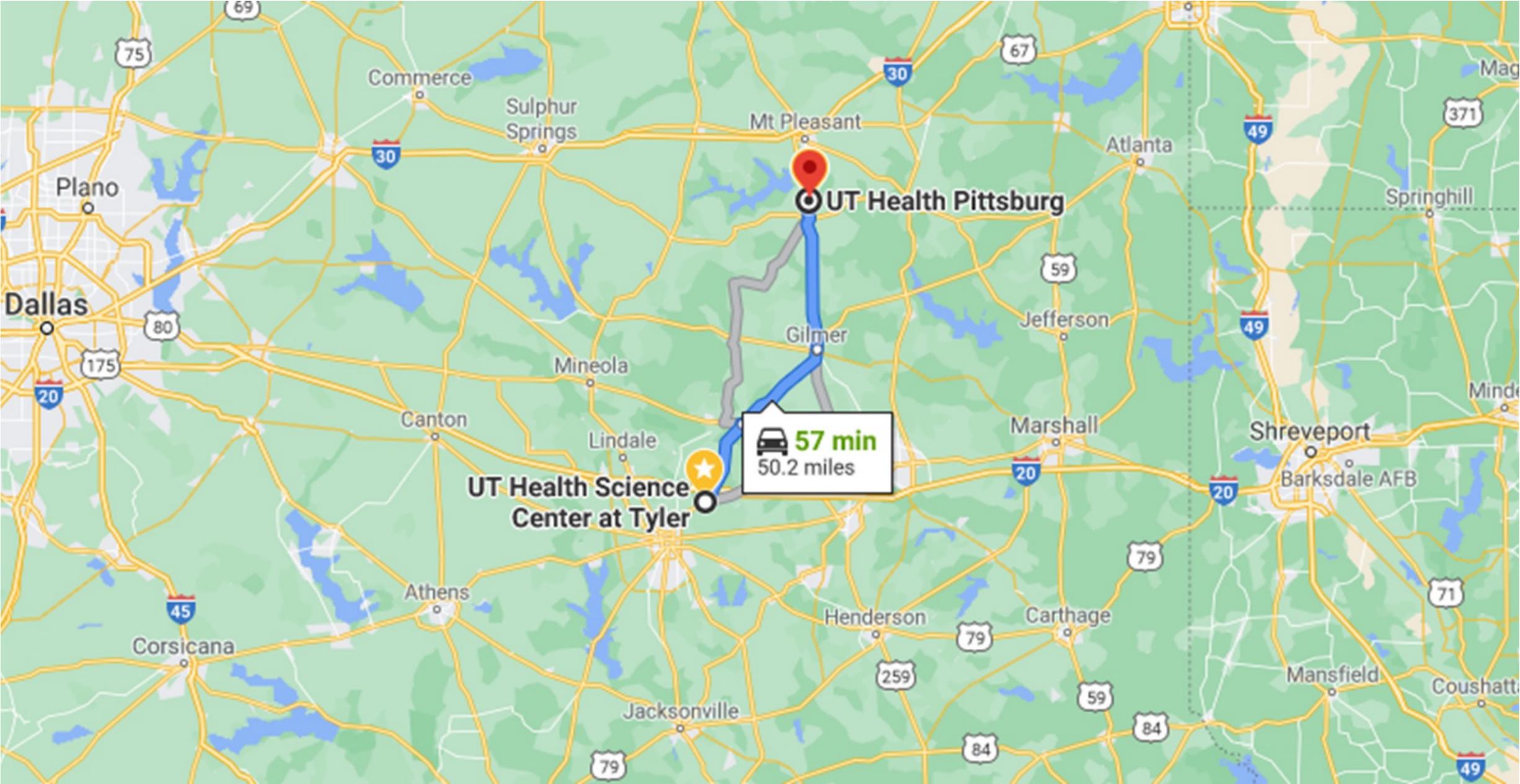
IRTT-like

Michigan State University Program - Rural pathway

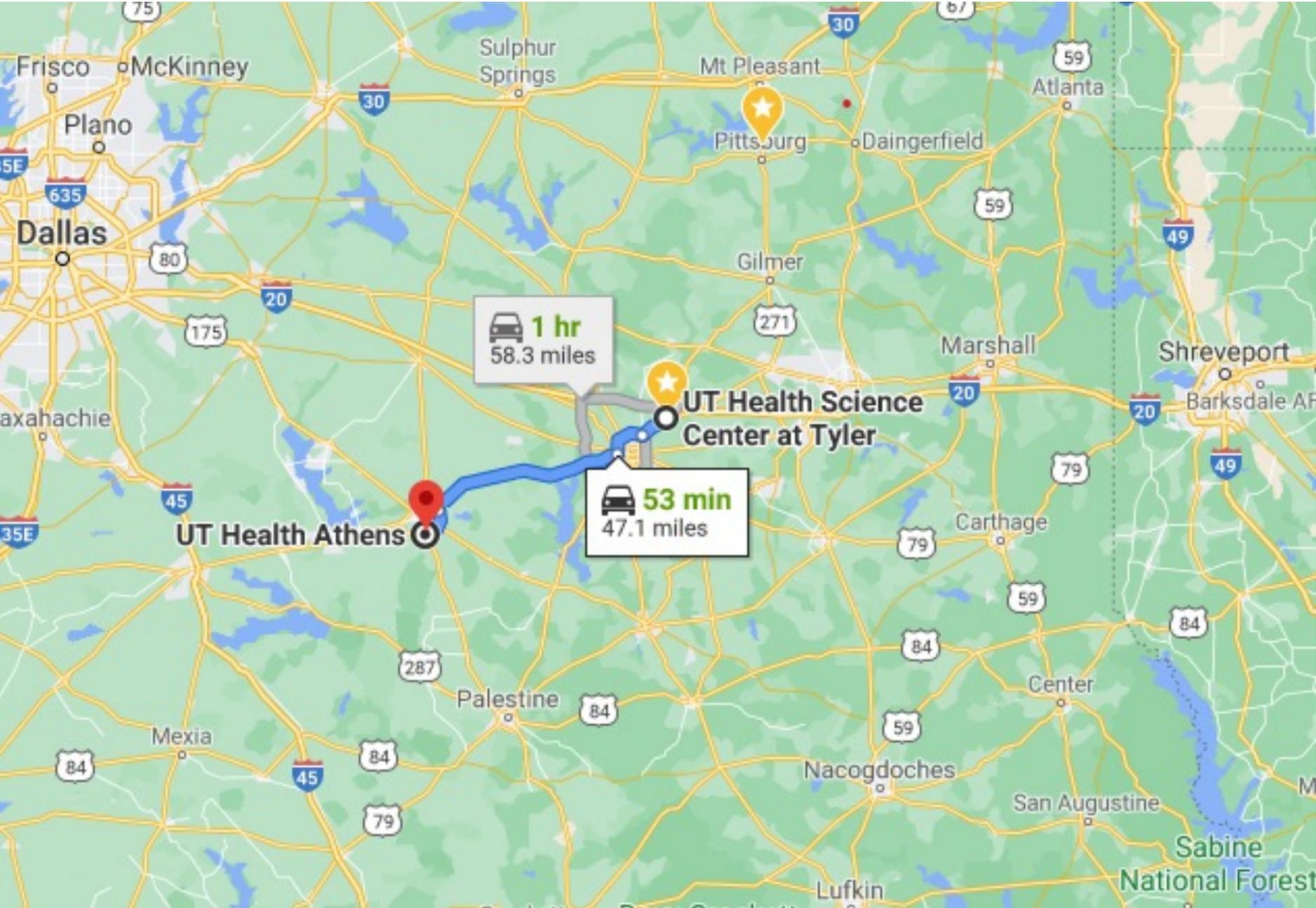
By comparison, there are many more FM and IM rural programs



UTHSCT Rural Psychiatry and FM @ Pittsburg



UTHSCT Rural Family Medicine @ Athens, TX



Our Rural Psychiatry Experience Thus Far – Overview of our Initial Applicants/Interview Season



Recruitment efforts:

- Videos on our UTHSCT YouTube channel highlighting the strengths of our program and institution, the natural beauty of Northeast Texas, and the perks of “country life”
- UTMB students rotate at UTHSCT for their clerkships—advertisement at it’s best!
- Virtual open house created/ran by the residents in early Fall – tremendous turnout
- Casual virtual “eat and greets” with the residents the evening before their interview

Our Rural Psychiatry Experience Thus Far – Overview of our Initial Applicants/Interview Season



Applicants:

- 532 total applicants
- 252 US MD/DO medical school graduates
- 68 Texas MD/DO medical school graduates
- Interviewed 60, ranked 54

Interviewees:

- Roughly 50% were dual applicants, to both Tyler and Pittsburg
- Over 50% lived in a rural setting for a majority of their childhood
- Nearly 75% stated they choose at least 1 elective rotation in a rural setting to obtain more exposure to rural medicine*
- 15-20% either chose or were assigned to rural rotations for >50% of their clerkship years*

Characteristics We Relied on to Find Our “Ideal” Rural Psychiatry Residents



Ties/family in Texas (or better yet, Northeast Texas!)

Has lived in a rural setting previously

Expressed interest in rural medicine through elective rotations, community service, personal statement, or letters of recommendation

Location of medical school (rural setting?)

Quality of interaction with residents and faculty during the interview process

They felt like a “good fit” based on personal characteristics— humble, resilient, hard-working, family- and community-oriented

Inaugural Class of Rural Psychiatry – Class of 2025



Lauren Cargill, DO
Edward Via College of
Osteopathic Medicine



Sydney Horton, DO
West Virginia College of
Osteopathic Medicine



Daniel Howard, MD
The University of Texas
Southwestern at Dallas



Mohammed Naqvi, MD
Ross University
School of Medicine

These residents will be joining us in Tyler in July and will spend the remainder of their residency serving UT Pittsburg and UT Quitman.

Rural Psychiatry Residency



1st year rotations:

- 3 months of inpatient psychiatry at Rusk State Hospital
- 3 months of inpatient psychiatry at UTHSCT
- 2 months of geriatric psychiatry at UTHSCT
- 1 month of outpatient FM @ Pittsburg– inpatient, outpatient and ER
- 1 month of outpatient FM @ Overton– rural agricultural community
- 2 months of inpatient IM @ UTHSCT– medical care to psychiatric inpatients

2nd year and 3rd year will be spent in Pittsburg in the outpatient, ER, and C/L settings

4th year electives to include community psychiatry, jail and forensic rotations

Future Expansion of Rural Psychiatric Services



Integrated outpatient wellness center in Pittsburg--FM, pediatrics, psychiatry, psychology and social services

Women's integrative health clinic

Expansion of mental health services to Camp County jail

Rural community psychiatry with Lakes Regional MHA

Free psychiatry and FM resident clinic

Health education in Pittsburg schools

Rural medicine tract for medical students (medical school coming in 2023!)

What Can We Do Right Now to Address the Critical Shortage of Rural Psychiatry?



- Develop clinical learning environments for rural psychiatric practice or use of telepsychiatry if needed
- Develop integrated care service models that bridge primary care specialties (e.g., family practice and pediatrics) and psychiatry
- Designate/support at least one faculty “champion” for rural psychiatry services, training, and mentorship
- Explore models that enable even urban-based faculty to work part-time in rural settings

What Can We Do Right Now to Address the Critical Shortage of Rural Psychiatry?



- Encourage multidisciplinary grand rounds around the psychiatric and primary care needs of rural communities
- Collaborate with your GME office and local medical community to seek funding opportunities for rural psychiatry training, clinical services development, and workforce development
- Advocate for state and national funding to support the mental health needs of rural communities and outcomes-based research on clinical and social services needed in rural communities

Call to Action— We need more accredited rural psychiatry programs!



- Identify local mental health personnel in schools, hospitals, and community health centers who may serve as liaisons to help introduce and endorse “outside” residents and psychiatrists to the community
- Expand primary care in psychiatry education, to enable psychiatrists to more comfortably manage common medical conditions or medication side effects in rural settings
- Encourage graduates who enter rural psychiatric practice to maintain connections with the academic program (e.g., via volunteer faculty appointments)

Thank you for your attention!



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Health Science Center at Tyler

Questions?

Comments?