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NEW RESIDENCY TRAINING PROGRAM AT CEDARS-SINAI MEDICAL CENTER TO TRAIN A DIFFERENT BREED OF NEUROSURGEON

LOS ANGELES (Sept. 21, 2005) – Cedars-Sinai Medical Center’s Division of Neurosurgery has established a new neurosurgical training program that is designed to produce neurosurgeons who are as skilled in the research laboratory as they are in the operating room.

“Our mission is to focus on training academic neurosurgeons. We’re looking for those who have a desire to conduct the kind of research that will lead to new treatments for patients with neurological disorders,” said Keith L. Black, M.D., director of the Division of Neurosurgery, the Cedars-Sinai Maxine Dunitz Neurosurgical Institute, and the Comprehensive Brain Tumor Program.

“We’ve always had an emphasis on quality patient care and research. Now, the third component of the triad, our teaching mission, is complete with the introduction of the residency program,” Black added.

Cedars-Sinai’s neurosurgical program has grown dramatically since 1997, the year the Institute was founded. This year alone, Cedars-Sinai neurosurgeons will perform more than 1,300 craniotomies and about 3,000 neurosurgical procedures, and *U.S. News & World Report* included Cedars-Sinai in its 2005 rankings of best hospitals for neurology and neurosurgery.

Still, Black sees innovation, more than volume of procedures, sculpting the future of neurosurgery. “We have a team of clinicians and scientists working side by side, making unique observations. There’s a constant interface between what we see clinically and what we take back to the lab,” he said. “Some of the major breakthroughs are coming out of integrated centers like ours that focus on early clinical translation and making innovative procedures and technologies available. We hope our residency program will lead to the expansion of this type of research and discovery.”

Cedars-Sinai’s is one of only a few new neurosurgical residency programs launched in the past two decades. Accredited by the American Council for Graduate Medical Education for up to five residents, it will provide one year of training in general surgery and five years in neurological surgery.

Moise Danielpour, M.D., who will direct the new residency, said the accrediting agency is very selective, requiring a thorough site inspection after completion of a detailed written application probing the merits of the facilities, the faculty and the proposed curriculum. “They make sure that the conditions are all correct and that the facility would be an excellent place to train the neurosurgeons of the future,” he said.

“We have a very active neurosurgical program with nearly 3,000 spine and intracranial procedures performed at Cedars-Sinai annually. This makes us one of the busiest neurosurgical programs in the country and gives us

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an uncommon opportunity to develop a program that focuses on the needs of the residents and includes both clinical care and academic endeavor,” Danielpour said, adding that the ideal candidate will be interested in the connection between research and patient care.

“We believe that translational research and clinical work for a neurosurgeon are equally important,” said Danielpour. “We want to train a surgeon who is innovative in the laboratory and facile in the operating room – a clinician-scientist who is going to excel and be one of the leaders in neurosurgery and neuroscience.”

Research has always been a key component of the Maxine Dunitz Neurosurgical Institute, which employs about 25 full-time researchers. While brain tumors are of particular interest, Black and the surgeons and scientists comprising the treatment and research teams conduct studies on a variety of subjects, including neurovascular abnormalities, spine disorders, movement disorders and pediatric neurosurgical issues.

Currently funded by seven National Institutes of Health grants, Institute researchers have attracted more than \$15 million in donor support to sustain an annual research budget exceeding \$2 million, and they publish about 20 peer-reviewed research papers per year on average. In the past several years, they have published significant findings in such areas as immunology, cancer stem cells, stem cell therapies, the role of genes, the blood-brain barrier, and innovative diagnostic and therapeutic technologies. Based largely on their work in immunotherapy and their efficiency in translating research into treatment, length of survival appears to be increasing for the first time among patients with the most deadly type of brain tumors.

Danielpour, a pediatric neurosurgeon, thoroughly enjoys interacting with residents in the medical center’s pediatric residency program when they go through their neurosurgical rotation, and he looks forward to the opportunities and challenges of the new residency program. “Having the privilege of training the neurosurgeons of the future is extremely rewarding,” he said.

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One of only five hospitals in California whose nurses have been honored with the prestigious Magnet designation, Cedars-Sinai Medical Center is one of the largest nonprofit academic medical centers in the Western United States. For 17 consecutive years, it has been named Los Angeles’ most preferred hospital for all health needs in an independent survey of area residents. Cedars-Sinai is internationally renowned for its diagnostic and treatment capabilities and its broad spectrum of programs and services, as well as breakthroughs in biomedical research and superlative medical education. It ranks among the top 10 non-university hospitals in the nation for its research activities and was recently fully accredited by the Association for the Accreditation of Human Research Protection Programs, Inc. (AAHRPP). Additional information is available at www.cedars-sinai.edu.

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