

# UT Southwestern Medical Center

## Employee Engagement Survey Results and Next Steps

To the UT Southwestern Community:

I am writing to thank you for your participation in the recently concluded Values in Practice (VIP) Employee Engagement Survey and to provide you with an initial summary of the results. You will be hearing further from others in the coming weeks, as leaders and staff from the Department of Human Resources provide more detailed results to executives, supervisors, and employees across the institution and work with departments to develop action plans to both address issues and celebrate areas of progress identified by the survey results.

As a reminder, to ensure absolute confidentiality, the survey was administered by our third-party vendor, Glint, and it was sent to nonfaculty UT Southwestern employees on June 8, for response by June 28. During this three-week period, more than 10,700 of you responded to the survey, which was a 71% response rate. We were very pleased to exceed last year's response rate of 62%, and, even more gratifying, the overall engagement index for UT Southwestern was 82, compared to last year's 78.

A one to two point change in the engagement index, which is a summary measure of employee commitment, motivation, and satisfaction, is considered a meaningful difference for a large organization; UT Southwestern's increase of four points is especially meaningful in light of the challenges we have been facing with COVID-19. In addition, this year's engagement index score puts us nine points ahead of the national benchmark for academic medical centers, so that, too, is a meaningful outcome of this year's survey.

The top two changes in responses to the survey questions were an increase of nine points in response to the question about communication ("UT Southwestern does a good job of communicating with employees") and eight points in response to the question about decision-making ("Overall, I am satisfied with how decisions are made at UT Southwestern"). Since decision-making was one of the topics identified for focused attention after last year's survey, this marked improvement is especially noteworthy.

We were pleased to see that in addition to these two topics, the responses to several other questions increased by more than five points compared with last year's survey, which is a sign of significant institutional progress. (Those areas were UTSW continual improvement, effective collaboration among teams, UTSW concern about employee well-being, confidence in UTSW leadership, and belief that meaningful action will be taken in response to survey results.)

However, one disappointment and cause for ongoing concern by all of us is that there was only a very small change in response to the question "I feel free to speak my mind without fear of negative

consequences.” Clearly that needs to remain an area of focus and a high priority for improvement in the year ahead. I believe that it is very important that UT Southwestern be seen as an institution where employees feel they can openly discuss problems and where their input and ideas are always welcome.

In addition to the standardized responses to the survey questions, employees were invited to add their own comments, and of the 10,700 respondents, over 4,000 (or 38%) added 14,271 comments. While I personally was very gratified by the many positive comments about the Wednesday morning campus briefings, I also found the content of negative comments on a number of topics very helpful to understand your concerns. I assure you that the Executive Vice Presidents and I are taking the themes that emerged from the comments, as well as the responses to the survey questions, very seriously.

One theme in the comments was the strong interest in being able to continue some amount of remote work, even when we can move beyond the constraints caused by COVID-19. I mention this to let you know that a priority project for the months ahead will be to re-examine our policies and practices in regard to remote work.

Your responses to the employee engagement survey are important for identifying what we are doing well and where we need to improve. The Executive Vice Presidents and I are committed to sustaining and extending the former and to giving high priority to addressing the latter.

Our fundamental goal is for UT Southwestern to be an institution that is characterized by mutual respect, mutual support, fair treatment of all, and a shared commitment to advancing our mission of promoting health and a healthy society through education, discovery, and healing.

Thank you for your responses to the VIP survey – and for all that you do, each and every day, to promote and reflect employee engagement. If you would like further information about the survey initiative or resources for employee engagement, please visit <https://www.utsouthwestern.net/intranet/hr/odt/engagement/> or contact the Organizational Development and Training (OTD) team at [EmployeeEngagement@UTSouthwestern.edu](mailto:EmployeeEngagement@UTSouthwestern.edu).

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