



 **COLUMBIA**
VAGELOS COLLEGE OF
PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS

STRATEGIC PLAN 2024



VISION AND VALUES

WE ASPIRE TO

transform human health by driving discovery, advancing care, and educating leaders

WE VALUE

excellence, respect and equity



A MESSAGE FROM KATRINA ARMSTRONG, MD

Dear Colleagues,

The Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons is a thriving institution, setting national and global standards for advancing biomedical research, patient care, and medical education, while embracing the northern Manhattan neighborhoods that define our identity and shared values. VP&S draws brilliant, socially minded students, skilled clinicians, ambitious scientists, and outstanding employees who believe in our larger calling. We are blessed with dedicated leaders and visionary benefactors, led by Roy and Diana Vagelos, whose generosity has elevated our aspirations across our missions. Our partnership with NewYork-Presbyterian is growing stronger daily because of productive collaboration and mutual respect. There is much to celebrate on 168th Street.

And yet, we must do more to seize the very real opportunities before us. This imperative is not simply a matter of every great institution needing to constantly evolve to meet the demands of a rapidly changing society—though that is true for us and for all involved in health care in 2024. I have recognized, since the day I arrived, that the faculty, staff and students of VP&S are our greatest asset. My top priority has been to create an environment that imposes no limits on their ability to succeed at the work they love. We are a large and diverse workforce comprised both of newcomers and those who have spent long and storied careers in Washington Heights. Across this diversity, we come together in our determination to address the needs of the world around us in a culture of authenticity, excellence and respect. The desire to achieve our full potential individually and collectively is widespread and deeply felt.

This is the setting in which this strategic plan has been developed. The plan represents the best of us: the product of concentrated effort by hundreds of faculty and staff across VP&S. It comes at a time when new challenges are emerging, even as the searing hardships of the pandemic have begun to recede into the past. It was developed for a medical school possessing talent and resources that are the envy of our peers. And it comes at a moment at VP&S when the desire for change and continued growth is palpable.

A MESSAGE FROM KATRINA ARMSTRONG, MD

To be sure, it would be a mistake to think of the announcement of this strategic plan as the starting bell for efforts to advance our missions and realize our goals. That work is ongoing and is happening today just as it has been happening here for decades. The purposes of the strategic plan are to propose new ideas, reestablish priorities for building our future, energize institutional initiatives, and create mechanisms for accountability. In the pages that follow, you will see both a roadmap for achieving our goals and a sampling of efforts already underway and deserving of recognition and continued support.

There is no more important professional endeavor than the work you do each day at VP&S. Succeeding at this work demands a unique combination of confidence and humility, idealism and practicality, optimism and acceptance. I am constantly inspired by how you embody these attributes and am certain that together we will achieve the goals set out in this plan. I am excited to join you in this work.

All my best,

Katrina Armstrong, MD

*Dean of the Faculties of Health Sciences and the Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons
Executive Vice President for Health and Biomedical Sciences, Columbia University*



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The VP&S Strategic Plan is a dynamic roadmap for guiding the work of the VP&S leadership team over the next 5 years. It is the product of a two-phase strategic planning process launched in January 2023. In phase one, a steering committee and an external consulting firm gathered input about our challenges and opportunities from more than 2,000 faculty and staff members. This information was then translated into overarching foundational values and goals for each of our missions and cross-cutting efforts.

OUR PEOPLE



CLINICAL



RESEARCH



EDUCATION



COMMUNITY



In phase two, working groups created for each of the missions and goals solicited input directly from the VP&S community, including department chairs and other VP&S leaders. The recommendations developed by the respective working groups form the core of the strategic plan and report now being shared with the VP&S community. That work has been distilled down to five overarching priorities, with accompanying goals and strategies that will bring each mission to life.

1 PRIORITY 1
Build the Best Environment for Our People

2 PRIORITY 2
Create the Clinical Care Model of the Future

3 PRIORITY 3
Drive Discovery to Transform Human Health

4 PRIORITY 4
Elevate Education Across the Continuum

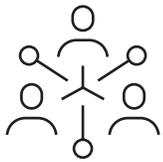
5 PRIORITY 5
Prioritize Partnership to Advance Community Health

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY VAGELOS COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS

We aspire to transform human health by driving discovery, advancing care, and educating leaders.

Excellence • Equity • Respect

Our People	Clinical	Research	Education	Community
<p>1</p> <p>Build the Best Environment for our People</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Create the Clinical Care Model of the Future</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Drive Discovery to Transform Human Health</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Elevate Education Across the Continuum</p>	<p>5</p> <p>Prioritize Partnership to Advance Community Health</p>
<p>Invest in inclusive ways for people to connect, collaborate and celebrate.</p> <p>Drive diversity, equity and inclusion through innovation, investment, and accountability.</p> <p>Enhance inclusive mentoring and career development for all faculty and staff.</p>	<p>Become tomorrow's cutting-edge care through interdisciplinary innovation and integration of scientific inquiry.</p> <p>Lead in quality of care, including clinical excellence, patient experience, and health equity.</p> <p>Streamline clinical processes to support high-performing teams.</p>	<p>Attract and empower the most creative and collaborative scientists.</p> <p>Create the leading ecosystem for scientific discovery and translation.</p> <p>Enhance scientific impact through collaboration and partnership.</p>	<p>Deliver best in class development programs to advance educator success and satisfaction.</p> <p>Ensure learners thrive in all settings, including the classroom, clinic and laboratory.</p> <p>Lead the nation in sustainable, inclusive programs that create pathways to biomedical careers.</p>	<p>Align medical center assets and activities to advance the health priorities of our local communities.</p> <p>Strengthen health care quality and access in our local communities.</p>
<p>Campus Services • Communications • Facilities • Information Technology</p>				



PRIORITY 1

BUILD THE BEST ENVIRONMENT FOR OUR PEOPLE

We are collaborative, interdisciplinary, and forward thinking. Our systems and structures enable us to excel.



GOAL 1

Invest in inclusive ways for people to connect, collaborate and celebrate.



The power of universities becomes visible when connections are made across difference: different ways of seeing things, different scientific disciplines, different life experiences. At VP&S, a profound shared determination to improve human health creates a communal sense of purpose and allows us to achieve remarkable outcomes working together. Connections are too valuable to be left to chance. We must be dedicated to forging productive partnerships large and small.

Strategies

- Build interactive and engaging shared spaces that facilitate interaction.
- Spur collaboration through new programs and events that build bridges across disciplines.
- Enhance a collective sense of purpose by serving local communities.

WORK IN PROGRESS

CUIMC WELL-BEING INITIATIVE

The CUIMC Well-Being Initiative was launched in October of 2022 to address immediate and long-term needs for achieving and sustaining well-being in the workplace. The initiative has conducted a campus-wide well-being survey, developed a toolkit for local leaders, and supported pilots across departments.



GOAL 2

Drive diversity, equity and inclusion through innovation, investment, and accountability.



The potential for transforming human health is larger than at any time in history. Seizing this opportunity is our foremost challenge. Only a diverse community will possess the level of talent required to succeed in this critical endeavor. We must celebrate diversity as a key to excellence, end practices that perpetuate inequality, and create an environment where everyone can thrive.

Strategies

- Define leadership responsibilities and strategies for accountability.
- Comprehensively measure and report on progress towards DEI goals.
- Ensure implementation of best practices including training programs, decision making processes, and the composition of committees.



GOAL 3

Enhance inclusive mentoring and career development for all faculty and staff.



Nothing says more about an organization than how it cares for its people. Over the last decade, VP&S has made major strides in supporting faculty and staff through career advancement, mentoring, and well-being initiatives. Building on this foundation, we must now set a new standard for comprehensive, longitudinal engagement and support that raises the trajectories of our people.

Strategies

- Create a comprehensive onboarding process.
- Facilitate group, peer, and cross-departmental mentoring.
- Ensure staff and faculty have clearly defined career pathways, including ongoing engagement after retirement.

WORK IN PROGRESS

CAREER LADDERS

Creating transparent and objective career development paths for staff is underway for nearly 50 job families. This Career Ladders initiative will enable our talented staff to continue to develop their skills and knowledge so they can achieve their full potential at VP&S.



PRIORITY 2

CREATE THE CLINICAL CARE MODEL OF THE FUTURE

We provide the best possible compassionate and equitable care to our patients and communities.



GOAL 1

Become tomorrow’s cutting-edge care through interdisciplinary innovation and integration of scientific inquiry.



Advances in science and technology are poised to revolutionize medical care. With our strengths in clinical care and research, we have an opportunity and responsibility to lead this revolution, connecting inquiry, discovery, and patient care into a new mutually reinforcing model. By creating and applying advanced, paradigm shifting care, we will provide the best possible care to our patients today while transforming care for the patients of tomorrow.

Strategies

- Invest in novel care models and crosscutting programs.
- Leverage technology, digital platforms, and artificial intelligence (AI) to transform care.
- Integrate clinical research throughout the patient’s journey.

WORK IN PROGRESS

WESTCHESTER EXPANSION

A major clinical expansion is underway in Westchester with the creation of a multispecialty patient centered ambulatory campus that will see over 1,000 patients a day at steady state. New space makes it possible to design programs to match what patients need and set a new standard for seamless service.



GOAL 2

Lead in quality of care, including clinical excellence, patient experience, and health equity.



Saving lives today depends upon a sustained and comprehensive commitment to health care quality and patient safety across our enterprise. New opportunities in data science, growing alignment with NewYork-Presbyterian, and deep commitment from front-line clinicians open the door to a new level of VP&S leadership in this national and global priority area.

Strategies

- Align quality and safety organization and leadership across the clinical enterprise.
- Create and implement clinical pathways for high impact conditions.
- Ensure a single standard of care for all patients.

WORK IN PROGRESS

DIGITAL ACCESS

Transforming our patients' ability to access care online, including appointment scheduling, virtual visits, and health information, has been on the fast track at VP&S since 2022. Having made it to 6% of visits scheduled online, digital access is being accelerated with new powers in artificial intelligence and new levels of alignment with NewYork-Presbyterian.

GOAL 3

Streamline clinical processes to support high-performing teams.



Medical care has become increasingly complicated, fragmented, and bureaucratic, damaging the experience for patients and clinicians alike. Future leadership in health care will require bringing together digital capabilities, artificial intelligence, and compassionate human resources to create a seamless, individualized experience for every patient.

Strategies

- Expand inclusive access to outpatient, inpatient, and virtual care.
- Institute standardized training for staff across practice sites.
- Develop analytic resources to enable continual process improvement.

WORK IN PROGRESS

SIMPLE IS BETTER

Redesigning systems to reduce friction and frustration has been the focus of the Simple is Better initiative that launched in May 2023. As of early 2024, Simple Is Better has received over 390 suggestions from the front lines and has completed over 80 projects to improve work life at VP&S.



PRIORITY 3

DRIVE DISCOVERY
TO TRANSFORM HUMAN HEALTH

Our discoveries elucidate biology and save lives.



GOAL 1

Attract and empower the most creative and collaborative scientists.



Scientific discovery changes the world. And each discovery depends upon a scientist asking a new question, pursuing a new idea, taking a new approach. To accelerate our impact, we will create new models of education, training and laboratory support to enable scientists to push the horizons of biomedical science.

Strategies

- Pioneer innovative approaches to support early career scientists, including physician scientists.
- Redesign graduate programs to attract the best students and ensure their success.
- Create flexible career pathways for diverse scientific talent, including postdoctoral trainees and research scientists.



GOAL 2

Create the leading ecosystem for scientific discovery and translation.



Meaningful scientific progress occurs in an environment that embraces critical thinking, diverse perspectives, opportunities for collaboration, and a belief in the power of science to transform society. By rejecting academic silos and trusting in our collective strength, we will continue to lead in scientific discovery and translational research.

Strategies

- Facilitate the movement of ideas and investigators across scientific disciplines and domains including translation to clinical breakthroughs.
- Invest in forward-looking tools and technologies, including AI, and make them widely accessible through core facilities and shared services.
- Implement data driven process improvement across the research cycle, including grants, trials, contracts, consent and biobanking.

WORK IN PROGRESS

NEW RESEARCH BUILDING

The Fall of 2024 will see construction begin on a new research building on the corner of 167th street and Audubon Avenue, the first fossil fuel free research building in NYC. The building will house innovative new precision science programs.



GOAL 3

Enhance scientific impact through collaboration and partnership.



Columbia University. NewYork-Presbyterian. Washington Heights and West Harlem. The Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons is part of one of the world’s great research universities and a partner of one of the nation’s premier hospital systems. We make our home in a community of unsurpassed diversity and vibrancy. We will travel faster and farther toward our goals by maximizing these opportunities for collaboration and the resources they offer.

Strategies

- Leverage the clinical enterprise to advance scientific priorities.
- Strengthen connections to the breadth and depth of excellence across Columbia University.
- Facilitate community-engaged and community-based participatory research through coordinated support, training, and oversight.

WORK IN PROGRESS

BRIDGE

The Biobank Resource for Investigating Disease, Genes, and Environment (BRIDGE) was launched in 2023 to support investigators across the medical center. BRIDGE will encompass coordinated recruitment and enrollment as well as automated sample processing, tracking, and storage. The program will set a new standard for institutional commitment to patient-based research.



PRIORITY 4

ELEVATE EDUCATION ACROSS THE CONTINUUM

We educate future leaders in medicine, research,
and community health.

GOAL 1

Deliver best in class development programs to advance educator success and satisfaction.



Everyone remembers their best teacher, the mentor that changed their career. Our commitment to education unites us and creates the biomedical workforce of the future. More must be done to ensure that our educators are supported and celebrated – bringing together individual best practices and the full resources of Columbia University.

Strategies

- Provide coordinated mentorship, research support, and professional development through a VP&S educator hub linked to department practices and support.
- Develop innovative approaches to educator recognition and support.
- Enhance access to advanced training and degree opportunities.

WORK IN PROGRESS

EDUCATOR DEVELOPMENT

As part of the MD curriculum redesign, over 100 core faculty members who lead our educational efforts have been engaged in a cutting-edge teaching skills development program. Additional resources are being developed and coordinated to align curriculum transformation with faculty development.

GOAL 2

Ensure learners thrive in all settings, including the classroom, clinic and laboratory.



Modern biomedical education exists in a dynamic learning environment that spans multiple distinct settings. Leveraging that dynamic environment to achieve optimal learner experience requires integrating cutting-edge technology and resources to robust structures for evaluation and dissemination.

Strategies

- Continually evaluate and upgrade educational resources needed by learners across sites.
- Clarify expectations and evaluation processes for learners from all disciplines.
- Enhance and expand use of simulation in educational projects and programs.

WORK IN PROGRESS

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Ongoing focus on the learning environment for medical students has led to redoubled efforts to develop system level interventions in partnership with NewYork-Presbyterian. A new oversight committee made up of key department learners, faculty affairs, clinical affiliates, education deans and students has led to exciting new ideas to continue to make VP&S the best possible place to learn medicine.

GOAL 3*

Lead the nation in sustainable, inclusive programs that create pathways to biomedical careers.



Responsibility for the diversity of the biomedical workforce begins long before students arrive at VP&S. There is a decades-long record substantiating the importance of early mentorship and support for aspiring doctors and scientists from diverse backgrounds. Now it is time to identify the most effective approaches, consolidate existing gains, and create a scalable, sustainable long-term model.

Strategies

- Create a central resource for coordinated longitudinal support of pathway programs and participants.
- Recognize and celebrate students, staff, and faculty for engagement in pathway programs.
- Increase impact through sustained partnerships with select local and national schools, colleges, and universities.

WORK IN PROGRESS

PATHWAY PROGRAMS

Coming out of the pandemic, VP&S faculty have developed exciting new pathway programs to expand connections to high schools and colleges. That includes the Ernest E. Just Biomedical Research Scholars, a collaboration with the United Negro College Fund to bring students from historically Black colleges, universities, and medical schools to VP&S labs for the summer. These initiatives build upon longstanding programs like the Summer Program for Undergraduate Rising Stars. These efforts place VP&S at the forefront of creating a diverse biomedical workforce.

* Shared with Priority 5



PRIORITY 5

PRIORITIZE PARTNERSHIP TO ADVANCE COMMUNITY HEALTH

We work closely with our community partners to create opportunities and address challenges.

GOAL 1

Align medical center assets and activities to advance the health priorities of our local communities.



The contributions of medical schools and hospitals to the well-being of the communities they serve are not limited to patient care. A regular stream of decisions by these institutions directly affects these neighborhoods. Who is hired? What new facilities are constructed and where? Are institutional resources being deployed consistent with the interests of the community? Through community dialogue and shared values, we can align our work with the needs of our neighbors.

Strategies

- Partner with local stakeholders to assess current community-based activities and develop a plan for strengthening our impact.
- Ensure that community-based work is a recognized and valued part of the VP&S culture.
- Adopt effective approaches to bi-directional information and resource sharing.

WORK IN PROGRESS

COMMUNITY HEALTH LEADERSHIP

In 2023, VP&S appointed its first Vice Dean for Community Health to coordinate and leverage our activities towards meaningful progress in improving health outcomes in our local communities. The creation of the Office of Academic and Community Partnerships in 2024 is another important step forward for our ability to advance our community health mission.

GOAL 2

Strengthen health care quality and access in our local communities.



While our contributions are not limited to patient care, VP&S has an important role to play in elevating and enabling high quality health care in the Washington Heights and West Harlem communities. Understanding and effectively implementing that role requires committing to a shared, long-term vision and approaching these partnerships with humility and transparency.

Strategies

- Equip all faculty, staff and learners with the tools and training needed to deliver trauma informed, culturally appropriate care.
- Contribute to a cohesive, community-driven plan for ambulatory care in our local communities.

WORK IN PROGRESS

DIVERSITY IN CLINICAL TRIALS

Launched in 2022, the Diversity in Clinical Trials Initiative has embraced innovative, community-based efforts to address barriers to research participation in our local communities. Leveraging digital tools, community health worker programs, and bi-directional educational series, the initiative has received global attention for its potential to improve cancer research and better serve diverse populations.

APPENDICES

Additional Priorities Supported by Ongoing Efforts

PRIORITY	ONGOING EFFORT
CLINICAL	
Create a growth strategy for clinical enterprise	Active service line and geographic planning under Senior Vice Dean of Clinical Affairs, in collaboration with New York Presbyterian (NYP) leadership.
Modify clinical compensation model to align incentives and support clinical enterprise	New clinical compensation model being implemented under Senior Vice Dean of Clinical Affairs, with support from NYP.
Develop standardized expectations for clinical effort across departments	Implementation of new clinical compensation model will accelerate development of effort guidelines across clinical services.
Advance subspecialty practice integration to advance equity in clinical care	Collaborative effort continues between Faculty Practice Organization (FPO) and NYP to develop and implement optimal approach to ensuring access and optimal care for all across clinical services
Expand and enhance primary care services	Having launched the Columbia Primary Care Initiative, the FPO and NYP are working collaboratively to refresh the primary care vision to expand access and align our primary care activities.
EDUCATION	
Redesign undergraduate medical education curriculum	A comprehensive MD curriculum redesign effort is underway, led by the Vice Dean of Education with a corresponding effort for the graduate programs led by the new Director of Graduate Programs in the Vagelos Institute of Biomedical Research Education.
Develop new educational programs to advance impact and financial performance	A taskforce on new educational programs was initiated in 2023 and will soon share its recommendations to guide our next steps in this area.

APPENDICES

RESEARCH	
Develop shared vision for research enterprise including basic, translational, clinical and population science	A strategic prioritization process for research was initiated with the basic science departments under the guidance of the Senior Vice Dean of Research and the Scientific Research Advisory Committee. This effort will encompass the full scope of VP&S research as it continues, creating a shared vision for the research enterprise.
Develop pathway for developing and retaining physician scientists	The Vagelos Institute of Biomedical Research Education will be the home of a new physician scientist pathway that will provide longitudinal support and mentorship.
Enhance and strengthen research computing infrastructure	Building on the recommendations of a research computing taskforce, VP&S will appoint a Chief Research Information Officer who will work closely with the redesigned information technology team to advance research computing infrastructure.
Revamp financial model for research support to incentivize collaboration and impact	The VP&S finance office is undertaking a comprehensive assessment of the internal funds flow models to ensure they align with our strategic goals and priorities.
PEOPLE	
Increase transparency and equity in job descriptions and packages	A redesign of human resources within VP&S is underway to improve efficiency and maximize transparency and equity.
Streamline administrative processes and break down administrative silos	The Simple is Better initiative was launched in 2023 to improve work life at VP&S by reducing administrative burden and implementing new ways of working together.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

VP&S Strategic Planning Steering Committee

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OUR PEOPLE MISSION

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Group No. 2

Prepare for a Future in Which AI Will Play a Significant Role in Advancing All Missions

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Enhance Mentoring & Career Development Opportunities for Faculty and Staff

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CLINICAL MISSION

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Advance Leadership in Quality of Care, Including Clinical Excellence, Patient-centeredness, and Equity

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Group No. 3 **Redesign Ambulatory Practices to Advance Patient and Clinician Experience, Including Integration of Clinical Research**

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RESEARCH MISSION

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Group No. 2

Lead In Innovative Approaches to Recruiting and Developing Research Workforce

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Group No. 3

Enable Greater Research Coordination and Collaboration by Reducing System Barriers

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Improve Quality of Learner Experience

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Group No. 2

Advance Innovative Approaches to Increasing Diversity and Inclusion in the Biomedical Workforce

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Subani Chandra

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COMMUNITY MISSION

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Grow Bidirectional Community-based Research

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Jennifer Heredia
Andrew Lassman
Nathalie Moise
Megan Mroczkowski
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Samuel Sternberg
Mary Beth Terry
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Group No. 2

Leverage All Assets Across Our Missions to Advance the Well-being of Our Local Communities

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Group No. 3 **Improve Health Care Quality and Access in Our Local Communities**

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