



**OSHER CENTER FOR  
INTEGRATIVE MEDICINE**  
HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL AND  
BRIGHAM AND WOMEN'S HOSPITAL

# Five-year Strategic Plan Overview

Academic Years 2021 - 2026



## A Message from Our Director

It has been a great privilege for me to work alongside my colleagues at the Osher Center for Integrative Medicine to create this Five-Year Strategic Plan for our work—and it is an even greater privilege to share it with you, our community of patients, friends, and supporters.

The Osher Center, a joint center of Harvard Medical School and Brigham and Women's Hospital, was established in 2001 with support from the Bernard Osher Foundation. Our mandate then was to work with allies around the world to help create the new field of integrative medicine, leveraging our community's unique strengths in research, education, and clinical care to promote an integrative model of health, healing, and well-being.

We were determined then to bring to bear every healing tool we had to improve patient health, never neglecting the suite of diagnostic tools, procedures, medications, and surgical options that lie at our collective disposal, while recognizing that excellent care does not stop at these interventions. Excellent care seeks to understand how an ailment affects a patient's overall physical and mental well-being. Excellent care considers the interconnected systems of the body and mind. Excellent care enhances patients' health by considering all the tools at our disposal—those from the technologically advanced spheres of conventional medicine, as well as from the spheres of traditional, complementary and integrative medicine. Excellent care acknowledges the whole patient, diverse forms of treatment and the many ways that patients heal.

Entering our twentieth year, we at the Osher Center reflect on our achievements: Our research begun to reveal the biology behind the healing power of acupuncture, chiropractic care, tai chi, dietary supplements, and caring relationships, while shaping a new paradigm for framing whole-person health and healing. Our trainings, public and academic forums, and curriculum design have introduced integrative medicine into leading hospitals and medical schools. Our multi-modal clinical care has brought improved health and healing to thousands of patients over the past two decades.

At the twenty-year mark, we celebrate these milestones, as we map new directions for our work. We are eager to embark on this next phase of this important journey in integrative medicine and to share the opportunities we see ahead in our Five-Year Strategic Plan.

With best wishes,



**Peter M. Wayne, Ph.D.**

Bernard Osher Associate Professor of Medicine in the  
Field of Complementary and Integrative Medical Therapies  
Harvard Medical School

**Director**

Osher Center for Integrative Medicine  
Brigham and Women's Hospital and Harvard Medical School

## Five-Year Strategic Plan, 2021-2026

**Integrative medicine** is an approach to healing that appreciates the complex multi-system dynamics—body, mind, and spirit—that underlie health and disease, and that must be brought into balance for both prevention and rehabilitation. It integrates modern medical practices with traditional wisdom and values the technological successes of disease curing along with the patient-centered exploration of healing.

Over the past half century, medicine has been driven largely by a reductionist approach, taking the components of human biology apart and focusing on the detail of each system, tissue, and cell. The resulting advances in molecular biology and their translation into therapies have led to remarkable progress in medicine, especially in our understanding of pathogenesis and the diagnosis and treatment of diseases.

It is, however, equally important to put the pieces back together and to consider the whole person. This perspective enables our patients' transition from a state of disease back to health, and promotes the understanding that health is, fundamentally, more than the simple absence of disease.

Biomedical science itself has recognized this imperative, with the fields of systems biology and network medicine—which underscores the crucial interdependence of biological structures and systems—emerging in tandem and in conversation with integrative medicine over the past twenty years.

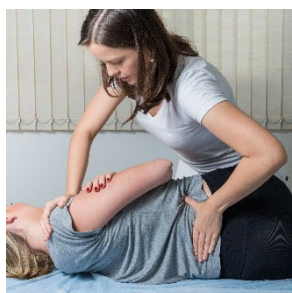
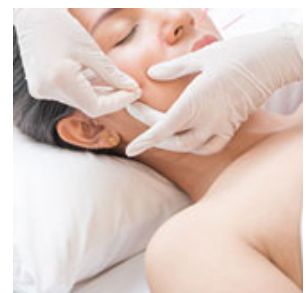
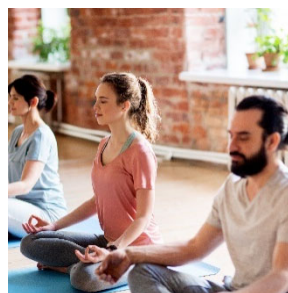
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We are committed to advancing a model of health that recognizes the interconnections of the body, mind, and spirit to enhance resilience and promote health and healing in individuals and communities.

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**Interconnection** and integration—of cells, of persons, of communities—are central to the work of the Osher Center for Integrative Medicine. We are committed to advancing a model of health that recognizes the interconnections of the body, mind, and spirit to enhance resilience and promote health and healing in individuals and the communities that support them.

The next-phase of our strategic plan is built on these fundamental principles, which have always informed our cornerstone programs in research, clinical care, and education, and will continue to guide our progress. In the coming five-year period, we envision new milestones in each of these areas.





## Research

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We ground the Osher Center's mission in rigorous clinical and laboratory research that aims to better understand health, disease, and resiliency from a systems-informed biopsychosocial perspective.

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Within this framework, we work to understand the therapeutic benefits of integrative treatments. Our research spans the translational spectrum from elucidating biological mechanisms, to documenting patient-centered outcomes, and modeling cost-effectiveness of community-based care. Through this approach, we are steering a course toward integrative medicine based on sound scientific inquiry. Our commitment to basic and translational research is a strength and uniquely positions us to inform the future of medicine.

Informed by these tenets, we have made marked progress in building the understanding and scientific evidence needed to support complementary and integrated use of promising therapies: mind-body therapies – like meditation, yoga, and tai chi; manual therapies like chiropractic care and massage therapy; and nutraceutical therapies like vitamins and herbal supplements. Based on our work, there is increasing understanding across the medical community that these therapies, together with current medical practices to treat illness, will enhance wellness and improve health.

Going forward, our research efforts will be focused on four inter-related domains, within and across which we examine healthy aging and resilience, and rehabilitation and management of a wide range of chronic health conditions:



**SCIENCE OF MIND-BODY CONNECTIONS** Our investigators seek to better understand the physiological and behavioral processes underlying healthy mind-body connections.



**CLINICAL EFFECTIVENESS OF MULTIMODAL AND INTEGRATIVE INTERVENTIONS** The Center employs and documents the efficacy of therapeutic practices that attend to mind, body and spirit, some—like tai chi or acupuncture or meditation—drawn from healing traditions outside of conventional medical care, and others combining conventional and complementary modalities.



**SYSTEMS AND TRANSLATIONAL BIOLOGY OF INTEGRATIVE MEDICINE** We are leveraging revolutionary advances in molecular, cellular, and systems biology coupled with large biomedical datasets and powerful computational tools to investigate and translate the promise of nutraceutical and other integrative therapies.



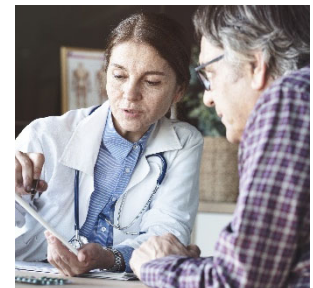
**PLACEBO AND THE SCIENCE OF HUMAN CONNECTION** Center faculty are taking a new approach to placebo research by grounding it in neurological and molecular placebo pathways uncovered by still-emerging neurobiology and pharmacology studies. This work identifies brain and neural pathways activated by provider support, patient belief and expectation, and social networks—all critical components of psychosocial health. Our work at the Osher Center will continue to play a critical role in understanding the biological processes that drive placebo effects and harnessing them in both clinical care and clinical trials.

## Clinical Care

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Our Osher Clinical Center is one of the longest standing U.S. integrative care centers embedded within an academic medical center. Our practitioners provide the highest quality, transdisciplinary patient-centered care through a health equity lens, listening to and treating the whole person, and partnering with specialists to enable coordinated care.

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In the coming five years, we will expand our clinical offerings, and integrate the Osher Clinical Center more fully with our research and education efforts.

**COLLABORATIVE PRACTICE** We will continue to welcome increasing numbers of medical professionals from Brigham and Women's Hospital and from our local healthcare communities to our network of caregivers, expanding our opportunities to provide coordinated, multi-modal care for our patients.

**PLATFORM FOR TRAINING AND EDUCATION** The Clinic will be a training hub, where future healthcare providers will learn best integrated practices as standard of care for their patients. Conferences like our Integrative Medicine Network Forums and Grand Rounds, bring together scientists, practitioners, and the public to exchange ideas, seed collaborations, advance research and best practices, and inform policy.

**HEALTHY COMMUNITIES** We will extend our work in the broader community, studying and applying innovative models of optimal patient-provider interactions, group-based learning, and virtual telemedicine platforms that prioritize listening and patient-centered care, and purposefully foster connection and community. Parallel initiatives will target the well-being and resilience of our healthcare providers, faculty, and trainees. We recognize that the field of integrative medicine is not immune to the broader and systemic challenges and burdens of social inequity and racism, which perpetuate the social determinants of poor health, and we strive to address these complex issues through our work.

## Education

Education is a key pillar, aligned and integrated with research and clinical programs at the Osher Center. Since the Center's inception, we have developed and delivered novel educational programs to diverse communities of researchers and practitioners, from students and trainees to senior faculty, alongside educational initiatives for our patients, the public, and policy makers.



**FUTURE LEADERS** The Osher Center is home to one of the oldest and most prestigious National Institutes of Health fellowship programs in integrative medicine. We have trained a generation of integrative medicine researchers and providers and continue to train and mentor emerging leaders in the field.

**SPREADING INTEGRATIVE MEDICINE PRACTICES AND BUILDING COMMUNITY** Through initiatives such as monthly Integrative Medicine Grand Rounds, biannual Network Forums, and Pilot Seed Grants, we bring together leaders and experts in integrative medicine research, education and practice locally, nationally and globally to disseminate research findings and best practices, and to foster cross-disciplinary dialogue. In addition, through curating and visualizing research and clinical network maps—making it easy to see locations and connections among national and international integrative medicine hubs—we catalyze collaboration and community and provide practical tools for leveraging the wealth of resources in our community.



**LEADING CHANGE** Through editorial and scholarly writing, service and leadership roles in national and international organizations, our fellows and faculty leaders disseminate knowledge and impact medical education and policy.

All of us at the Osher Center for Integrative Medicine are deeply engaged in realizing our vision of a systems-based, integrative model of health that recognizes and leverages interconnections of body, mind, and spirit and community to enhance resilience and promote health, healing and well-being in individuals and their communities.

In addition to the goals we have shared for our research, clinical care, and education domains, we are also putting into place the rigorous program evaluation, communications, and revenue platforms essential to supporting this work day by day.

Together, over the coming five years, we will lead the way toward a new model of health and healthcare that advances leading edge scientific research to inform the effectiveness, cost-effectiveness, safety, and biological basis of integrative therapies and models of care; educates the next generation of integrative health leaders; and provides quality evidence-based clinical care that fosters whole person health and resilience, and prevention and rehabilitation of chronic disease.

We hope you will join our community as we pursue these important goals, and we look forward to sharing more about our work at the Osher Center with you.



## Osher Center Leadership



### **Kathryn T. Hall, PhD, Director of Basic & Translational Research**

Dr. Kathryn T. Hall is Associate Molecular Biologist and Assistant Professor in the Division of Preventive Medicine at Brigham and Women's Hospital and Director of Placebo Genetics in the Program in Placebo Studies at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center. After receiving her PhD in Microbiology and Molecular Genetics from Harvard University, she spent 10 years in the biotech industry tackling problems in drug discovery and development—first at Wyeth (now Pfizer) and then at Millennium Pharmaceuticals (now Takeda) where she became an Associate Director of Drug Development. Dr. Hall returned to Harvard Medical School in 2010, joined the Fellowship in Integrative Medicine at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in 2012, and received a Master's in Public Health from Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health in 2014. Dr. Hall was the 2015 Harvard Catalyst Program for Faculty Development and Diversity Inclusion (PPFDD) faculty fellow and is the 2019 BWH Minority Faculty Career Development Awardee.



### **Matthew H. Kowalski, DC, Associate Clinical Director**

Dr. Matthew H. Kowalski is a 1990 graduate of the National College of Chiropractic. He also completed a multidisciplinary orthopedics residency leading to certification with the American Board of Chiropractic Orthopedics. Dr. Kowalski practices and contributes to research at the the Osher Clinical Center at Brigham and Women's Hospital where he also serves at the Associate Clinical Director. His practice focuses on the evaluation and treatment of patients suffering with headaches, spinal disorders, myofascial pain syndromes and other non-operative musculoskeletal conditions. Dr. Kowalski's care combines manually applied procedures, rehabilitation, lifestyle counseling and ergonomic modifications. His integrative approach to practice bridges conventional and integrative healthcare.



### **Donald B. Levy, MD, Medical Director**

Dr. Donald B. Levy is Assistant Professor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School and has been the Medical Director of the Osher Clinical Center for Integrative Medicine at Brigham and Women's Hospital since 2003. He has been active in teaching and mentoring medical students, interns, residents, fellows and colleagues at Harvard for 35 years and had a practice in primary care internal medicine for 25 years in Cambridge, MA. His professional interests include integrating the scientific advances in modern medicine with age-old therapies and principles of healing, the use of therapeutic lifestyle changes-- including nutrition and dietary herbs and supplements-- to recover from illness and maintain good health, and the power of an effective doctor-patient relationship.



## **Darshan Mehta, MD, MPH, Education Director**

Dr. Darshan Mehta serves as Osher Center's Education Director, as well as the Medical Director of the Benson-Henry Institute for Mind Body Medicine at MGH and Director for the Office for Well-being with the Center for Faculty Development at MGH. In addition, he is the MGH site director for the Practice of Medicine curriculum required of all 1st-year Harvard Medical School students, and leads their well-being curriculum. His educational and research interests include curricular development in complementary and integrative medical therapies, mind/body educational intervention, and promotion of professionalism in healthcare trainees. After completing his residency in internal medicine at University of Illinois-Chicago Hospital, he completed a clinical research fellowship in complementary and integrative medicine at the Harvard Medical School Osher Research Center, during which he received a Master of Public Health degree from the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health.



## **Peter Wayne, PhD, Center Director**

Dr. Peter Wayne is the Bernard Osher Associate Professor of Medicine in the Field of Complementary and Integrative Medical Therapies at Harvard Medical School, and serves as the Director for the Osher Center for Integrative Medicine. The primary focus of Dr. Wayne's research is evaluating how mind-body and related integrative medicine practices clinically impact aging and chronic health conditions, and understanding the physiological and psychological mechanisms underlying observed therapeutic effects. He has served as a principal or co-investigator on more than 25 NIH-funded studies. His research has evaluated the impact of therapies such as Tai Chi, acupuncture and chiropractic on diverse medical issues including balance disorders, Parkinson's disease, heart failure, cancer, back and neck pain, migraine headaches and healthy aging. Dr. Wayne has more than 40 years of training experience in Tai Chi and Qigong, and is an internationally recognized teacher of these practices.



## **Gloria Yeh, MD, MPH, Director of Clinical Research**

Dr. Gloria Yeh is Associate Professor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School. Her research program is based in the Division of General Medicine and Primary Care at the Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, where she serves as the Division's Director of Mind-Body Research. She is also the Director of the HMS Research Fellowship in Integrative Medicine (NIH T32 postdoctoral training fellowship). Dr. Yeh is a clinician-investigator with a primary research focus on evaluating mind-body therapies, their potential role in complex chronic illness, and understanding underlying psychosocial and physiological mechanisms. She also focuses on understanding component effects of mind-body therapies and how these therapies may promote healthy behavior change such as physical activity. She is principal investigator or co-investigator on a number of NIH-funded clinical trials investigating mind-body exercise, including Tai Chi and meditative breathing in patients with chronic cardiopulmonary conditions. Dr. Yeh also serves on the Advisory Council for the NIH National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health.