Our Chancellor
Sam Hawgood, MBBS, became UCSF chancellor on July 17, 2014. A renowned pediatrician and neonatologist, Dr. Hawgood was previously dean of the UCSF School of Medicine, which ranks among the nation’s top medical schools in research, education and clinical care.
UCSF: Advancing Health Worldwide

UCSF’s success in receiving highly competitive federal funding is a reflection of its excellence in basic and clinical research. UCSF patient care is strengthened through a University-wide commitment to translational medicine and the work of UCSF clinical and basic science research teams who are dedicated to speeding discoveries from the laboratory to clinical care programs, where they can benefit patients.

UCSF Research Highlights

- In 1989, Harold Varmus, MD, and J. Michael Bishop, MD, received the Nobel Prize for the discovery that certain genes that are part of our normal chromosomes can mutate to become abnormal, cancer-driving oncogenes, a discovery that is the foundation of ongoing research and of many new targeted cancer treatments.
- In 1997, Stanley Prusiner, MD, received the Nobel Prize for demonstrating that a class of rare but deadly, infectious neurodegenerative diseases was not caused by an infectious life form with its own DNA, but rather by a change in the shape of a specific type of protein. The possible role of shape-changing, misfolded proteins now is a focus of study in other, more common neurodegenerative diseases, including Parkinson’s disease, Alzheimer’s disease and Lou Gehrig’s disease.
- In 2009, Elizabeth Blackburn, PhD, shared the Nobel Prize for her co-discovery of the telomerase enzyme and her related work on telomeres — protective bits of DNA that cap the ends of chromosomes within the cell nucleus. A vast majority of cancers have abnormal telomeres, which now are the target of new cancer drug development.
- In 2012, Shinya Yamanaka, MD, PhD, a senior investigator at the UCSF-affiliated Gladstone Institutes and a professor of anatomy at UCSF, shared the Nobel Prize for his co-discovery of how to transform ordinary adult skin cells into cells that, like embryonic stem cells, are capable of developing into any cell in the human body.
- UCSF scientists have played a leading role in HIV/AIDS research since the outbreak of the epidemic. They discovered the protease inhibitors now widely used to treat HIV, and continue to play an international leadership role in AIDS treatment and research.
- In diabetes research, UCSF scientists have developed novel treatments to suppress the immune system’s attack on the insulin-producing cells in the pancreas, and are world leaders in clinical trials to prevent type 1 diabetes and stave off the disease in newly diagnosed patients.

UCSF Patient Care Highlights

- UCSF Medical Center consistently ranks among the top hospitals nationally in the annual best hospitals survey by US News & World Report, and consistently exceeds the most widely used patient satisfaction and safety measures in the nation. The medical center has two main clinical sites, Parnassus Heights and Mount Zion, and maintains numerous primary care and specialty clinics throughout San Francisco and Northern California.
- UCSF Benioff Children’s Hospital ranks as one of the top children’s hospitals in the nation by US News & World Report. The hospital has more than 150 specialists in more than 40 areas of children’s health.
- UCSF Dental Center operates 14 clinics at three San Francisco sites, providing comprehensive dental services from routine care to the most sophisticated oral health care available today.
- The UCSF Helen Diller Family Comprehensive Cancer Center is one of only two centers in Northern California to receive the prestigious designation of “comprehensive” from the National Cancer Institute.